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HERR HITLER

Appointment of Adolf Hitler as German chancellor may not be such a threat to world peace as it appears at first blush. For several years he has grown at home and abroad as a bogey. A bogey is very alarming—often more alarming than if it were real.

There is a fair chance that the Fascist firebrand will be more docile in harness than out. That has been the history of Hitler's idol, Mussolini.

Of course Hitler can not carry out his program—if for no other reason than because it is self-contradictory. Half of it is extreme Socialism, bordering on Communism; the other half is extreme reactionary nationalism.

Unless all predictions fail, he will scrap the radical part of his program and act on the reactionary part. If he does, he will tend to lose a considerable portion of his labor following.

That he will continue as an arch-nationalist is not doubted. But in that he is not much different from those who preceded him as chancellor—Von Papen and Von Schleicher.

By the unjust Versailles treaty and their post-war policies, the allies destroyed most of the peace sentiment of the German republic. They caused the wave of military nationalism, on which Hitler rides to power. Hitler is not the cause of anything; he is merely a symptom—a dangerous symptom.

Control of government in Germany is not changing hands with the appointment of Hitler. For many months a capitalist dictatorship has ruled. It will continue to rule through Hitler.

With Von Papen as vice-chancellor and reich's commissioner in Prussia, holding the military balance of power in the country, and Von Neurath continuing as foreign minister, Hitler is not apt to have much more personal power inside the cabinet than outside.

He may have even less strength as a minority chancellor than as outside leader of a militant opposition.

In any event it is important to remember that Hitler is a tool of the big industrialists, the Ruhr magnates, who have helped to finance his movement and furnished most of the brains for its leadership. Though those industrialists are nationalists, it is not likely that they will permit Hitler to provoke a foreign war at this time.

When it comes to the test, the industrialists and Hitler well may prove less dangerous as warmongers than the other two elements in the German dictatorship, the Junker land owners and the army of Von Schleicher.

Therefore, the inclusion of Hitler in a reactionary coalition cabinet probably has more immediate significance in domestic than in foreign affairs. It may be a prelude to outlawing the large and growing Communist parliamentary party, and a reign of terror against radical labor organizations.

As indicated by every national election in recent years, the German trend is away from the liberal center and toward the extreme right and extreme left. In that general trend this new Hindenburg-Hitler partnership represents a stronger consolidation of the right against the left.

The immediate drift seems to be not so much toward war as toward revolution.

JOHN GALSWORTHY

The names of writers are legion; those of creators few. John Galsworthy, who died today, was one of the latter. Out of the cobweb substance of genius he built a universe, intact and compact with people, places, and things. Nor did he neglect to incorporate the element of time in his rhythmic whole.

Necessarily shortened to the requirements of publication, minutes ticked, hours swung around, years went by. Young men grew old as the pages were turned. Girl babies came crying into the world, ripened to beauty, and died wondering at the riddle of existence.

Like all creators, he spun riddles as he went, and gave no answers. His were no textbooks, replete with propositions at the front and indexed with wise saws, homilies, and explanations at the back.

As his trees sprouted, so they grew. As they fell, so they lay. Men and women were born, shaped by experience, helped or harmed by accident and died with unanswered questions in their eyes.

His endings are neither happy nor unhappy. They are merely inevitable. And in making them so their author performed his office of creator authentically.

One of his less known books, there is a passage of peculiar beauty and peculiar significance.

"Nothing," the passage reads, "is more to be remarked than the manner in which life devises for each man the particular dilemmas most suited to his nature; that which to the man of gross, decided, or fanatic mind appears a simple sum, to the man of delicate and speculative temper seems to have no answer."

The dictionary might be read through and no words more descriptive of John Galsworthy be found than delicate and speculative.

THE POWER FIGHT

The fight for federal regulation of water power was won at the polls last November, but it is being fought all over again in the federal courts.

The New river case, in which the Appalachian Electric Power Company is attacking the constitutionality of the federal water power act, has been reargued and a decision will be forthcoming soon. It involves many technical issues, the navigability or non-navigability of the river, the possible effect of a power plant upon interstate commerce in the Kanawha river, and the extent to which the commerce clause of the Constitution gives the federal government the right to provide for recompence, amortization reserves, valuation based on actual cost, and regulation of securities in regulating the flow of streams.

These complicated matters wait a decision by the court. But they are of such paramount importance in the economic life of the country that the court decision, whatever it is, will not decide them finally.

If the court finds with the government that the water power act is constitutional and can be enforced, utilities undoubtedly will continue their fight to cripple regulation in every way possible, and

yearly battles will take place over appropriations, appointments, and other administrative matters.

If the court finds with the power company that regulation based on the commerce clause is unconstitutional, and if the higher courts sustain this view, one of two things will take place.

Either congress will discover a new and sounder way of bringing about federal regulation or it will turn to government ownership and operation of utilities. The people of the United States will not allow an industry second only in size to the railroads and of equal economic importance—an industry based upon monopoly of natural resources—to do as it pleases.

Investors and consumers are agreed upon this. No do promises of self-regulation and reform of some of the conditions disclosed by the federal trade commission offer any greater hope of reliability than they have in the past.

If the company wins the New river case, its attempt to overthrow regulation may go down in history as the greatest single step toward government ownership.

Pyrrhic victories have occurred many times in the past and will continue, leaving contemporaries in doubt as to their ultimate effect, and following generations amused at their ironic implications.

SOCIETY, THE SINNER

Thunder from America's pulpits today warns not so much of hell-fire for the unrepentant individual as of the doom that awaits an unrepentant social order. Warnings come from Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish clergy alike.

From one Catholic spokesman we hear that the social revolution is in the making.

"The only question," says the Rev. James M. Gillis, editor of the Catholic World, "is whether it shall be a pacific or a bloody one."

Father Gillis denounces capital's treatment of labor as "worse than that accorded an animal." The present policy, says the Rev. Wilfrid Parsons, editor of America, "actually has produced nothing but unlimited competition and unlimited opportunity for avarice and greed."

Capitalism has been committing suicide, says Dr. John A. Ryan of the Catholic university. If industrial magnates refuse to grant the workers social justice, says Joseph A. Porcelli of Fordham university, "let us pass laws to force them to do so."

The Federal Council of Churches, embracing twenty-six Protestant bodies, with 22,000,000 membership, warns against "the seductive voices" that would "call us back to barren and blighting prosperity and to the worship of things as they were."

At its recent convention in Indianapolis, the council called for downward revision of debts and armaments, control of private traffic in arms, recognition of the right to refuse to bear arms, social planning, unemployment insurance, old age pensions, shorter work hours, abolition of child labor, a fairer distribution of wealth, co-operation instead of competition as the guiding principle.

The central conference of American rabbis at Cincinnati endorsed "such changes as would bring about curbing of the greed which the present profit system makes inevitable," and demanded "not only such palliatives as compulsory unemployment insurance, but also the further reaching demands of the more adequate distribution of the profits of industry."

I WENT to my first Communist meeting last week.

It was not a trip planned for the gathering of newspaper material or any desire of a lark which drew me. Indeed, I went with a certain trepidation. But it so happens that I am on a committee which has been appointed to investigate Harlem hospital.

The Communist party has attacked the personnel and purposes of the committee. And so I felt in honor bound to listen to what ever charges might be brought.

I knew I was going to be razed, and I thought I might get in a row. Some years ago I attended an Irish meeting devoted to attacks on Michael Collins. Since I was an admirer of Michael Collins, I came away with the largest black eye which I have known in a career perhaps too largely devoted to the collection of such specimens.

To Rest and Bleed.

After that I let six or seven years go by without attending any highly emotional gatherings where I was likely to be in a minority of one.

My entrance last night was none too promising. Introducing myself at the door, I asked whether I could go in. The man in charge, who later turned out to be one of the speakers, answered: "I don't welcome you. I'll never welcome you."

"I don't ask that," I said. "I just asked, could I go in?"

He replied tepidly that it was an open meeting. However, I came away without any wounds, except such as may be inflicted by verbal castigation. Not all of the words cut deep, for I was hardly impressed with the face of one orator who declared that there was present in the audience an enemy who had come either as a spy or to disrupt the meeting.

In addition to the fact of giving my name at the door, I must protest that I am a poor build for Secret Service. Not even a haircut or long white whiskers would help to identify me.

As for disrupting the meeting, the memory of the deep purple of my Michael Collins eye still lingered too vividly in my memory.

And so several at least debatable charges flew by my head without reply. Before the evening was over, I almost began to believe that I was Harlem hospital.

Run over in your mind the proverbs most often quoted, and you will discover how discouraging they are. They see the seamy side of life as final, if not fatal. For that reason they are false, since a half-truth can do more harm than a downright lie.

For example, take the ancient saw: "Old dogs can not learn new tricks"—a proverb worn smooth by long use. As dog-philosophy, it may be valid, but as applied to men it is absurd.

Yet how often it is used to depress people as they try to make a new start. It makes old age, even middle age, not an adventure, but an obstacle; it disheartens us when we most need help.

Many a man would like to change his work or change himself, but he goes on telling himself that he is too old for that sort of thing. So inevitably he gives up.

Also Abraham Lincoln.

But for that matter, Abraham Lincoln took almost as much punishment as I did. One of the speakers said, with entire historical accuracy, that Lincoln was far more interested in the preservation of the Union than in the freeing of the slaves and that the emancipation proclamation was strictly a war measure.

As far as I have read history that is entirely true, but I thought the orator's conclusion was far-fetched when he went on to say that Lincoln was therefore an enemy of the Negro race and one merely desirous of luring Negroes from the south to the north.

It is true in a nutshell, and therefore no larger than a nut—never the truth, or even half of it. Also, nearly all of our proverbs are pessimistic, if not fatalistic, as is born of hard lot.

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