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THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
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VOL. IX

JANUARY, 1943

NO. 2

ADVENTURES IN READING

Sixteenth Series

DALE AND WALTER SPEARMAN



THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA PRESS
CHAPEL HILL

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- Vol. XIII. No. 2. *Other People's Lives, Third Series.* 1933. C. S. Love.
- Vol. XIII. No. 5. *Adventures in Reading, Sixth Series.* 1933. M. N. Bond.

Single Copies, 50 cents; in North Carolina, 25 cents.

University Extension Library
Chapel Hill, N. C.

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*Published six times a year, October, January, April, May, June, 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.*

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- *3. April, 1936. *Adventures in Reading, Eighth Series*. M. N. Bond.
4. May, 1936. *Other People's Lives, Fifth Series*. C. S. Love.
5. June, 1936. *Adventures in Reading, Ninth Series*. A. B. Adams.
6. July, 1936. *Modern Plays and Playwrights*. C. M. Russell.

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- *1. October, 1936. *Adventures Around the World*. Lucile Kelling.
- *2. January, 1937. *The Modern Woman*. E. C. Baity.
3. April, 1937. *Literary Backgrounds of Present Day Germany*. A. E. Zucker and W. P. Friederich.
4. May, 1937. *India in Revolution*. E. E. and E. E. Ericson.
- *5. June, 1937. *Adventures in Reading, Tenth Series*. A. B. Adams.
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- *3. April, 1940. *Other People's Lives, Seventh Series.* C. S. Love.
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4. May, 1941. *Religion and Contemporary Life.* Dale Spearman.
5. June, 1941. "Eyes South." E. S. Godfrey and J. L. Godfrey.
6. July, 1941. *Adventures in Reading, Fourteenth Series.* A. B. Adams.

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2. January, 1942. *Understanding the News.* Walter Spearman.
3. April, 1942. *Adventures in Reading, Fifteenth Series.* A. B. Adams.
4. May, 1942. *Other People's Lives, Eighth Series.* C. S. Love.
5. June, 1942. *Places and Peoples of the Pacific.* D. & W. Spearman.
6. July, 1942. *Blueprints for Tomorrow.* A. B. Adams.

VOLUME IX

1. October, 1942. *Some Leaders of the World at War.* E. S. & J. L. Godfrey.
2. January, 1943. *Adventures in Reading, Sixteenth Series.* D. & W. Spearman.

* Out of print. Available only as loan.

Single copies, 50 cents each; in North Carolina, 25 cents.

Advance subscription per volume, \$2.00; to residents of North Carolina, \$1.00. Copies sent on approval.

THE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION LIBRARY
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FOREWORD

"Today readers have in the novel a life-extension agency: a means, not to the prolongation of physical existence, but to an expanded mental participation in the whole range of human experience. Modern fiction has overpassed former boundaries—strengthened, varied, developed its processes and scope. It reflects the activities, the complexities, the human, social, and moral problems, the satisfactions and inquietudes of the modern world with a more pervasive radiation than any other form of writing."

So writes Helen E. Haines in *What's in a Novel*, recently published in the Columbia University Studies in Library Service. Her words might well be taken as a guide for those who are seeking in this contemporary world of war and problems some intelligent conclusions. The books suggested in this bulletin not only are offered as "adventures in reading"; they are also recommended as an effective "life-extension agency."

Note: Books in any of the chapters listed as "Additional Reading" may be substituted for "Special References," if requested at time of registration.

WHERE AND WHAT IS FRANCE?

When France fell in the catastrophic spring of 1940 there also fell the hopes of the civilized world, which for centuries had considered Paris its intellectual capital. What happened to France and what may befall that country in days to come is of the deepest concern to all of us who read and think and feel.

Of all the accounts of France's sad plight, Elliot Paul's *The Last Time I Saw Paris* is at once the most revealing and the most discerning. And for those who hope to see once more the rise of a courageous and heartened France, the most hopeful account is perhaps Ben Lucien Burman's *Miracle on the Congo*, which begins where Elliot Paul's book ends and finds genuine hope for the future in the spirit and the fighting of General De Gaulle's Free French.

Taking the lines of a popular song for his title and one small street on the Left Bank of the Seine for his setting, Elliot Paul does a great deal more than attempt to explain the fall of France. He shows us a France that was zestfully living, tumultuously arguing, avidly eating, lustfully loving—and bitterly divided into opposing political camps which made invasion easy and defense almost impossible.

His Rue de la Huchette was a street teeming with humanity of all kinds. There was Hyacinthe Goujon, the precocious child who became a famous movie actress; Pierre Vautier, the weakling who fought for the Loyalists in Spain; the Juillards who ran the Hotel de Caveau. There was the grocer who wanted his son to become a travelling salesman, the old woman who kept a yarn shop, the man who sold goldfish, the serving women who shouted like fishwives, the old aristocrat and his young mistress, the Communist and her converts, the postman, the florist, the coal man, the policemen, the taxidermist, the butcher, the priest, the French petty officials—in short, there was the whole world of contemporary France. "If fate or history or progress or God could have spared the Rue de la Huchette," said Elliot Paul, "from it another France might grow."

Ben Lucien Burman firmly believes that another France may yet grow from the deeds and the daring of the Free French, whom he visited in Brazzaville, Equatorial Africa. Here he found "the

cradle of new France," men who left their homes and Vichy because they wanted to fight for a freedom they once possessed. "Never," said he, "have I seen individuals with such complete unselfishness, such pure devotion to an ideal."

1. A CITY THAT USED TO BE

The Last Time I Saw Paris, by Elliot Paul

How did Elliot Paul happen to live on the Rue de la Huchette? How well did he know the other inhabitants of his neighborhood?

What is his attitude toward the people of this street where he lived for nearly twenty years? Does he make you believe that they are a fair cross section of all France?

What qualities of a novel does the book possess? Of a history? Of an autobiography?

Trace the developments of French political and social history as sketched by the author. What are his opinions of Petain, Laval, and other political leaders?

What reasons does Paul suggest for the surprising fall of France when the Germans attacked?

Discuss the philosophies of Pierre Vautier, Hyacinthe Goujon, Madame Durand, the inhabitants of the Basket of Flowers.

The Spanish War plays an important role in the lives of several characters. Why does Paul bring it into the picture to such an extent?

Do the people who live on the Rue de la Huchette seem more real to you than the characters of most novels? How does the author go about making them so credible?

Discuss the reactions of the various inhabitants of the street to the coming of the Nazis. What is the fate of the leading characters?

Additional Reading:

Memories of Happy Days, by Julian Green.

Life and Death of a Spanish Town, by Elliot Paul.

2. A SPIRIT THAT WILL BE

Miracle on the Congo, by Ben Lucien Burman

Discuss Burman's statement: "The heart of France is no longer in Paris along the gentle Seine; it is here in Africa, along the banks of the fever-ridden Congo."

Trace on a map or globe the trip made by Burman in order to write this book. What were the highlights of the trip?

Compare the Congo River and the Mississippi River, noting the descriptions on pages 33 and 45.

To what does Burman attribute the fall of France? Compare his

analysis with that of Elliot Paul in *The Last Time I Saw Paris* and of Hans Habe in *A Thousand Shall Fall*.

This book is a travelogue as well as a political treatise. Note Burman's adventures with the manion ants, the suicide scorpion, the tsetse flies. Read his vivid description of a desert post (p. 81).

What is his opinion of General de Gaulle? Of Marshal Petain? Of the Arab Legion, which he calls the most democratic army in the world? of Glubb Pasha?

How important to the cause of the United Nations is the activity of the Free French in holding a great section of the heart of Africa?

What does Burman think of the policies of the United States in connection with Vichy and the Free French? Would his account of the "miracle of the Congo" possibly influence American public opinion or American national policy?

Does he believe that the spirit of the Free French will be the soul of a Free France sometime in the future?

Additional Reading:

Until the Day Breaks, by Louis Bromfield.

A Thousand Shall Fall, by Hans Habe.

Assignment in Brittany, by Helen MacInnes.

The Sound of an American, by David Ormsbee.

Reprisal, by Ethel Vance.

LIGHT AND THE SEED

France fell, the blitzkrieg struck England, the German Army surged against Russia. But the spirit of freedom did not die out on the continent of Europe. Suppression and censorship have kept from America many of the facts of what is today happening in occupied Europe. But the spirit of the countries comes out in the novels written about them.

Norway under the Nazis is the scene of William Woods's engrossing story, *The Edge of Darkness*. Italy, restive under the heavy-handed Fascists and the encroaching Germans, is the scene of Ignazio Silone's *The Seed Beneath the Snow*. Both authors find the natives smarting under oppression, fervent in their determination to cast off a hated yoke of bondage. In the Norwegian fishing village there is active revolt, violent outbreaks against the Nazis and final escape to England to foster additional struggles. Among the peasants of Italy Silone finds growing discontent, "seeds of liberty and freedom" waiting "beneath the snow" to put forth their roots and their stalks.

Several years ago William Woods was a student at the University of North Carolina, interested in playwriting and acting with the Carolina Playmakers. Later he taught English, spent some time in Europe, traveling and writing and watching the ominous spread of Nazism. His book is an exciting tale of action and excitement, already being fashioned into a motion picture out in Hollywood. Similar to John Steinbeck's *The Moon is Down*, which has the same locale and theme, it has been highly praised by many critics as superior in story and local color and authentic treatment.

Ignazio Silone knows his Italy under Mussolini—and knows his Italian people. Editor of a labor paper in Trieste, he was sought by the Fascists and his brother was beaten to death. He escaped and evaded the Black Shirts for three years, sheltered by the peasants of his native Abruzzi and finally smuggled out into Switzerland, where he now lives in exile. His former books, *Bread and Wine* and *Fontamara*, showed him a tender, compassionate delineator of the Italian peasants as well as a bitter and satirical portrayer of government officials, deluded bureaucrats, and self-seeking Fascists.

In *The Seed Beneath the Snow* the hero, Pietro Spina, is a man hunted by the police for his rebellious opposition to the government. Living now in a rude stable with only a donkey and a deaf-mute for company, now in the home of his devoted and aristocratic old grandmother, now in a secluded village inn wearing the borrowed uniform and identity of a dead kinsman, Pietro remains steadfast to his two compelling motives, "the rejection of our present social order and attachment to the poor." And through him, Silone not only shows an Italy slowly gaining determination to seek a better way of life, but also shows the seed eternally pushing up through the soil and the snow.

1. UNREST IN ITALY

The Seed Beneath the Snow, by Ignazio Silone

From your knowledge of Silone's experiences and the contents of his former widely read novels, what would you expect his attitude toward modern Italy to be?

Note the care with which he builds up the character of the grandmother, Donna Maria Vincenza, head of the aristocratic Spina family of the village of Colle.

Contrast the two male members of the Spina family—Don Bastiano and young Pietro.

Do the minor characters of the novel serve to make the story and the theme more credible and genuine? What is your opinion of Simone the Polecat, Don Severino the organist, Natalina the maid, Don Marcantonio the new government orator, Aunt Eufemia?

"A handkerchief does not exist for the nose, but the nose for the handkerchief," explains Don Bastiano in the midst of a political discussion (p. 29). Discuss the application of this reasoning to the problem of whether the state exists for the individual or the individual for the state. Is there an essential difference here between the principles of democracy and of fascism?

Donna Maria Vincenza tells her grandson that Italy "is a region where the drought has dried up even the roots of the human soul." Does the author blame this upon the Fascist regime?

Note the ideas of Don Severino, the church organist, about modern Italy. Compare this with the ideas of Don Marcantonio, the government orator.

Illustrate the use of symbolism made by the author. Comment upon his recurring theme of "the seed beneath the snow," also of the suggestion that a bundle of fasces be placed upon the cross which is to be mounted on a hill near the village. Is there symbolism in Pietro's friendship for Infante, the deaf-mute, and for the animals about him?

Does Silone suggest that certain of his characters possess a Christ-like quality? What is the significance of the ending?

What does Silone foresee for Italy and the Italian peasants in the future?

Additional Reading:

Bread and Wine, by Ignazio Silone.

Fontamara, by Ignazio Silone.

Balcony Empire, by Reynolds and Eleanor Packard.

2. REVOLT IN NORWAY

The Edge of Darkness, by William Woods

Describe the fishing village of Trollness, which is the locale for this stirring account of patriotic Norwegians under Nazi rule.

Does William Woods succeed in giving an objective picture? Do you feel that his characters are propaganda puppets, or living, breathing, suffering human beings?

Critics of Steinbeck's *The Moon Is Down* complained that his Nazi soldiers were not depicted as real villains. How does Woods handle his Nazis?

What purpose is served by the love affair between Karen Stensgard and the Nazi soldier Karl Fischer?

Discuss the roles played by Gerd Bjarnesen, the inn-keeper; Aalesen, the pastor; Sixtus Andresen, the stubborn old schoolmaster; Katja, the Polish prostitute.

What ruse is employed by the British agent to make contact with the Norwegian patriots and to smuggle arms into the village? Is this plot convincing?

Why are Martin Stensgard and Gunnar Brogge selected as the leaders for the revolt? Was there a chance that the revolt might prove successful?

What effect did the revolt have on the individuals who participated in it? Did it bring forth any unexpected heroism?

What do the people of Trollness expect of the future?

Do these two novels meet the standards suggested by Miss Haines?

Additional Reading:

What's in a Novel, by Helen E. Haines.

The Moon Is Down, by John Steinbeck.

THE FRIENDS WE FIGHT WITH

America sends her sons to camps to prepare for war, and abroad to fight by the side of the English, the Russians, the Chinese and others of the United Nations. Those of us who stay behind, possessed with a desire to know more about our allies and the countries where they live, seek enlightenment in the latest available books. Foreign correspondents, world travelers and established novelists are rapidly answering our demands by producing competent and satisfying volumes.

Somerset Maugham writes of England in *The Hour Before the Dawn*, which brings the war crashing down upon the heads of an old English family, steeped in the traditions of the Army and the landowners. At Graveny Holt, their estate in Sussex, lived the family of General Henderson. Roger, the oldest son, was in the British Intelligence. His escape from Dunkirk with his Cockney pal, Nonny Clark, provides exciting chapters for the novel. Daughter Jane, grotesque and ribald, is married to stout and puffing Ian, with whom she keeps up a running fire of playful insults. Jim is a conscientious objector in love with Dora Friedberg, an Austrian refugee. These are Mr. Maugham's customarily "nice people," but they are nice people subjected to the strain and agony of war, a war which takes its toll of civilians as well as soldiers, a war which is no respecter of the landed gentry or the Cockney.

Village in August is a Chinese author-soldier's account of dauntless Chinese guerrilla fighters and their struggle against the encroaching Japanese. Edgar Snow points out in his preface that this book has had great influence in China. American readers will find T'ien Chün's novel completely engrossing and somewhat similar to Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*.

After long years of deep distrust of the horrors that "Red" Russia stood for in most American minds, the heroic stand of the Soviet troops and people against our common enemy has brought us a new and saner interest in knowing what Russia actually is, what she is fighting for, why she is our ally, what her attitude is toward America, what she plans for the future. Two books that provide answers to these great questions are Margaret Bourke-White's *Shooting the Russian War*, and foreign correspondent

Wallace Carroll's *We're in This with Russia*. Miss Bourke-White and her husband, novelist Erskine Caldwell, went to Russia in May, 1941, and stayed until just before Pearl Harbor. Her book is the highly personal account of her efforts to break through Russian officialdom and take all the pictures she wanted. Her humor, which sparkles through her pages and superb photographs, probably helped her win most of the censorship battles—even Stalin smiled for her. Primarily, she has recorded the reactions of the Russian people themselves in the midst of their severest trial.

Though Mr. Carroll's book is in more serious vein, this does not detract from its readability. His fluent prose carries us through the intricate and tortuous background of the war, the high-tensioned days from Munich on, through his full days among Russians at war, at the front, in subway shelters, in diplomatic circles, and finally through his return to America and his logical conclusions as to relations between the U. S. and the U. S. S. R.

1. ENGLAND MEETS THE WAR

The Hour Before the Dawn, by Somerset Maugham

Sketch the background of the Henderson family and their situation at the outbreak of the war. What were the reactions of the individual members of the family? Does this give a typical cross-section of British public opinion?

Is the presentation of Jim as a conscientious objector carefully and sympathetically handled? Read his thoughts as he walked in St. James's Park (p. 85) and recalled the last war, which he termed "a stupid, senseless war, a war brought on by greedy, ambitious, unscrupulous knaves."

Analyze the character of Dora Freidberg. Is she a credible person to you? Discuss her impassioned, bitter tirade against England after Jim had unmasked her. Does the melodramatic story of Jim and Dora seem an integral part of the book?

Why did May marry Roger Henderson? And why did she fall in love with Richard Murray? Discuss the effect of the war upon the private life of May, Roger and Richard. Is the ending convincing to you?

Old General Henderson says: "The future belongs to the soldiers and sailors and workmen who will have won the war. Let's hope they make it a happier and better England for all the people who live in it." Is this also the conclusion of the author?

Additional Reading:

The Commandos, by Elliott Arnold.

Signed with Their Honour, by James Aldridge.

Mrs. Miniver, by Jan Struther.

2. CHINA FIGHTS ON

Village in August, by T'ien Chün

What qualities of this book have made it popular with the masses in China? Note the events in the author's life which made possible the writing.

Compare the story, characters, style of *Village in August* with other books about China written by Americans, such as Pearl Buck's *The Good Earth* and more recent *Dragon Seed*. What distinctive Oriental flavor do you find?

How real do the characters seem? Give brief descriptions of Seventh Sister Li and her lover Boil Tang, of Old Eight and his young wife, of Iron Eagle, Little Red Face.

Anna, the young Korean girl who devoted her life to the cause of China's freedom, provides an inspiring heroine. How does she resolve the conflict between her love for Hsiao Ming and her duty to her army?

What impression do you get of the will of the Chinese peasants and their determination to withstand the Japanese?

3. THE WHY AND HOW OF RUSSIA

Shooting the Russian War, by Margaret Bourke-White

Look carefully at the photographs. Do you see in the faces of these people any key to their determined fighting strength?

What is the author's approach to the Russians? Is she trying to preach any doctrine? Is her book anything more than an excellent piece of reporting?

The reports on the leaders of churches in Russia are a valuable sidelight on the troublesome question of religion in Russia. Compare these with Mr. Carroll's discussion of religion.

What qualities make the humor in this book? Note particularly the characterizations of the many people Miss Bourke-White met, from Stalin to "Comrade Mammy."

Why did the bombings of Moscow appeal so strongly to the author's photographic instincts? Compare the reactions of the Moscow citizens during and after bombings with the many stories of the English in such circumstances.

Why do you leave this book with the feeling that, even though she laughs at them, the author has great admiration for the Russian people, as individuals and as a nation? What meaning has the last page of the book for us?

We're in This with Russia, by Wallace Carroll

What is the author's approach to Russia? What knowledge and background fit him to tell America what we should think about Russia? Compare the approach of this book with that of *Shooting the Russian War*.

Trace the diplomatic developments between England and Russia, and

follow carefully the explanation of the Hitler-Stalin pact. Do these events, and their aftermath, have a lesson for the United States?

Discuss the organization of the Red Army. What do you think of the political commissars attached to the armed forces?

Do you think a fair and unprejudiced picture is given of the standards of living in Russia, of the development of Russian industry, of the political upheavals, of the aims of the Soviet Republic?

Read carefully Part III, "The Questions Come Home." Here is the core of Mr. Carroll's thesis that America must have a realistic policy toward Russia, not one of condescension. What is the only way he thinks America could ever be communistic? Why won't the Russians, if the Allies win, try to spread world-communism?

Discuss his phrase, "The choice before America is more democracy, not less. The American Revolution, too, is a continuing revolution."

Additional Reading:

All Night Long, by Erskine Caldwell.

War and Peace, by Tolstoy.

THE FOES WE FACE

Not only do we desire to understand our allies of the United Nations but also our enemies. In these two novels about Germany and Japan today we may learn as much about the nature of the foe we face as from many volumes of history and analysis, many front page news reports or radio broadcasts. By reading discerning and penetrating fiction we may come close to the truth about the people in those countries whose ideas as well as armies are lined up against us.

The Seventh Cross by Anna Seghers is as exciting as a Wild West movie, but at the same time as thoughtful as an intelligent, thinking novelist can make it. This is the story of seven men who escaped from a concentration camp in Germany, what happened to them and to the people who sought to aid them and the people who tried to catch them. Primarily it is the story of George Heisler, who became a symbol to the oppressed German people not of the Nazi concentration camp but of the hopeful possibility of escape from such a camp and such a way of life. While George Heisler lived uncaptured the hope of freedom for all mankind could flicker and flourish once again even in the heart of Germany.

Beginning with an old Japanese folk tale of the bamboo and the oak, Robert Standish's *The Three Bamboos* ends with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The pages between depict the growth in power and numbers of the Fureno family, whose emblem was the bamboo and whose policy was to bow to the passing winds but like the bamboo always to spring back erect. As the Fureno family grew in strength and in guile so did the land of Japan, says the novelist.

So closely based on historical events is this novel that the reader can scarcely distinguish the fiction from the facts. "For what it is worth," says the author in his preface, "this book may help those who know nothing of Japan or its people to learn a little of a race whose fate in this struggle will decide the course of the world's history for several generations, or longer. There are still a few who love the Japanese and many who hate and fear them, but there is none who can afford to ignore them."

1. ESCAPE IN GERMANY

The Seventh Cross, by Anna Seghers

Does Anna Seghers' novel give you new insight into the present situation in Germany? Discuss her opinion of the morale of the German people and their attitude toward the Nazi regime.

Why is the escape of one man (Heisler) from a concentration camp so important? Explain the author's statement: "If one stroke, no matter how tiny, proved successful against the enemy's alleged omnipotence, everything was won."

What is the significance of the title? Does the picture of the seven tree-crosses remain vividly before you as you read the book?

How does the author achieve the almost overwhelming sense of excitement? Compare this quality of the book with a detective novel; with the movie technique of rapid cutting from scenes of the fleeing hero to scenes of the pursuing villain.

What reception did Heisler get from his family and former friends? Note the effect of Heisler upon each person he met. What was the attitude of his wife and his friend Franz Marnet? What effect did his escape have upon Paul and Liesel Roeder, upon Dr. Kress and Frau Kress?

Trace the fate of the other escapees, especially Wallau, Belloni and Aldinger. Do their misadventures heighten the suspense of Heisler's own story?

How successfully does Miss Seghers create the minor characters? Note Paul's aunt who ran the garage, the young boy whose jacket was stolen, the officers at the Westhofen concentration camp.

Discuss the value Miss Seghers places upon the significance of the individual human being and his right to freedom. How does she bring this out in her novel?

Additional Reading:

Hostages, by Stefan Heym.

Last Train from Berlin, by Howard K. Smith.

Assignment to Berlin, by Harry W. Flannery.

What About Germany? by Louis P. Lochner.

2. AMBITION IN JAPAN

The Three Bamboos, by Robert Standish

Discuss the old folk tale of the bamboo and the oak. How well does the author weave this legend into the pattern of his story?

Note the constant use of historical events, real people, official documents. Does this make the story of the Fureno family seem more real?

Trace the rise to power of the Furenos in Japan. How does this success story compare with the parallel "rising sun" of Japan as a world power? What means did the Fureno family employ to gain their goal? Do you

think the author bases his account of the Furenos on certain actual families in modern Japan?

What role is played in this novel by the Germans, English, Americans? Note the attitude of Tenjo Fureno toward his "friends" of other nations. How does he exploit them for his own selfish ends? Discuss the characterizations of Lord Carradine and von Frick.

Is the author successful in his creation of the women characters? What do you think of Soft-as-Silk and Plum Blossom? Of Etsu Honmoku and her noble sacrifice for her father?

Discuss the accounts of the rise of the Bushido in Japan. Is the Society of the Little Flowers based on fact? Note the exploitation of opium and religion on the part of the Furenos. Is the death of General Akira Fureno in the Japanese tradition? Does the conclusion of the novel follow logically from the author's exposition of Japanese character?

Compare the background (political, social, economic) of *The Three Bamboos* with other recent volumes on Japan, such as Upton Close's *Behind the Face of Japan*. Do you feel that Mr. Standish has given a fair portrayal of Japan? Criticize his style of writing.

Additional Reading:

Behind the Face of Japan, by Upton Close.

AMERICA IN OTHER WARS

It is no new experience for Americans to be adjusting their lives to a world at war. The freedom which boys on Guadalcanal and on Bataan fight to preserve was won by other boys in the 1770's. Both the American Revolution and the Civil War are fresh in the memories of this still young nation, and in the volumes of biography, history, memoirs and novels, stories of those other two wars are constantly being read.

The early American period of the Revolution is skilfully recreated by Esther Forbes in her *Paul Revere and the World He Lived In*. Not only does she build up a fascinating account of the man whose famous ride was immortalized by Longfellow, but she also gives excellent pictures of his contemporaries—Sam Adams, John Hancock, Joseph Warren and other fiery Boston patriots of the time.

The familiar tale of the lanterns hung in the belfry of Christ's Church and Revere's boat trip across the Charles with his oars muffled in a woman's flannel petticoat, then his mad horseback ride to warn the people of Lexington—these are exciting pages of Miss Forbes's book, but just as interesting are her descriptions of Revere's skilled work as a silversmith, his visits with friends and fellow patriots, his role in the life of his family and his town.

A hundred years later the Civil War was over but the South was suffering the pangs of Reconstruction. Marian Sims chooses this period for her first historical novel, *Beyond Surrender*, laid in Fairfax, South Carolina. The opening scene brings Major Denis Warden back to his mother's home at Brook Haven—also back to the problems of rebuilding a social and political civilization on a new economy.

Inevitably, of course, any novel of the Civil War in the South will be compared to *Gone with the Wind*, but Mrs. Sims's engrossing novel easily holds its own and commands respect. Its characters are credible human beings, its historical background accurate and vital, its writing skilful. The breakdown of the old plantation system and the dubious beginnings of tenantry are introduced in easy doses of history and sociology, made convincing by the reality of the people who meet these problems. Mrs. Sims's handling of her Negro characters and the growing class of people

in "trade" does much to provide a fuller picture of the South than the old lord-of-the-manor variety of novel. Her Negro Luke, who wanted so desperately to own his bit of land, and John Jernigan, clear-sighted, intelligent lawyer, are two of the most appealing characters in this season's fiction. Aristocratic Denis Warden, and Dolly Helms, the shop-keeper's daughter who became Mrs. Warden, are also clearly drawn.

A highlight of the novel is the campaign to get South Carolina out from under control of the carpet-baggers and ignorant Negroes, climaxed by the election of General Wade Hampton to the Governor's chair. Mixed in with the politics and history is a strong underlying belief in American democracy, which gives *Beyond Surrender* real pertinence in the life of today.

1. EARLY AMERICAN

Paul Revere and the World He Lived In, by Esther Forbes

Trace the family background of Paul Revere, noting the combination of artistic French ancestry and stout New England forebears.

What role did Revere play in the events leading up to the American Revolution? Discuss his relationships with Samuel Adams, John Hancock, George Washington, Joseph Warren. What was his attitude toward the British?

Would you consider Revere primarily a man of action or a man of ideas? How did he correlate his artistic interests (as a silversmith, engraver, maker of bells) with his political and patriotic interests?

Read Miss Forbes's stirring account of his famous ride. Does this differ from other versions? From the Longfellow poem? Was there more than one ride?

In addition to being a rider and a silversmith, Revere was a practicing dentist. How did this profession tie in with his work as a patriot? Note his identification of Joseph Warren's body.

Describe the expedition made by Lieutenant-Colonel Revere along the Penobscot River. Why did it result in a court-martial? Was Revere cleared of all charges against him?

What were his activities after the Revolution? As leader of the Boston artisans what was his influence on the ratification of the Federal Constitution? To sum up, what contribution would you say Paul Revere made toward the development of American democracy?

Additional Reading:

The Unvanquished, by Howard Fast.

Look to the Mountain, by Le Grand Cannon, Jr.

2. MIDDLE AMERICAN

Beyond Surrender, by Marian Sims

Compare *Beyond Surrender* and *Gone with the Wind*, as to plot, characters, background, style—then forget the famous Margaret Mitchell novel and discuss the Marian Sims novel on its own virtues.

Characterize Denis Warden, Sara Warden, John Jernigan, Dolly Helms. Why did Denis not marry Sharon Long? Explain his infatuation with Dolly Helms. Are these two women in his life credible human beings?

Discuss the historical and economic background of the novel, including the breakdown of the plantation system, the rise of the tenant farm, the growing financial power of the merchants, the coming of the mills to the South.

How is the Negro problem presented? Contrast Luke and Cato. Read pages 260-272 for an illuminating example of Mrs. Sims's understanding of the Negro character.

What role do the Ku Klux Klan, the Rifle Clubs and the Red Shirts play in the novel and in the reconstruction of South Carolina?

Note the handling of the Northerners who came South in this period. Discuss the activities of Bart Lester and of Mr. and Mrs. Hutchins. What is the influence of the Freedmen's Bureau?

Pay particular attention to the statements of John Jernigan. What were his ideas on the best means of reconstructing the South? Do you feel that the author herself is speaking through Jernigan?

What contribution does this novel make toward an understanding of contemporary American democracy?

Additional Reading:

Gone with the Wind, by Margaret Mitchell.

Lee's Lieutenants, by Douglas Southall Freeman.

The Drums of Morning, by Philip Van Doren Stern.

I Came Out of the Eighteenth Century, by John A. Rice.

ONLY YESTERDAY

Far removed from contemporary troubled Europe in time and space and point of view are two novels about life in America in a pioneering yesterday of the Middle West.

Henry Bellamann, once literary editor of the *Columbia* (S. C.) *State*, and later dean of the Curtis Institute of Music, several years ago wrote *King's Row*. A grimly realistic account of psychopathic characters in a Mid-west town, this novel has been on the best-seller list for two years. His new book is *Floods of Spring*, a lyrical-analytical story of Missouri just before the turn of the century; and about Peter Kettring, Pennsylvania farmer who sought escape from people and ideas by going to a strange town on the banks of a far-off river. The story of young David Kettring and his love for Taska Janek, daughter of their Bohemian peasant neighbor, is also a story of a growing America which in those years of development became a land in which disparate peoples and different races could live together in peace and understanding and love.

Ruth Suckow's *New Hope* tells of two years in the life of a small Iowa town. This is a warming, enduring, encouraging account of people who were generous and friendly, whose problems were personal but simple, and whose way of life was staunch and unflinching.

Mr. Greenwood, the minister "with the eyes of an innocent eagle," and genial Dave Miller possessed a faith both in the community where they lived and in the future of their country. Their philosophies permeated the lives of their families and of their neighbors, expressed most fully perhaps in the idealistic beliefs of the two children, Delight Greenwood and Clarence Miller, through whose eyes the story is told. Here is a picture of democracy at work in a time before its practitioners were conscious of the great need to defend by fighting what they so firmly believed.

1. RURAL NOSTALGIA

New Hope, by Ruth Suckow

How did the village of New Hope get its name? What symbolism is attached to this name and how important is this to the story?

Contrast the opening and closing scenes of the book, both of which show the children at the railroad station.

How effective is the device of showing the life of the town through the eyes of Delight and Clarence?

What do these two magical years of knowing the Greenwood family do for Clarence Miller? Discuss the games played by the children.

What role did church and religious activities hold in the life of New Hope? Note the importance of such seasonal celebrations as the Harvest Festivals and May Day.

How does the author give a "period" feeling to the 1900's? Check the use of costumes, customs, historical events, speech patterns, thought patterns in creating the illusion of a past epoch.

Compare the characters of the two fathers, Rev. Mr. Greenwood and Dave Miller. What were their relationships to their respective families? To the community?

Study the author's handling of Rev. Greenwood's first sermon, also of the first funeral in the new community.

Read the scene with the women of the town sitting in the warm Miller kitchen and talking about their neighbors (p. 183). Does this give another side of the community life?

Describe the Harper family and their feeling of aloofness from the town. How did the Miller girl catch the attention of the Harper son?

What did people from "outside" think of New Hope? Note the attitude of Aubrey Broadwater when he came back home.

Why did the minister decide to leave New Hope?

Additional Reading:

The Folks, by Ruth Suckow.

Country People, by Ruth Suckow.

One Foot in Heaven, by Hartzell Spence.

Get Thee Behind Me, by Hartzell Spence.

2. A MAN AND HIS SONS

Floods of Spring, by Henry Bellamann

Characterize Peter Kettring, pointing out the forces in his life that made him wish to live sufficient unto himself and which later made him fail so miserably in his relationship with his two sons.

Kettring's neighbor, Michael Janek, said of him: "When one is hard all over like that, nothing comes out of the heart any more, and nothing goes in. The hand becomes hard, but the heart should never be so." Is this a fair statement?

Why did Kettring refuse to send his son David to college? Is the usually passive Savina convincing when she gives her son money and tells him to leave home?

Notice the author's lyric descriptions of the Missouri countryside. Compare that style with his *King's Row*, which was almost clinical.

How does the love between David and Jaska differ from the romance of Robby and Laurel Sandifer?

Does Robby inherit his poetic nature from his mother or his father? How deeply does the tragedy of Robby and Laurel cut?

Discuss the attitude of Peter toward the river that runs by his farm. The attitude of Savina. Does her blind fear of the floods bring about her own destruction?

In the end of the novel do you feel that David closely resembles his father in wanting "to begin building from the bottom up?"

What influence does the Civil War have upon Peter Kettring? Upon his Missouri neighbors? Upon young David?

Additional Reading :

King's Row, by Henry Bellamann.

Island in the Corn, by John Selby.

Carry Me Back, by Rebecca Yancey Williams.

YOU CAN GO HOME AGAIN!

Thomas Wolfe, the South's greatest contribution to contemporary literature, expressed his own deep-seated philosophy of life in the title of his final novel—*You Can't Go Home Again*. Neither physically nor spiritually was he able to return to the scenes and the beliefs of his Carolina boyhood.

Two other young writers who left their Carolina homes for creative adventures in the great world outside have recently returned home in their writings, and have looked sharply but lovingly at the land that gave them birth. Sam Byrd grew up in Mount Olive, North Carolina, moved to Florida in the days of the boom, and finally went to New York, where he played Dude Lester, Jeter's half-witted son, in *Tobacco Road* for its seven-year run on Broadway. Ben Robertson is from the hill country of South Carolina's Piedmont section. He, too, went away from home, working in New York during the depression of 1932, landing a job on the spectacular newspaper, *PM*, and going abroad to witness the terrific bombing of England in 1940.

Now each of these Southerners has come home again, to revisit old haunts and playgrounds and family abodes. Each has written a book about what he saw in the South, about what he feels when he comes home again. Sam Byrd's book is called *Small Town South* and is published by Houghton Mifflin Company as a prize book in the same "Life-in-America" series which brought out Agnes Morley Cleveland's *No Life for a Lady* and Donald Culross Peattie's *The Road of a Naturalist*.

Ben Robertson's book is *Red Hills and Cotton*, published by Alfred A. Knopf in a series on "The American Scene," which has already presented volumes on Georgia, Connecticut, Vermont and other sections of the United States.

These two pictures of life in the South are interestingly similar. Both Byrd and Robertson look back on the South with nostalgic remembrance. Both of them can look critically and discerningly at the South's problems today and the South's failure to solve these problems. Both point out that the South is long on talk and short on action. "It's the besetting sin of the South, maybe, the small town anyway; too much talk and too little

do," concludes Byrd. "We talk—we talk and we talk," says Robertson.

And finally, both of them would like nothing better than to end their days in the South that gave them birth, on the land that their fathers knew, in the countryside and among the people they love and have loved for generations.

1. MRS. BYRD'S LITTLE BOY COMES HOME

Small Town South, by Sam Byrd

Sketch Sam Byrd's life prior to his recent trip to North Carolina and Florida. Do you think his childhood experiences and his years in New York on the stage have fitted him to write an objective study of the South?

Why was he coming home again and what did he expect to find?

Describe Sam Byrd's adventures "looking for the Lesters" whom he had portrayed in Erskine Caldwell's famous *Tobacco Road*. Did he discover the counterpart of the Caldwell characters?

To what does he attribute the general failure of most of the people in his old community? Is he interested in analyzing the social and economic developments of the town? What does he say about the strawberry markets?

Read the story of his visit to the family barbecue and his encounter with the "child bride."

Discuss the following paragraph concerning the kinfolks at the barbecue: "There were no great white columns in front of their house, but they owned it and it was theirs and last year the barns had been repainted. You felt the devotion of these people for each other when you sat down at their table with them. These are the people, and theirs is the land and this right of theirs to love each other and to own these things that are theirs is what Americans fight for. Theirs is the Democracy."

Do you find his writing warm and vivid? Note such phrases as "Now don't she look just like a bale of cotton that didn't sell!"

What effects of the great prosperity boom and subsequent depression did Byrd find when he went to the Onora Valley in Florida? Do you think his chapter on "Children of the Boom" explains a period of American life?

Do you find his characters real? Compare the two men who were bank presidents—Mayor Simon Rivers and old Mr. Preston. Discuss Miss Sophia, "social worker extraordinary," and her experiences with people on relief.

What did he learn about the tourist cabin trade in Florida? Do you think his findings on that subject are typical of other sections of America? Has the gasoline and tire shortage brought to an end that particular phase of Americana?

Summarize Sam Byrd's conclusions about his two former homes in the South. Does he approach the topic from an emotional or an intellectual point of view?

Additional Reading:

Tobacco Road, by Erskine Caldwell.

Mud on the Stars, by Wm. Bradford Huie.

South of the Potomac, by Virginius Dabney.

2. FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT LOOKS BACK

Red Hills and Cotton, by Ben Robertson

Ben Robertson was born in South Carolina in 1905. After studying Journalism at the University of Missouri he worked on newspapers in Honolulu, Australia and New York. During the Battle of Britain he was English correspondent for *PM* and more recently has been reporting in the Orient. Does this background give him an objective point of view about the South?

"We are farmers, all Democrats and Baptists," writes Robertson, "a strange people, complicated and simple and proud and religious and family-loving, a divorceless, Bible-reading murdersome lot of folks, all of us rich in ancestry and steeped in tradition and emotionally quick on the trigger." Is this description characteristic of the South?

Note his enthusiasm for country sights, sounds, foods, amusements recalled from South Carolina childhood. Read his accounts of possum hunting, family reunions, cotton picking, appearance of the countryside (p. 134-140).

Discuss the strong family ties of the Robertsons. Does the author successfully depict his Grandfather Bowen (p. 74-78), his other grandfather (p. 92-97), his grandmother who declared that "Yankees are just pigtracks," his great-aunt Narcissa (p. 168-201)?

From the stories he tells of Margit, Aunt Coot, Bill and Mary, what is his attitude toward the race problem in the South?

What role does cotton play in the life of the Southern Piedmont? What did the Robertsons think about industry? About the Live-at-Home programs? About banks and merchants?

"My kinfolks did not live in magnolia groves with tall white columns to hold up the front porches," he says. "We did not care for magnolias—they were swampy." The author sketches the conflict between the "pretentious" low-country planters and the hill farmers. What effect did this have on the history of the South?

Why does Robertson think the South has remained so conscious of the Civil War? What influences in his youth imbued in him this awareness?

What were the effects of the depression on the hill country and the Robertsons? What is their opinion of the New Deal? Their reaction to the present war?

What does Robertson expect to happen to his country and his kinfolks in the future? What do you think of his hopes for "an American state that will be ruled by the Northern mind and guided by the Southern heart?"

Additional Reading:

The Mind of the South, by W. J. Cash.

A Southerner Discovers the South, by Jonathan Daniels.

I Saw England, by Ben Robertson.

WOMEN WITH SURVIVAL VALUE

Now, more than at any time since the reading and writing of novels began, a world crisis is demanding drastic and fundamental changes in the life of women everywhere. Yet nowhere does one find any appreciable tendency to have woman relinquish her ancient functions of sweetheart, wife, mother, and homemaker. Not to fail in the great task at hand and still maintain her feminine prerogatives means that the contemporary woman must develop survival value, the basic integrity required to see the thing through. Therefore we are particularly interested now in observing the way in which two American women, in widely separated communities and in different periods of our national life, dealt with their crucial problems.

Drivin' Woman begins in the conventional style of most novels of the Civil War and Reconstruction, with an impoverished Southern beauty transformed by recent hardships into the prime mover on a Virginia plantation. The plot even thickens in the accepted manner by having the Yankees burn the house and the heroine confronted with the necessity of murder to preserve her sister's honor. But having produced a lover of incalculable charm for the unpredictable America Moncure and having given the reader a glimpse of North Carolina's infant tobacco business in the person of "Tugger" Blake, the story jumps the groove. From here on Elizabeth Pickett Chevalier leads the reader a merry chase over several states and through the mazes of romantic adventure and high finance.

The heroine's life among her distant cousins on Tuckahoe Ridge, Mason County, Kentucky, provides excellent history of a region not greatly affected by the disasters of the war. History, however, is entirely incidental to the thrilling romance and marriage of "Merry" Moncure and Fant Annable, a black sheep among the cousins who had visited the Moncures in Virginia while returning from the war. Her personal suffering after her discovery of his true profession as river-boat gambler seems cosmically important to the reader. After her husband's death America becomes intimately involved in the struggle of the small tobacco farmers against the Trust, which Tugger and his associates have formed. These latter chapters contain some of the most illuminat-

ing socio-economic history to be found in any American novel, and appropriately culminate in the Supreme Court's decision in 1911 which outlawed the Tobacco Trust.

Emily Blair, who enters the reader's heart from Rachel Field's compelling novel, *And Now Tomorrow*, is quite different in her appeal. In her resolute facing of a new day as negotiable and good without discounting the joy or pain of the old, she may well be a source of courage to other women faced with radical changes in their own lives.

Born into the limited aristocracy of a New England textile town in the early 1900's, Emily never wholly forgets that her beautiful Polish mother was a mill girl from the wrong side of the river, stubbornly chosen by her father, Elliott Blair. He further scandalized the family by turning his back on the Peace-Pipe Textile Mills founded by his grandfather, and becoming an artist. After his wife's death in Paris he brought Emily and Janice, his two young daughters, home to Blairstown, to be reared in the Blair tradition by his sister Emily and brother Wallace.

The years of Emily's girlhood are telescoped to focus attention on her love affair with Harry Collins, young official of the family mills. This marriage is first postponed by the crash of 1929 and resultant financial and labor difficulties. Then came the great blow; Emily became gravely ill with meningitis, which left her deaf. Her struggle to overcome this handicap and to maintain the appearance of her engagement to Harry makes a poignant experience for the reader, against the background of increasing labor strife in the mills. This is further complicated by the tragic death of young Jo Kelly, childhood friend of the Blair girls and grandson of the family gardener, who had been taking an active part in the workers' struggle.

Emily's personal triumphs over physical and emotional disaster fittingly reflect the integrity and vitality we had come to expect of Rachel Field. *And Now Tomorrow* constitutes an excellent testament to the author, who died while the book was being published.

1. IN SPITE OF HELL AND HIGH WATER

Drivin' Woman, by Elizabeth Pickett Chevalier

Briefly describe post-war life at Golden Hill. Sketch in words your idea of America Moncure. How closely does she resemble Scarlett O'Hara? Do

you think her early personal introduction to violence makes the later events of her life possible and plausible to her?

Give an account of Tugger Blake's business excursions into Virginia and his first relations with the Moncure family. Does Mrs. Chevalier's description of the early days of the tobacco industry tally with your own information about it?

Comment on the character of Fant Annable. Do you find him sufficiently charming to justify Merry's early risks and later sacrifices? Discuss her native stubbornness and persistent sense of guilt as factors in making her a "drivin' woman." Would you consider her a selfish mother?

Using the information so entertainingly given by Mrs. Chevalier, describe the following areas of life in the United States during the last quarter of the nineteenth century: Wall Street and Fifth Avenue; Tuckahoe Ridge in Mason County, Kentucky; the Old South; the river towns on the Ohio and Mississippi, e.g., St. Louis, Cincinnati, New Orleans.

What is a tobacco "break"? Discuss the careers of Stone Moncure and Tugger Blake as they reveal two elements in the great struggle against the Tobacco Trust. Trace the development of the Equity Society and comment on its tactics in dealing with the Wall Street capitalists; with local growers. Do you find Tugger's appearance in America's kitchen too melodramatic for even *Drivin' Woman*? Does the Supreme Court decision strike you as an anti-climax?

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer has paid \$75,000 for *Drivin' Woman*. Do you think it will make a good movie?

Additional Reading:

Night Shift, by Maritta Wolff.

Tobacco Tycoon, by John K. Winkler.

2. YEARS PAST AND LIFE TO COME

And Now Tomorrow, by Rachel Field

Contrast briefly the tumult in the external world where *Drivin' Woman* begins and the serene and steady look into an intensely personal history which characterizes the opening chapters of *And Now Tomorrow*. Do you find Emily Blair's introspection a sound literary device for making her life real and vital to the reader?

Give an account of the Blair family history up to the time of Emily's engagement to Harry Collins. Have you known in your own experience a family-owned mill comparable to the Peace-Pipe Industries? A woman like Aunt Em? A girl who resembled Janice? A labor leader like young Jo Kelly? A doctor of whom Dr. Weeks reminds you?

Does Miss Field's account of Emily's deafness give you a clear understanding of what such an affliction would mean to a girl in love? Do you blame Harry and Janice for falling in love with each other or does it seem almost inevitable under the circumstances?

Discuss the labor situation at the Peace-Pipe Mills. Do you feel that

Emily understood the causes or possible cures of these economic difficulties? Is her full intellectual understanding important to the story or does her somewhat sentimental concept of what goes on contribute to her reality as a person?

Does Merek Vance seem more interesting and more romantic than Harry Collins? Is this because of the glamor which often clings to a young doctor, or do you find more personal reasons for his charm and strength?

Comment on Emily's realism and courage as the modern counterpart of those qualities which enabled her great-grandparents to succeed in their day.

Additional Reading:

The Song of Bernadette, by Franz Werfel.

Norma Ashe, by Susan Glaspell.

The Prodigal Women, by Nancy Hale.

AMERICAN PUBLIC FIGURE

If America's boasted democracy is worth fighting to save, then it must be a democracy which works—or can be made to work—successfully at home. In these war years serious American authors are examining the practical aspects of the democracy they cherish.

James Gould Cozzens in *The Just and Unjust* traces a murder trial through the court at Childerstown, but more than that he shows the American judicial system at work. He shows how justice is sought in a democracy, what steps are taken by the just to insure it, by the unjust to evade it. Abner Coates, the young assistant district attorney, is a conscientious, honest American who believes in democracy and wants to see local government not dictated by politicians but directed by the people and their duly elected leaders.

Another story of the development of an American "public figure" is Clyde Brion Davis's *Follow the Leader*, an account of the growth of Charles Martel from the time he was six years old, sitting in the church at Pabuloma, Missouri, until December 11, 1941, when he is called upon by the President of the United States to fill an important post in the war effort.

Both of these novels look at the American public figure. One examines the lawyer and his world of courts and trials and justice. The other examines the successful business man and his world of ledgers, deals, public relations. Is this America worthy of the great fight being waged to preserve it? Are these leaders true to the principles of democracy?

1. JUSTICE AND THE LAW

The Just and the Unjust, by James Gould Cozzens

Does the murder trial provide the principal theme of this book? What is its use in the development of the novel? Do you feel any sympathy for the defendants?

Note the meticulous care with which the author builds up the atmosphere of the courts. Do you feel that the judges, jurors, lawyers, spectators are genuine?

Would you consider Abner Coates a good lawyer? Does he make a satisfactory hero for the novel? What qualities does he lack?

Describe Abner's father, the old judge. Is he a vivid and forceful character in spite of his affliction? How does the author succeed in making him convincing?

What do you think of Bonnie? Of Bonnie's mother? Through them do you get additional light on Abner Coates?

How does Cozzens build up the life of the town? Note the scene at the Black Cat "joint," also the nocturnal ride down the river.

Do you feel that Harry Wurts, the lawyer for the defense, is a more vital and attractive person than Abner Coates? Contrast the two men and show what part they play in the novel.

Note the minor cases that come up in court, the boy charged with manslaughter, the high school principal who made advances to the school girls. Why are these plots introduced?

Is Abner's dislike for the politician Jesse Gearheart justified? What role does a man like Gearheart play in American democracy?

Read the advice old Judge Coates gives Abner at the conclusion of the book. How does this fit in with the theme of *The Just and the Unjust*?

Additional Reading:

Sun in Capricorn, by Hamilton Basso.

The Last Adam, by James Gould Cozzens.

2. LOCAL BOY MAKES GOOD

Follow the Leader, by Clyde Brion Davis

Trace the career of Charles Martel from the bicycle shop to the White House visit. To what do you attribute his success?

Describe the Martel family. What traits of Sophie Martel did her son inherit? Of Henry Martel?

Read Henry Martel's experiences with the Ku Klux Klan. What do they reveal about his character?

The author has skilfully created a background of the 1900's for the opening section of his book. Notice the details by which he fixes the time in the mind of the readers.

How effective is his device of inserting short sketches of current events to set the stage for certain periods of time? Do you think this adds to or detracts from the progress of the novel?

Why did Charles Martel never do anything about his love for the girl next door? Is his shyness convincing?

Did Charles seek to get into the war in 1917? Describe his experiences in France and their effect on his thinking and his actions.

What changed Charles from an ineffectual dreamer to the successful man of action? Does his metamorphosis seem genuine or is it manipulated by the author?

How much of Martel's success was due to his "public relations" expert? Describe Irving Radetsky and his role in American democracy.

What kind of leader do you think Charles Martel would make? Would he be a satisfactory presidential candidate in 1944 or 1948 if the country "needs a business administration"?

Additional Reading:

The Anointed, by Clyde Brion Davis.

The Great American Novel, by Clyde Brion Davis.

Sam, by John Selby.

THREE WRITERS LOOK AT WAR

The three utterly dissimilar books in this chapter have a common thread running through them that makes a joint discussion intriguing. In his *Only One Storm* Granville Hicks tells of a New England intellectual who leaves a successful New York advertising business and returns to the small Massachusetts town of Pendleton to work and to live. In *The Copper Pot* Oliver La Farge describes a gifted painter in the old French Quarter of New Orleans. And in that best-selling favorite, *See Here, Private Hargrove* a young North Carolina newspaperman gives his impressions of life in the army.

Here you have an intellectual, an artist, a soldier. The scenes are a New England village, the city of New Orleans, the Army post at Fort Bragg. What is there in common? Three men—talented, thinking American writers—are looking at the American way of life as it may be affected by the war and are recording their observations.

In the Hicks novel Canby Kittredge had friends who were members of the Communist Party in the United States—and he also had conservative friends who were more nearly allied to the Fascists. As for Kittredge himself, he was trying to work out his political and intellectual beliefs for himself—and in the actual workings of American democracy in a small Massachusetts town he thought he had found the solution.

Tom Hartshorn, artist, is the hero of La Farge's novel, and through his painting Hartshorn was learning to find satisfaction and fulfilment—when the war came and changed his personal plans. "Private" Hargrove went into the Army from his newspaper job, and as he watched thousands of fellow Americans learning to adjust themselves to a new life, and to meet new and unusual demands upon them, he found such a warmly "human" method of describing his comrades that his book soon became the most popular account of this war's training camps.

1. DEMOCRACY AT WORK

Only One Storm, by Granville Hicks

What is the significance of the title? Relate it to the intellectual problem faced by Canby Kittredge.

Why did Kittredge decide to return to the small town of Pendleton? Sketch his family background, his personal experiences prior to this return.

Pay particular attention to the conversation in *Only One Storm*, for reviewers have considered it the most stimulating and provocative "talk" of the year.

Does the author give impartial presentation to the varying points of view held by different characters? What are the central beliefs of Wallace Burgin, Uncle Henry Carter, Rev. Perry Bradford, Robin Ward, Ralph Baxter?

Discuss the characterization of Christine Kittredge. Is she convincing as a human being or does she seem too good to be true?

Why did Kittredge allow himself to become involved in the strike called in a neighboring town? How does this situation fit into the story?

Study and discuss democracy at work in the town of Pendleton, pointing out the various political camps, the use of the town meeting, the election.

What is Kittredge's attitude toward the war and how do his ideas develop? What do you think he would be doing in 1942?

2. PORTRAIT OF AN ARTIST

The Copper Pot, by Oliver La Farge

In the first chapter do you feel that Tom Hartshorn is really a painter? How does the author build this impression? Note how Hartshorn looks at light and shadow, color, movement, lines.

When he fails to win the coveted Goldwater Prize, why does he call himself "young man afraid of his brush"?

What influence did women have on Hartshorn's life and work, particularly Rita, the rich Estelle Garney, the beautiful Frances Warren?

How well do you come to know his friends—Ida Helm, who kept the art gallery and supply store; Pete Ferrati, the writer; Bill Cooper, the Charleston aristocrat now given over to an alcoholic haze; Jimmy Danielson, the Oklahoma etcher who drank to kill his pain; Jean de Vanard, impoverished Creole guide?

Do you think the sudden loss of his income had anything to do with Hartshorn's artistic success? Note his work on the mural in the seamen's hangout and his Christmas card etchings.

Why were his paintings of "The Copper Pot" and "The Jam on Royal Street" superior to his earlier work?

What is he like aside from being an artist? Note his attitude toward his friends, toward women, toward the Negro, toward war.

Judging from the code he had worked out for himself at the end of the book, what do you think he considered his role in the life of America today and tomorrow?

3. YOU'RE IN THE ARMY NOW!

See Here, Private Hargrove, by Marion Hargrove

What are the qualities of this book which placed it on the national best-seller list, gave it a spread in *Life* and the *Reader's Digest* and sold it to the movies?

Do you think the author's work as feature writer on *The Charlotte News* prepared him for writing this book?

What elements of humor do you find in the book? Does the author invite the reader to laugh at him? What use does he make of the corporals and sergeants who try to direct his efforts?

Does Hargrove learn anything from the Army? And does the Army learn anything from Private Hargrove?

Discuss Private Hargrove's reactions to medical examinations, K. P. duty, guard duty (read p. 37-39!), morale (p. 87-90), and helping the good earth (p. 90-93).

Do you think Hargrove's account of the draftee's life would be reassuring to the families of other men in the service? Note the great amount of good advice and serious reporting of just what the soldier does every day that he managed to mix in with his anecdotes and wisecracks.

What are his impressions of the soldiers' reaction to Pearl Harbor?

POETRY IN WAR-TIME

Reams of paper still roll through the presses of the English-speaking world, and much of it comes out covered with opinions and comment and information about the War. Poets writing in war-time cannot fail to be strongly influenced by the great struggle now engaging the full attention of the world, because poetry by its very nature is concerned with the meaning of human experience.

Enjoyment of the poetry being written in these times—perhaps even the limited understanding of it—relates directly to what one thinks poetry is. For that reason it is particularly helpful to read Max Eastman's charming article which the editors of the *Saturday Review of Literature* call "Poetic Justice in the Art of Calling Names." His analysis of our American preoccupation with the practical is especially timely, now that we are hearing intensely practical men call for use of the imagination, and the inspiration of great ideas, to help win the War.

Modern Poetry and the Tradition by Cleanth Brooks is invaluable in bridging the fearsome gap between most of the *Golden Treasury's* contents and the intellectual exercises which frequently appear in the writings of our modern poets.

American literature was made richer in 1942 by the publication of *The Witness Tree*, Robert Frost's first new book of verse in six years. Called "the dean of American poetry," Frost is claimed by several schools of criticism, though not ranked alike by them all. Several poems in the recent volume stand with his best; among them are "Come In," which many readers will find as charming as "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening," "To a Young Wretch," who cut down the poet's cherished spruce for a Christmas tree, and "The Gift Outright," a timely poem on American history.

Genevieve Taggard's *Long View* is one we are all heartened to take with her, the title poem being perhaps the best in the volume. She knows the metaphysical poets, and in *Circumference* has compiled one of the best anthologies of their work, but in recent years her own trend is toward idealism and simple imagery with a strong American slant. A believer rather than a critic, she is sometimes accused of sentimentality, especially in her propaganda poems.

Poetry about the War we all think we want to read, and we do. We are interested in it and moved by it; much of it is good verse,

but present judgment finds as yet no great poetry written on the War.

A study of Stephen Spender's poems written between 1934 and 1942 rather candidly reveals the dilemmas and difficulties faced by the poet who seeks to maintain his integrity in a world where all experience is subservient to what we term "the war effort." *Ruins and Visions* records with exceptional clarity Spender's reactions to the Spanish Civil War, in which he and many other English literary leftists were involved, and includes also personal poetry not directly related to military and political events.

More spontaneous and topical are two recent works by American women, *Wake Island* by Muriel Rukeyser and *The Murder of Lidice* by Edna St. Vincent Millay. For verse of this kind both these thin volumes contain some unusually good poetry.

Poems of This War is an anthology of war poems from England written by young men and women, many of whom are personally involved in war service. Though uneven in quality, as all such compilations must be, it is illuminating and rewarding to any reader. Alun Lewis also lets us into the soldier's mind and heart by his competent and often beautiful work in *Raiders' Dawn*.

1. WHAT IS POETRY?

"Poetic Justice in the Art of Calling Names"—*Saturday Review of Literature*, Oct. 24, 1942

Modern Poetry and the Tradition, by Cleanth Brooks

State and discuss Mr. Eastman's position on the American attitude toward poetry. Do you think he is justified in saying: "As a nation we don't even know how to read poems, much less write them"?

What does Mr. Eastman say poetry is? Do you agree with him? Have you read any "modern poetry" in the sense Mr. Brooks uses the term? You will find his first three chapters and pages 69-76 particularly helpful in analyzing the differences between traditional and modern poetry.

Do you agree with the modern concept of what constitutes proper subject matter and diction for poetry? With Mr. Brooks's theory about the weakness of propaganda art?

2. POETRY PUBLISHED IN WAR-TIME

A Witness Tree, by Robert Frost

Long View, by Genevieve Taggard

Wilbert Snow, who reviewed Mr. Frost's book in the *New York Herald Tribune*, said: "He has given us enough first-rate poems here to satisfy

the most exacting critic and keep us all in his debt." Does this seem just praise?

Read aloud the following poems: "Come In," "I Could Give All to Time," "The Gift Outright," and "To a Young Wretch." Do you find these poems intelligible?

Note Frost's comment on the Senate in "On Our Sympathy with the Under Dog" and his whimsy on the causes of war in "The Literate Farmer and the Planet Venus."

Genevieve Taggard is a great believer in the future of America. Do you catch her enthusiasm from reading "First" and "Long View"? Is she too uncritical? In this connection read "Ode in Time of Crisis" and the group entitled "To the Negro People."

Comment on the form and content of her radio poem, "An Afternoon, Smoking, Writing, Swimming." Do you understand "Sleepy Blues: Night Driving"?

Discuss briefly her notes on writing texts for music and read aloud the one you like best.

Additional Reading:

Natalie Maisie and Pavilastukay, by John Masefield.

3. TOPICAL WAR POETRY

Ruins and Visions, by Stephen Spender

Wake Island, by Muriel Rukeyser

The Murder of Lidice, by Edna St. Vincent Millay

Stephen Spender has been war-conscious longer than most of us through his intense concern with the Spanish Civil War. Note his reactions to this experience as expressed in the following poems: "Exiles from Their Land, History Their Domicile" (an intellectual translates his convictions into action); "Two Armies," and "Port Bou."

Would you call "An Elementary School Class Room in a Slum," "The Marginal Field," and "The Fates" propaganda poetry? Are you convinced by it? If you already agree with the ideas involved, are you moved by it?

Does Muriel Rukeyser's *Wake Island* give you a new appreciation of that action in relation to the war as a whole? Read aloud the excellent lines on page 12, beginning "The world's the only island."

In your local library look up the newspaper accounts of the destruction of Lidice on June 10, 1942. Then read Miss Millay's poem. Does her version of what took place "illuminate" the experience for you?

Additional Reading:

Poems of This War, edited by Patricia Ledward and Colin Strang.
Raiders' Dawn, by Alun Lewis.

AFTER THE WAR—WHAT?

In the stress of war and the agony of battle America is thinking. We ask why the nations of the world have reached the present crisis. We ask what the future of our world may be. We look back to the last war, which we won, and then admit to ourselves that we "lost the peace." Finally, we determine in our thoughts and in our will that the peace to come will be a just and lasting one.

Vice-President Henry A. Wallace and Editor Herbert Agar have been particularly apt in expressing many of the points that Americans are thinking today. It was Wallace who said: "Some have spoken of the 'American century.' I say that the century on which we are entering—the century which will come of this war—can be and must be the century of the common man." And in his excellent book, *A Time for Greatness*, Mr. Agar declares: "We have learned in grief what happens to a world that strays too far from its moral purpose." Turning from the past to the future, he predicts: "If the American idea prevails, the future will offer man some dignity and some chance for self-improvement. If the American idea is presently extinguished, the future will be dark for uncountable years."

Arresting and provocative is *Prelude to Victory*, which author James B. Reston terms "not a book so much as it is an outburst of bad temper against careless thinking; bureaucratic officials; selfish 'special groups'; irresponsible citizens, newspapers, and politicians; people who think wars don't really settle anything; people who want to 'get back to normal'; people who think time and money are on our side; and people who are afraid to win because of post-war problems."

A timely and serious discussion of the post-war world is presented in *Conditions of Peace* by Edward Hallett Carr, Professor of International Politics in the University College of Wales. He, too, believes this present crisis a moral one and calls for a new faith in the political and economic realms, a faith which will lay "more stress on obligations than on rights, on services to be rendered to the community than on benefits to be drawn from it."

From such books as these we Americans can develop our own ideas, stimulate our own thinking and consequently make up that

great mass of "public opinion" which has too often been inarticulate but which must speak out during the war and after the war if we are to obtain the kind of new world which is compatible with our American "explosive idea" of democracy and our American dream of freedom.

1. THE AMERICAN WAY

A Time for Greatness, by Herbert Agar

Prelude to Victory, by James B. Reston

Compare the essential themes of these two books. What is Reston's "prelude to victory" and why does Agar consider this "a time for greatness"?

Discuss Reston's statement that "this war is the climax and result of an era of irresponsibility" and Agar's assumption that the war is a result of the world's having "strayed too far from its moral purpose." Do you think this belief is generally held by the American people?

What do both Reston and Agar consider the significant characteristics of the "American way of life"? What do they have to say about President Roosevelt's "four freedoms"?

Explain Agar's conception of the "explosive idea." What is his theory about equality? Discuss his statements about the Negro problem and the tenant farmer problem in the South. What does he say about labor relations?

Reston calls for "something outside and above reason, something which we call spirit or faith." In addition to his "moral purpose," Agar demands "a high seriousness." What is the significance of this?

What is the opinion of Congress held by both these writers? Agar says: "The people ask for the bread of a true democracy, and they are given a stone which is not only inedible but moldy." What do they say of the war administration?

Discuss the "illusions" which Reston uses for chapter headings and which he declares are keeping us from winning the war.

What do both commentators say about America's relations with England? With Russia?

What do they say about the role which the average man and woman in America can play now in winning the war and later in winning the peace?

2. THE WAY OF TOMORROW

The Price of Free World Victory, by Henry A. Wallace

Conditions of Peace, by Edward Hallett Carr

Discuss Wallace's statement that the idea of freedom is derived from the Bible and his belief that "through the leaders of the Nazi revolution,

Satan is now trying to lead the common man of the whole world back into slavery and darkness."

What are the four duties of the people which correspond to the famous "four freedoms," according to Wallace?

Read carefully Wallace's thesis that "the world moves straight ahead" when "the freedom-loving people march, the farmers have an opportunity to buy land at reasonable prices, etc." What do you think of this description of his Utopia? Do you think that the Vice-President's speech boosted the morale of the peoples of the United Nations? Compare it with other war-and-peace speeches made by Roosevelt and Willkie.

How does Professor Carr trace the development of the present war? Does he think it might have been prevented?

"Inequality and unemployment—unemployment both of man-power and of material resources—are the crying scandals of our age," he says. What remedies does he suggest?

Notice that Mr. Carr, like Reston and Agar, believes that "a new faith in a new moral purpose is required to reanimate our political and economic system."

To what does he attribute the "crisis of democracy"? Explain his statements on "the economic crisis" and "the moral crisis."

Sketch his significant ideas on the world after this war. What role does he assign to England? What does he say of the fate of Germany in the future? What kind of "new Europe" does he foresee? Analyze his plans for the European Reconstruction Corporation and the European Planning Authority.

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