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NEW BOOKS

ASPECTS OF CIVILIZATION:

A Review Article. By K. M. Hamilton.

READINGS IN WESTERN CIVILIZATION. Selected and Edited by George H. Knowles and Rixford K. Synder. J. B. Lippincott Company. 1951. Chicago.

ENGLISH CHARACTER AND THE ENGLISH LITERARY TRADITION. By Malcolm W. Wallace. University of Toronto Press. 1952.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH HUMOR. By Louis Cazamian. Duke University Press. 1952.

AESTHETIC STUDIES. ARCHITECTURE AND POETRY. By Katherine Gilbert. Duke University Press. 1952.

The modern substitute for the Greek, 'Know thyself', seems to be, 'Know thy culture.' As higher education more and more tends to lose itself in narrow specialization, so training in the business of seeing life steadily and seeing it whole becomes an obvious necessity. Unless we have some understanding of the roots of that civilization of which we are a part, we shall degenerate into technically well-equipped illiterates and diploma-collecting barbarians. So much is generally agreed. But to diagnose the disease is one thing and to find a remedy another. It would be comforting to discover an infallible method: 'How to become Fully Civilized in Ten Easy Lessons. In the meanwhile, we make do with tentative and rather self-conscious efforts to stimulate interest in 'cultural values' and 'the history of ideas,' like visitors arriving in a historic city for a business conference who can spare just half-an-hour for a hurried scamper round the famous art gallery there—if there is not time to become familiar with the exhibits, at least there will probably be an illustrated catalogue to take away.

Such a catalogue is provided by *Readings in Western Civilization*, which emanates from Stanford University. The compilers say that it is intended for use as source-book (not as text-book) in connection with courses in the history of Western Civilization. It consists of thirteen sections, leading from 'The Ancient Near East' to 'Contemporary Civilization', the sections containing a dozen or so moderately lengthy extracts apiece in English or English translation, and each separate item is prefaced by a brief introduction. Of course one book cannot contain everything, even in eight hundred and eighty-nine double column pages. No place has been found for Homer, Livy, Seneca, Boethius, Duns Scotus, Leonardo da Vinci, Cervantes, Shakespeare, Bacon, Descartes, Grotius, Spinoza, Diderot, Kant, or Freud. It is only surprising how much has been included. Aristarchus and Eratosthenes are here as well as Plato and Aristotle; Vasari as well as Machiavelli; Tetzel as well as Luther; Bossuet and Jeremy Taylor as well as Locke and Newton and Kropolkin as well as Darwin and Marx. Adam Smith, not visible at first glance, keeps company with Herman Melville and John Stuart Mill under a nineteenth-century heading. And among the important and all too inaccessible documents, from Magna Charta to the Charter of the United Nations,

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to be found here in whole or in part are the decrees of the Council of Trent, the Declaration of American Independence, the French Declaration of the Rights of Man, the Sadler Report of 1832, and the Communist Manifesto.

It is hardly possible to quarrel with such riches. Any questions which linger in our minds must concern the purpose which directed the undertaking, rather than the actual result. For instance, we might wonder why in the last two sections Hitler and Mussolini between them are allocated four items out of a total of eighteen; and we might suspect that some of the other items in these sections represent popular journalism rather than statements of historic importance. But the compilers are ready armed against any such merely academic objections. They explain (in the jargon favoured by so many authorities on culture) that the book is the result of an 'emphasis upon usability in discussion rather than full coverage of all phases of a culture.' No doubt class discussion, guided by the notes supplied telling the student what to note, will be lively. But discussion requires a certain background. What notion of 'the rich heritage in the field of literature' (the compilers' phrase) and of its contribution to civilization can be expected when Wordsworth's 'The Tables Turned' and 'We are Seven' must serve to represent the whole of the English Romantic movement? The danger plainly is that the study of civilization becomes a process analagous to skimming cream while remaining ignorant of the existence of cows. If 'usability' is to determine importance, the conception of learning as a discipline is abandoned in favour of the inadequate notion that any activity which can be given a dignified title is educational. The consequences for culture of this attitude are hardly reassuring. But it is probably unnecessary to follow these reflections through to their uncomfortable conclusions. A more gracious acknowledgement of the editors' labours would be to accept the *Readings* gratefully, without asking how or why, as an *omnium gatherum* of outstanding merit.

National character is nearly as elusive an entity as civilization and is obviously an important ingredient of the latter. Professor Wallace, adding to the distinguished line of Alexander Lectures at the University of Toronto, has taken this difficult theme to develop in *English Character and the English Literary Tradition.* If he does not open up any very novel line of thought, he writes persuasively and avoids too many references to that most mythical of all monsters, the 'typical Englishman'. He stresses the practical bent of the British peoples, their genius for government and their preoccupation with moral issues, which Europeans have unkindly called *cant.* And he expresses the conviction that this character still has a great contribution to make in the modern age of uncertainties and broken traditions. Undoubtedly the British way has generally been to subordinate literature to life and to value conduct more than aesthetics. But it is surely unnecessary to call in Sir Philip Sidney as a witness to English moral bias because he said that poetry should both instruct and please. That sentiment—a tag lifted straight from Horace—was after all a commonplace of Renaissance criticism.

Professor Wallace does not mention the Comic Spirit as one of the

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specific qualities of the English character which is a constant element in the nation's literature. Yet the judicious use of understatement, the dry comment which hides perspicuity under a mock-serious show of obtuseness, and the sheer delight in nonsense for nonsense sake are original ingredients in the formation of a literature of humour which is Britain's unique gift to the world. The famous French scholar, Louis Cazamian, enthusiastically recognizes humour as a true native growth, though he shows that it needed to be cross-fertilized with Gallic wit and high spirits to reach a full maturity. Wher *English Character and the English Literary Tradition* does not try to trace the English character farther back than the reign of Elizabeth I, *The Development of English Humor* finds the outline of the character—moralism and all—already evident in the Anglo-Saxon period. With fine discrimination, Professor Cazamian finds the humane and tolerant chacteristics of the English love of the ridiculous, with its self-criticism and its absence of malice, to be the complement of the Puritan strain in the nation and the inverted image of a serious philosophy of life. Apart from Mr. J. B. Priestley, Professor Cazamian has not had many rivals in this field, and none to attempt so systematic a study. Part I of this book first appeared in 1930 and took the historical survey up to Chaucer and his followers. Part II continues through the Shakespearean age to the Restoration and ends with a rapid survey of developments in the eighteenth century. The continuation is more lengthy than the first instalment and the air of being a little more laboured—comprehensive rather than intensive. Nevertheless it is a pity that we are not given a survey of the final flowering in the nineteenth century and after when, as the historian indicates, English humor was carried overseas and made a universal possession of Western Civilization. (Professors Knoles and Snyder, though they include Rabelais, have no space to spare—alas!—for Sterne, or Thomas Love Peacock, or Lewis Carroll, or even James Thurber.)

If the quality of its laughter is one of least definable aspects of a culture, architecture and poetry together give clear evidence of particular cultural achievement—how much of ancient Greece is summed up in the Homer and the Parthenon, how much of old France in Chatres and Ronsard! These two arts and their interrelation are the concern of some of the recent essays of Katherine Gilbert, collected in *Aesthetic Studies. Architecture and Poetry.* Though, as the authoress says, 'This little book must be shelved under *philosophy*', by the nature of the case most of these studies are slight, both in length and treatment. But a student of Western Civilization will find here a good deal to ponder over. A theme for fruitful discussion might well be: if you were editing a new edition of *Readings in Western Culture*, would you feel inclined to substitute, for Julian Huxley's 'The Biologist Looks at Man', Katherine Gilbert's 'Recent Poets on Man and and his Place?'

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THE BROWNS OF PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS: COLONIAL YEARS. by James B. Hedges. S. J. Reginald Saunders, Toronto. $8.00.

This is the first volume of a projected three-volume history of the Brown family. To those who, like myself, have lived for years in Rhode Island the book is almost a *Who's Who* of many of the well-known names of the State.

Someone once said that Rhode Island is the home of the otherwise minded. That remark was continually in my mind as I turned the pages of this book. Rhode Island was the first to start the War of the Revolution and the last to sign the Constitution. Even then she only signed it under pressure. The early Rhode Islanders were fierce individualists. They had a code of honor to which they rigorously adhered. This code might have differed somewhat from ours, but you could depend on it. It also differed among individual members of the Brown family, but such as it was each one clung to it no matter what. Moses Brown was a Quaker, and as such he fought the slave trade in all its forms; while on the other hand his brother John believed in slavery, and made all he could out of the traffic. It may also be a surprise to some of our modern Baptists that the First Baptist Church, still a landmark in Providence, was built through a lottery, and no one saw any harm in such a procedure. (The colonial Browns were mostly Baptists.)

The thing one notices most of all in the Brown family is the succession of able men. A strong father was never succeeded by a weak son. Down through the years, yes even to the present day and that takes us a lot farther than this volume, there has always been a strong Brown to carry on where the former generation left off.

In reading this volume one is soon conscious that this is really economic history. It is not history of the Brown family but a history of the Brown business, and the way that family through the years made its millions. This method of handling adds much to the value of the volume.

The Browns' code of ethics evidently did not extend to the Mother Country. Smuggling goods in without paying custom dues was just smart business, especially as it was very profitable to adhere to the code that taxation without representation was illegal.

The Browns asked no quarter and gave none. Also, and this is most important, they were able to change with changing times. In early colonial days they made candles from the head matter of whales which sold all over the world, also they had an iron foundry at Scituate. During the Revolution, when so many business houses failed, they simply changed their methods and still made money. When peace came they were ready to change again. They rarely got their fingers burned in any venture more than once. Their greatest difficulty was the absence of hard money in the colony. The devious ways they manipulated their trade to overcome that handicap is one of the most interesting parts of this history.

There are many lessons to be learned by the wise reader of today. In the first place the Browns were individualists. They neither asked for nor received government help. Secondly they had a strict code

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of ethics. Having given their word they stood behind it no matter what. Once, and this was perfectly legitimate according to their code, they tried to corner the market in Rhode Island tobacco. This was one of their failures. They tried to prove, not very convincingly, that they were acting for the good of the colony. This incident reminds us that a Brown of a later date joined with others to corner the rye market of the country, also with similar results.

All in all I think that Professor Hedges has not only added much to the history of his state, but has also made a notable contribution to economic history as a whole.

W. T. TOWNSEND

BROWSING AMONG WORDS OF SCIENCE. By T. H. Savory. Thrift Books (C. A. Watts & Co.) S. J. Saunders. Pp. 94. 0.25.

Not often do we find a scientist who is keenly interested in the development of words, and only too often etymologists are not well versed in science. Fortunately Mr. Savory knows both science and etymology, and the result is a thoroughly delightful and informative piece of work. Each branch of science has a chapter for its own interesting words. Occasionally a word will take the author into the literary fields, as when he discusses Dr. Johnson's remark that sailors and gluttons used the word turtle for tortoise, or when he ventures an explanation of why Elizabethan tapsters added lime to the sack. For those of us who despair of the spelling habits of the products of Canadian schools there is perhaps some comfort—if misery really likes company—in the weird specimens that Mr. Savory has garnered from his pupils in England: "devilery tube", "zooolligy," "highdrogin," and "respitry." (I still think, however, the honors go to my student who recently gave me "cilible.")

— BURNS MARTIN

THE LIBERAL ANGLICAN IDEA OF HISTORY. By Duncan Forbes. (Cambridge: At the University Press. Pp. X, 208. $4.00.)

Is there a philosophy of history, a pattern we can, to some extent at least, work out in advance or does all depend on chance? It was Vico's theory that had the greatest influence on the Liberal Anglicans. Shakespeare went half way when he wrote "There's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will." But he does not say that this divinity is foreknowable. Yet history has the great use that we can escape the pitfalls of the past if we are forewarned. Therefore I make the humble remark that we should probably have better laws if we elected more historians and less lawyers to parliament. Stanley one of the Liberal Anglicans, quoted the great lines, "Westward the Star of Empire held its course," but he seems to have forgotten that the earth is a sphere. What happens when the course of Empire makes the complete circle? Not yet, but it is getting there.

Let us also quote from Hare, another of the Liberal Anglicans. "If Nations in their youth are apt to err on the side of credulity, they

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are apt to err in their decline on the side of incredulity; which after all is only credulity saying "No," instead of . . . . "Yes."

The Deism of the 18th Century had many rebounds, the two best known are the Liberal Anglicans and the Oxford Movement. Those of us who have been brought up on Milman's *History of Latin Christianity* cannot help but wonder what would have happened if his group had set the pace for England instead of that led by Cardinal Newman. Perhaps there would not have been only 3,000,000 practicing Anglicans in England today. (Some are not going to like me for that suggestion.) Still here is another. How different everything might have been if Newman had only known German as well as Latin and Greek! But let us go back to the book itself.

This book is philosophy rather than history, and should be reviewed by a philosopher rather than by a historian. But the reviewer must be a philosopher who knows history. Here were men who were not only sincere Christians but who also firmly believed in a philosophy of history. You may not agree with them but you must respect them.

Mr. Forbes knew both the philosophy and the history of his period. He had the rare faculty, not too common in the so-called historians, of being able to live in his period. This is difficult, nay almost impossible, but at the same time imperative, if you are to interpret a past age, (the farther past the age the greater the difficulty), but our greatest historians have been able to do it. The lesser men see everything from the point where they themselves are standing. Scott's novels are the best examples of the latter. His mediaeval characters all thought and spoke as Scots of his own day. Mr. Forbes lives with his characters, and that is what makes the book a *must* for every serious student of 19th Century history; yes, and forevery philosopher.

W. T. TOWNSEND

THE WORLDLY MUSE. By A. J. M. Smith. George J. McLeod, Ltd. Pp. 388. $3.50.

SELECTED POEMS, OLD AND NEW. By Gilbert Thomas. George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. Pp. 111. 7/6.

To the making of anthologies there is no end. When one thinks this must be the last anthology, another one comes out, using very often the same material but in a slightly different arrangement. The present reviewer was not impressed when he found another anthology awaiting him, but after he had read the preface to Professor Smith's collection and noted the arrangement and the contents, he soon changed his mind. Here was something really fresh and stimulating. *The Worldly Muse* is an "anthology of serious light verse," a somewhat paradoxical sub-title that the compiler, however, justifies. To present a criticism of life, a poet need not be somber; indeed, from Chaucer down, English poets have been able to score many a point against life and society with laughter rather than chiding, and Professor Smith has drawn on just such poets. Then, too, popular, anonymous verse has always been free to be frank and merry; and here the com-

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piler has found good material Professor Smith suggests that the book might be read consecutively, instead of in the usual haphazard way of picking out the poems here and there; the excellent arrangement of the material supports this interesting and somewhat novel approach. One is grateful to Professor Smith for rescuing Moore's "Taking a Wife," for it shows a new and delightful side to that arch-sentimentalist. The present reviewer has only two complaints to register: the attempt to represent that perfect poem "The Rape of the Lock" by only one canto—as bad as trying to represent a symphony by one movement—and the ommission of Housman's "Good-bye, Young Man, Goodbye" as a companion piece to Shakepeare's "It was a Lover and His Lass."

Mr. Gilbert Thomas will be familiar to readers of *The Dalhousie Review* for his excellent article "The Dark Horse: Thomas Hardy" which appeared in the issue of January, 1951; many, too, will know him for his very fine study *William Cowper and the Eighteenth Century*. Indeed, his latest volume, *Selected Poems, New And Old* reveals clearly his kinship with Cowper. Both are gentle souls; both have a quiet, contemplative appreciation of nature; both are religious and reflective poets; and for both there is a danger of the high seriousness and the moral getting the better occasionally of the imaginative impulse. The poems in this volume are the work of more than forty years, during which time Mr. Thomas has published several volumes of poetry. Always there is quiet, perfect workmanship; Mr. Thomas has a fine musical ear and a good sense of metrical pattern and verse form. While the mood of most of the poems is reflective, there are a few light, amusing ones, like "The Futurist" and "The Ballade of a Publisher's Reader." Mr. Thomas's religion is a very simple, undenominational one, and so the poems get the essence of Christianity. This volume can be confidently recommended to all who like to read quiet, unassuming verse that enriches the spirit of the reader.

BURNS MARTIN

THE PREFIGURATIVE IMAGINATION OF JOHN KEATS. A Study of the Beauty-Truth Identification and its Implications. By Newell F. Ford. Stanford: Stanford University Press. 1951.

This monograph exhausts its subject. In the true spirit of research, Mr. Ford investigates what Keats understood by "truth" and "imagination," how his ideas worked out in practice, how they compared with those of his contemporaries and with his own at different periods. A clear-cut conclusion is impossible, since, as he observes, "Keats was not always faithful to the accepted usage of words." He appends a small concordance illustrating the poet's use of "truth," "ethereal," "empyreal," "sensations," "spiritual," "speculation," "abstract," "imagination," "fancy." These words appear often and with somewhat varied meaning in the poet's letters, which express his ideas; the poems express rather his emotions. He was not university-trained; in fact, he educated himself for the most part by an en-

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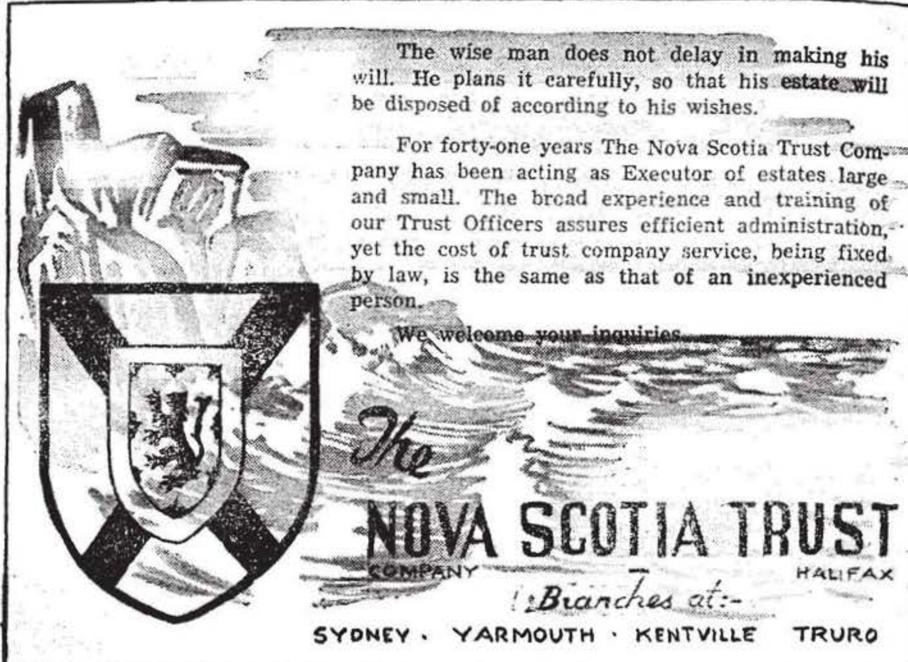
thusiastic reading of the poets. Hence, probably, the slight inconsistency in his use of terms.

Chapter one clarifies the sense in which Keats uses the word "truth." In Letter 31, written when he was twenty-two, he says, "What the imagination seizes as beauty must be truth . . . The imagination may be compared to Adam's dream—he awoke and found it truth." Later, in Letter 42, he speaks of "a regular stepping of the imagination towards a truth." The one "truth," as Mr. Ford points out, is "a visual glimpse of the future, *extensional* reality; the other an intuitive judgment of *value*." This distinction serves the reader for signpost in his journey through the book. As a philosopher defines it, "Truth is the equation between thought and thing (*Adeguatio rei et intellectus*)."

The author next wrestles with the problem of what Keats meant by "prefigurative truth." He takes as text twelve significant sentences from Letter 31, written to the poet's friend, Benjamin Bailey, who was a theological student at Oxford. The most provocative sentence is, "O for a life of sensations rather than of thoughts!" and it has evoked much commentary. Keats's surprising wish cannot be justly interpreted according to present day ideology. His was a spirit very finely attuned to beauty: he responded sensitively to the lighest touch of that stimulus. Unknowingly, he seems to have reacted to the beauty of this world as to a revelation of the "Beauty, ever ancient, ever new," that thrilled Augustine. In one of his last conversations with Severn, he dwelt on natural beauty, and exclaimed, "I never cease to wonder at all that incarnate delight . . . It's an immortal youth, just as there is no *Now* or *Then* for the Holy Ghost." The imagination, so he holds in a letter to Bailey, is "a shadow of reality to come," and he gives this illustration: You hear a haunting melody sung by a beautiful voice in a charming place, and imagine the singer's face to be more beautiful than seems possible, yet—"that delicious face you will see." Your imagination of it was the "shadow of reality to come."

Mr. Ford goes on to say, "What the letter describes, the poem (*Endymion*) enacts. That is, the letter is a statement of Keats's prefigurative creed and the poem is an illustration." A prefigurative dream, as all readers know, starts the narrative of *Endymion* on its way, and prefigurative dreams and imaginings recur throughout the poem. Others there are who set much store by dreams—notably the Freudians—but no others holds them prefigurative as Keats does. Synesius, a bishop of the early Christian centuries, advised the faithful to keep diaries of their dreams as well as of their thoughts and deeds, because he had a theory that the soul was more itself in dreams than when distracted by the cares of the waking world.

Keats was not alone in his ideas about the relation of truth and beauty. He found parallels in the poetry of Spenser, Drayton, Milton, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Shelley. Poe agrees with him wholeheartedly, Tennyson in part. Even Byron writes that dreams "look like heralds to eternity." Beyond question, Leigh Hunt was the strongest influence on Keats in his early period. He was Hunt's protégé, read his poetry, and met him frequently at his own house or at the houses of his friends. Naturally he would be in-



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fluenced. Hunt's idea of paradise, at that time, resembled Mohammed's; heaven, as he imagined it, was not exactly a harem of houris, but something of the kind. This helps to explain the voluptuous elysium of *Endymion*, as it helps to explain Keats's youthful theory that "we shall enjoy ourselves hereafter by having what we call happiness on earth repeated in a finer tone."

By 1818, when Keats was twenty-five, his views had changed, and he wrote that dreams

> "shadow our own Soul's daytime
> In the dark void of Night."

He had moments of supreme joy when time seemed to shred away—as at his first view of Lake Windermere—but he knew that these *moments éternels* were not, and never would be, eternal. Writing his friend Bailey from the Burns country, he closes his letter with a poem composed, Mr. Ford thinks, at the height of rapture. In the experience he relates, the poet "reads his Soul's memorial" and finds that "room is there for prayer."

The prefigurative dream appears once more, very happily, in Keats's supreme love poem, *The Eve of St. Agnes*. This was written in 1819 after his engagement to Fanny Brawne. In the great odes and sonnets of the same year, the notion of prefigurative truth has disappeared. Indeed, it had never figured very largely, though it had figured vividly, in Keats's writing. As Mr. Ford concludes:

"The illusion never persisted for long. The world of immediate reality flowed in again, and with it the relativistic attitude to experience and judgment, in which the illusion of prefigurative truth was seen, perhaps not certainly as an illusion, but as 'a favorite speculation,' a verisimilitude coexisting with 'half-knowledge.' Never could mortal man attain to absolute knowledge; but he could, Keats learned as he grew in wisdom, increase his knowledge and experience, enlarge the disinterestedness of his mind, deepen his comprehension of the human scene, and thus diminish gradually the 'erroneousness' of his preceptions, making them more worthy to be called 'truths' and 'philosophy!'"

SISTER MAURA

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ing where they failed or succeeded, and sometimes why. He supplies a broad critical foundation for the general reader who would not go through *all* of Mark Twain unless for exercise, and cannot read *all* of Henry James unless he is gifted with patience and the love of toil.

For Mark Twain and Henry James are ideal representatives of the two great opposing forces in the American character, and Mr. Canby is an ideal man to write about them. His comprehensive knowledge of American literature has enabled him to grasp the broader pattern formed by the work of these two men, and in their parallel biography he has conceived a bold and original book.

More than is generally realized, Clemens and James, though utterly different in background and outlook, were asking the same questions at the same time about the make-up of the American personality. One found his answers in the growing assurance and independence of the West; the other in an Eastern movement toward enrichment from older civilizations. Together they form a remarkable portrait of the maturing American.

The author rightfully says that the focus of *Huckleberry Finn* is always the river, and its theme also is freedom, but in a dramatic counterpoint where Huck, who has run away himself to be free, encounters a runaway slave for whom freedom is a crime against the morals of Hannibal. "*Tom Sawyer*," Dr. Canby states, "is a miniature, sharp and vivid; Huckleberry Finn is a mural with an epic rhythm."

It is well pointed out that Pap Finn, Huck's father, has never been sufficiently appreciated: "my favorite character next to the boys and Colonel Sellers in all of Mark Twain. He is as good as the best of Dickens, and, of the humorous kind, as the best of Shakespeare—a backwoods Pistol, a poor white Falstaff."

And Dr. Canby shrewdly comments, "Mark's art, such as it was, and at its best it is a great art, is essentially oral. He saw not only a born storyteller and wisecracker, but he early learned how to transfer to the written word the overtones, the color (to mix my figure) of conversation, how to select the words which lift narrative, no matter how rapid, above a mere record of events. Few novelists achieve this excessively difficult transubstantiation." And Henry James is quoted as agreeing with this in the preface to *The Golden Bowl* when he says that any literature whose highest bid is addressed to the imagination must lend itself to *viva-voce* treatment: "It then infallibly, and not less beautifully, most responds."

"Mark's English is superb, his taste in diction impeccable," the author tells us. "He boasted of it, and he was right . . . He writes better English then Henry James, both by word and by rhythm, though with far less assistance from a flowing vocabulary. He would, I think, have been incapable of using *aggravated* where he

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means *irritated*, as James does too often. His cello is a better instrument than James' violin, though realms of expression were admittedly closed to it."

Pudd'nhead Wilson is described as an unjustly neglected book, for it contains the one real female character created by Mark Twain, the Negro slave woman, Roxana, "a bitter, frustrated heroine who makes Uncle Tom seem the synthetic fiction of a sentimental moralist that he is. She is the somber, foredoomed contrast to Huck's childish, lovable Jim, whose racial loss of physical freedom is far less terrible than her racial fate. She is a great actress playing a great part in the enduring drama of the black and the white in America."

Mark Twain and Henry James cannot be placed in such general categories as the labored and the fluent: "if either man was fluent it was the infinitely plodding James, and if either man left rewritings and corrections of his works, it was the supposedly so spontaneous Mark Twain."

This scholarly, stimulating and original book with its tolerant, discriminating, yet enthusiastic approach should increase the followers of these two American classics.

CYRIL CLEMENS

THE THEORY OF FUNCTIONS OF A REAL VARIABLE. By R. L. Jeffery. Pp. xiii, 232. 1951 (Mathematical Expositions, No. 6, University of Toronto Press.)

The aim of the series of Mathematical Expositions issued under the auspices of the University of Toronto is to present the material of various advanced topics in a way which emphasizes fundamental principles but is prepared to sacrifice elaboration and exhaustiveness in the interests of readibility. In such a subject as real variable, not treated extensively, readability is dangerous and Professor Jeffery has wisely aimed primarily at clarity, though keeping clear of undue symbolism of the Whitehead-Russel type.

The book's main interest is in modern integration-theories,—a field in which Professor Jeffery has done much work—and its purpose is to conduct the reader from the fundamentals of the number-system and sets of points through to Denjoy and other generalized integrals,—with a timely addition, in the last chapter, of Stieltjes integrals, functionals and the brink of modern Schwartz distributions. The theories are developed mainly on the classical lines of Lebesgue; references are sometimes made to Hobson and Titchmarsh; and the book generally steers clear of ultra-modernity.

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The chapter headings are: Introduction; Sets, Sequences and Functions; Metric Properties of Sets; The Lebesgue Integral; Properties of the Lebesgue Integral; Metric Density and Functions of Bounded Variation; The Inversion of Derivatives; Derived Numbers and Derivatives; The Stieltjes Integral. There is a comprehensive bibliography and indexes of subjects and authors. There is no glossary of symbols. There are some problems to all but the last two chapters; they are concerned for the most part with elucidations of items in the theory and to developments, including theorems not given in the text.

Applications to extraneous matters —if we except the proof of the "ergodic" theorem—are entirely absent. The theory is treated frankly for its own sake. The readers for whom the book primarily caters—mainly beginning-graduate students of Canadian and American universities—are unlikely to have acquired beforehand any serious interest in such vague aims as generalizing the notions of integral with no purpose, set or even vaguely indicated; and it would therefore seem doubtful whether the exclusion of applications (which might hint at possible objectives) is a sound policy. Students should not, and very often do not, need to be bought by pennies to study geometry or function theory; but they normally do need some kind of incentive. Even the beauty of a piece of mathematical theory depends, like a piece of architecture, on its conceivable fitness for some desirable end; and one does not have to be a gross materialist to feel a need for a discernible end. So-called "applications" in mathematics can be used this way without descending into—shall we say?—mere engineering. Modern integration theory has readily available—in such directions as Fourier series and "practical" dealings with discontinuous functions—applications eminently suited for this purpose. The addition of a few such applications could have enhanced the readability of the book.

There is about the book a refreshing air of personality. A reader brought up on other accounts of this theory, even written from the same point of view, will find many points of novelty, which will strike him favourably or not according to circumstances. The non-analytical approach to the real numbers (involving proportional geometry) is a very striking point in question. Another (to American readers) will be the discarding of *l.u.b.* (in favor of *sup.*) for what European readers since the time of Goursat and W. H. Young have generally known as *the upper bound* of a set. (This gains the reviewer's definite approval...)

In other respects the book carries out its aim effectively. Misprints and slips are rare. The printing and general set-up of the book are good, an excellent achievement in a work involving much detailed symbolism. But there are several places where the breaking up of symbols at the ends of lines strikes the eye awkwardly and militates against readability. In one place (p. 67) a solidus is used unhappily.

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A mixture of the naive and critical views on the multiplicative axiom (and elsewhere) is a little disconcerting until the reader realizes the the possibility of scepticism on such matters. Other points of difficulty (which might settle themselves with more careful reading) include: Is ∞ allowed as a number or not? Is an end-point of a closed interval an interior point? Is the interval $-\infty < x < \infty$ open or closed? (Different parts of pages 20 and 31 give different answers to these questions.) Is it deliberate (p. 46, line 6) to accept sets of sets and sets of points as on the same footing without question or comment? Is it deliberate to slur over the distinction between simple and double sequences and to use (*e.g.*) $\| f_n - f_m \| \to 0$ as $n, m \to \infty$ (p. 213) without comment or definition?

On a light note, it would appear (p. 11) that the author has miscounted (by 1) the number of decimals of π commonly known! (The reviewer considers trivial errors like this the mark of a good book.)

Whatever in the above may be regarded as criticism amounts to saying that the book is not at the same time a Hobson, a Landau, a Borel monograph, a Hardy of 1908 ("talking to barbarians"), a Russell's Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy, a Principia, and an essay in mid-twentieth century topology. It is readable and competent account of its declared field; and it should be welcomed by students and teachers.

CHARLES WALMSLEY

A DELAYED REVIEW

BREAD AND WINE., by *Ignazio Silone.*

A world audience for the artist is slow in coming. Generations after the Chinese painter has conceived and executed his serene and perfect Paradise of Buddha, his genius may be recognized by members of the populace who file through a Canadian museum and see his painting. Similarly years after the original work has appeared, a popular translation may bring a great European novel to the attention of, and rouse admiration in, the English-speaking reader. The novel *Bread and Wine*, written by Ignazio Silone and published first in Europe in 1936 was translated into English by Gwenda David and Eric Mosbacher, and published much later by Penguin Books Inc., New York 16. It might be claimed that this work, composed at the time of the Abyssinian war, ranks properly among the best novels of any period.

Such a case cannot be argued without a glance at the standard works, *Tom Jones* and *Vanity Fair*, *Madame Bovary* and *Buddenbrooks*, *The Brothers aramovov K*and *War and Peace.* In spite of modern developments and the impact of *The Remembrance of Time Past* and *Ulysses*, certain basic things are looked for and found in the classics of prose fiction. One is a vivid and compelling story, one is the creation of convincing character, one may be fresh and sharp contact with nature, one may be an intense impression of the character of reality and the laws of life and of man's life, while in a masterpiece like *War*

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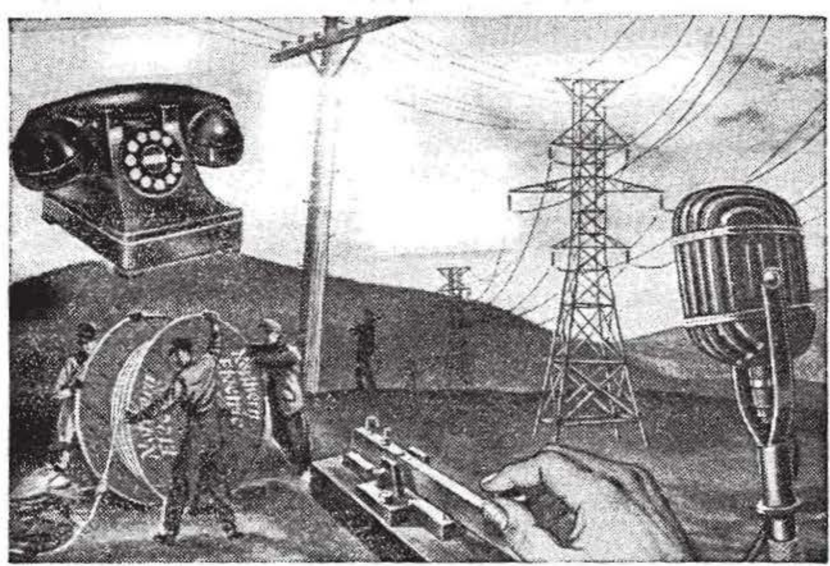

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and Peace a whole civilization is made to live and God's plenty put into our hands, plot, character, irony and beauty without stint.

Fortunately Silone was not thinking about *War and Peace* when he wrote *Bread and Wine*, or the vast canvas and astonishing wealth of the earlier book might have made his own aim and subject-matter shrink as he took up his pen to write. To the dispassionate reader of both books the achievement of the contemporary Italian remains significant even in the face of the perfections of Tolstoi. He has attemped a different thing. The one artist has imagined and realized on the printed page fifteen years of history, the social attitudes, military activities, civil sufferings and final peace which made up the story of Napoleon and Russia, with a theory of history accompanying the tale and a philosophy of acceptance questioned and ultimately established as Pierre and Natasha are left living happily ever after. Instead, Silone writes amidst the struggle, seeing wars as related to the sufferings of men in a Europe that is over-populated and unreformed, and as only to be understood and banished in the light of a new vision. Where Tolstoi the philosopher seems to be saying "Pacifism is the only course in a situation governed by irrationality among leaders and people alike," Silone presents a fable, concentrated and symbolic, which is charged with the weight of human suffering and urgent with the need for personal decision and choice.

Ignazio Silone has the primary gift of the novelist, that of the story-teller. What draws children from their play and old men from the thread put into the reader's hand concerns neither a noble hero nor a beautiful heroine, but the humanity of the scene grips him at once. You see Don Benedetto the old teacher-priest and his sister Marta, waiting in the garden for the pupils of an earlier day to come and honor him on his seventy-fifth birthday. When they arrive, first an officer in uniform and a young doctor, and afterwards the churchman Don Piccirilli, the talk is of school days and what has become of the boys not appearing. Each story has its tragic side. One, an engineer, has died of typhoid fever in Libya, after being unemployed for three years, one plays Scopone for a living, one has gone into bankruptcy and cannot leave his house,one had died of consumption, one is a clerk in a tax office and makes money as an informer, while the best loved by Don Benedetto, Pietro Spina, has become a rebel, been arrested, has fled from country to country and contracted lung trouble. As Concettino Ragu and Dr. Sacca walk towards the railway, Concettino says "Spina is in Italy . . . The police are already on his track . . . But what can I do if he is mad?" The stage is set. The story is begun.

Viewing *Bread and Wine* as a novel pure and simple, the reader notes first the rapid and interesting movement. The fate of Spina holds him in suspense from the first chapter till the last. Whether lying, as a sick man, on the saddle in the shed at Acquafredda, or disguised in the Priest's habit in the hotel at Pietrasecca, or coming down the Scala Santa transformed to a layman in preparation for meeting old friends of the movement in Rome, Spina is the live centre of a plot. That plot is simple—the conflict between men set on truth and freedom, and dictatorship in Church and State. The enemy is always

just around the corner or under the window, and the expected climax is capture and the expected dénouement is death. Actually no capture is described, but disappearance and flight through the snow up into the mountain. The final picture is of the devoted Cristina awaiting the wolves, her following of the sick man having proved unavailing.

Such a thread of narrative, occupying less than three hundred small pages, might seem thin stuff for a plot were it not for the richness of its texture. In the actual reading there is a constant impression of full and strong life—life of the earth and of man—but all rendered with great restraint. Spina lay on the thawing earth one day, "rejoiced in its warmth and tried to wriggle closer to it with movements of his legs and shoulders. A procession of ants was descending from the fig tree and making its way along the ground quite near him. Every insect was carrying something." Later there is an account of an early morning walk in Rome when he is in search of a former comrade. "Workmen came trooping along from every side, and there was a beauty in the air that moved Spina deeply, the marvellous beauty of Rome at dawn, when there is no one in the streets but honest people going to work, walking quietly and talking little." For sheer beauty of description, nothing is better than the following short paragraph. "The great hollow of the Fucino was dotted all round with lights, as in a fairy tale. A north wind was blowing from Pescina and the plain seemed to be swelling like an inlet of the sea." When, as the scene closes in, Spina is being driven to Rocca to see Benedetto, he turns away from the driver's bitter words about the persecution at Pratola. "Grapes were being pressed in a big container between two houses on the outskirts of Rocca. Three women, holding their skirts above their knees, were treading the grapes with their bare feet, in a kind of slow dance."

Passages like these not only convey the character of the Italian scene, but prepare the reader to realize the central symbolism of the book. Silone believes that history has taken a false turn, that mechanisms of government have become ends in themselves (and Propaganda is the worst mechanism) and man has been set against man with no regard for the basic needs of life. This is most fully brought out in the scene in the Murica household after young Murica's torture and death. Bread and wine, nourished by the earth and matured in nine months, are presented to the mourning friends. "Eat and drink," the father said. "This is his bread and this is his wine." "The bread is made of many grains of corn," said Spina. "Therefore it stands for unity. Wine is made of many clusters of grapes, and therefore it stands for unity too. Unity of similar, equal, and useful things. Hence also it stands for truth and brotherhood, things that go well together." As the old father counts out the time from November to July when the grain is first sown and finally reaped, and the nine months from March to November when the grapes grow to maturity, the mother thinks, "Nine months? It takes the same time to make a man." Her son, cherished in the womb and loved through infancy and youth, had been wrenched from life and the harmony of nature because he wrote, "Truth and brotherhood will reign among

men in the place of hatred and deceit; living labor will reign in the place of money."

The dark theme of persecution is lightened in this book not only by the piercing beauty of the martyrs Don Benedetto and young Murica, but by the wealth of human character with which its pages are filled—characters often inconsequent, brutal and ribald but also characters genial and kindly, and all of them instinct with vitality and reality. Silone's men and women entertain, shock, sadden and exalt, but their actuality is never questioned. The credibility of the book generally, as well as well as its rich, full quality, is directly related to this authenticity of the characters. They create a world for us, Bianchina and Sciatap and Cristina and Fleetfoot, and the astonishing countess with her worshipping cowherd. The Silone world has then a reality similar to the world of a Dickens novel, with the difference added that the people of "*Bread and Wine*" startle and often charm by the novelty of their mental and physical habits. They are Italian as well as human and live in a way indelibly.

Something should be said about Silone's method of characterization. In general he is in the great tradition of direct portrayal by means of dialogue, the tradition of Fielding and Jane Austen and Balzac. The ironic quality of Benedetto's mind is learned, for example, in the opening dialogue of the book. When his sister remarks to him that to shave with the new safety razor blades is to slash himself worse than an old-fashioned cutthroat, her brother answers, "Safety, Marta, is always relative . . . Don't forget that the razor blades you are talking about are Italian national blades, and therefor the wounds you receive with them are, in a sense patriotic wounds." She wonders why the Pope does not denounce the war they are preparing in Africa. "The Holy Father knows, my dear, that it's unhealthy to talk with a bit in one's mouth."

The book is full of such pungent, amusing and sometimes moving passages. The long story about the countess is a case in point, where the cowherd confesses to filling out his lady's penances by licking crosses on the ground for her. "Just imagine it, sir! Such a fine lady, and thirty mortal sins a week!" It "is certainly not a little," Don Paolo agreed. "Do you still lick the crosses on the ground?" The cowherd stammered in confusion. "It's the only contact I had left with her," he said. "If I had refused, she would have had it done by someone else, and I shouldn't have heard from her at all." Silone is thus ironical, amused and kindly as he lets his people talk, and where the soul is engaged he is pitiful and respectful. There is a passage describing Chelucci when he has been returned to his wife and mother, blind from the prison. All three have been somewhat cheered because the word from other countries is heartening. The mother, who had remained a peasant, says, "Sometimes God closes a window but opens a veranda." Then the blind man asks about the war. "Yesterday they bombed a hospital, as a reprisal," Spina said. "Who did?" "Those who intend to bring civilization to that part of the world." "When do the rains start again?" "In May." "Only in May? Poor Abyssinians," the blind man said. "If God wills, He may cause the rains to start two months earlier," his mother said, seeing that this

piece of information saddened him. "When there's no other hope, here is always the mercy of God to hope for."

Some readers of *Bread and Wine* are interested in the book mainly because Silone wrote it. The extraordinary confession in "The God hat failed" makes it clear that Pietro Spina and Ignazio Silone are he same man, the Italian who broke with his church because it conradicted its own teachings, who broke with communism because it ontradicted humanity, and who after fourteen years of exile returned o his own land to try to stir up fresh courage in his fellow-countrynen and start a new revolt. The characterization of Spina is, however, mainly interesting to the critic because of its intrinsic power and ntensity. Here the consciousness of a twentieth century man is revealed, having the poignancy of the classic confessions of St. Augustine nd Rousseau, the immediacy of Pamela and Leopold Bloom, and a urious arresting sense of modern identity that takes possession of the eader's own mind. The method is the so-called "stream of conciousness," but applied dramatically and with economy. It is Spina t significant points who is revealed, not Spina at every moment of he day—although the picture is intimate and frank as the European night be expected to make it. The writer, for example, entertains himself and his reader in a passage in chapter 4. "Fortunately for eligion however, the Spiritual ferment caused by the war was subsided. The Red Peril passed, and the old order was re-established. The ncient hierarchy reigned once more among the bushes." It is this ronical twist, shared with his creation, Don Benedetto, which seems o render endurable for Silone-Spina conditions of existence which night have overwhelmed another.

It was suggested above that, although *Bread and Wine* cannot ompare in breath or realistic richness with a novel like *War and Peace* t may at least equal that work in significance. Silone has not, it is rue, brooded as Tolstoi plainly has done on the mysteries of cause nd effect and the relations between destiny and the individual will. He advances no theory of history. He is perfectly simple, as Bunyan s simple and as the writer of Everyman is simple. His materlal is, ike theirs and like Tolstoi's, human character, but his theme is less ike Tolstoi's and more like Bunyan's—the simple theme of conflict, uter and inner. The upshot for the reader is first, aesthetic delight, nd second, spiritual illumination. Silone appears then to have ritten in *Bread and Wine* a supremely satisfying work.

Were any final proof demanded of this author's universal reerence, the story of Benedetto's death at early mass might be cited. t furnishes the reader's mind with a symbol of extraordinary power, emaining there in sharp relief when many other incidents and novels re forgotten. The walk and talk with his friends through the misty norning, the description of the ancient village church, the celebration f the mass and Benedetto's slow collapse after drinking the poisoned ine, these things make a complete parable of life and history. Silone ere and throughout his novel speaks to all awakened men under the un of good and evil, and of the necessity of decision and choice.

M. L. Kirkwood