

Philanthropic Foundations

The ledger value of the capital assets of fourteen of the nation's largest foundations, totaling almost \$549,000,000 in 1933, has not been reduced by the depression. In fact, the 1933 ledger value was 0.7 per cent. over the 1930 value.

The announcement was made by the Twentieth Century Fund, the headquarters of which are in New York City. The organizations included in its survey are the three great Rockefeller and four great Carnegie funds, and the Burke, Buhl, Commonwealth, Falk, Milbank, New York, and Russell Sage Foundations. The market value of these holdings was not disclosed.

Changes in market value were disclosed by two funds. The holdings of the Julius Rosenwald Fund dropped to \$1,700,000 between 1930 and 1932, but mounted to \$5,200,000 in 1933, a gain of 205 per cent. over the previous year. Variations of less than 10 per cent. in any of the three years were reported in the portfolio of the New York Community Trust.

Capital assets of the Rockefeller Foundation, at ledger value, were \$10,900,000 greater in 1933 than in 1930, the total in 1933 being nearly \$153,600,000. A decline of \$1,000,000, or 1 per cent., was shown by the Carnegie Corporation for the three years. It remains the largest American foundation, with assets of more than \$158,000,000.

Methodism vs. Militarism

The peace committees of six Methodist conferences in Kansas, Nebraska, and Missouri, which met recently in Topeka, have voted to fight militarism in all its forms.

Beginning with indorsement of the League of Nations and World Court, the committees condemned "economic exploitation and imperialism, the private ownership of munitions industries, armed intervention in foreign countries for the protection of any and all investments of American capital, and the protective tariffs which create tension."

Every Methodist pastor in the three States was urged to focus public attention on attempts of college students to do away with compulsory military education, and to "discourage attendance at Citizens Military Training Camps." It was recommended also that "the Reserve Officers Training Corps would be investigated . . . to determine the interest of munition-makers in its support and maintenance."

The resolution recited: "We deplore the fact that such institutions as Civilian Conservation Camps and the Boy Scouts of America are being used to spread militaristic propaganda."

The report favored systematic peace propaganda, and that the Methodist Church withdraw its ministers from the chaplaincy in the United States Army, substituting therefor pastoral care under the Church's own control. Subsidy for men serving in the armed forces also was recommended.

A Jewish Writers' Symposium on Radicalism

Several Hebrew Authors and Publicists Believe the Apparently Rising Tide of Fascism Inevitably Will Victimize Minority Races



"This Is Dictatorship; Ours Is Leadership"

—Cassel in the Brooklyn Daily Eagle

Not long ago James W. Gerard, former Ambassador to Germany, and warm friend of the Jews, warned them that the affiliation of many Jews with Communism is leading to general belief that Jewry and Communism are synonymous. He pleaded that representative Jews use their influence to stay the flow to Communism, and warned them that "if the American nation ever gets the idea that the Jewish race and Communism are synonymous, there is a possibility of a pogrom that will make those of the Czar's era in Russia look like a small parade. The Jewish race is noted for its ability to build up a culture and nations, and the members of the race have nothing in common with Communism, which seeks to tear down culture and government."

Mr. Gerard's admonition was the result of his personal observations of a Communist gathering in New York City, where, he said, a large majority of the participants were Jews.

A different picture was given by Samuel Untermyer, noted Jewish lawyer, who said that Jewish membership in the Communist Party is infinitesimal, and that the Communist Party formed but an infinitesimal part—approximately 29,000—of the population of the United States.

Be that as it may, a number of Jewish writers contributing to a symposium in *Opinion*, a journal of Jewish life and letters published in New York, believe that the apparently rising tide of Fascism inevitably will victimize minority races and religions, and that the Jew must throw in his lot with liberal and radical movements. In parentheses, it might be added that Arnold Zweig, noted German Jewish author, wrote in *The Sentinel*, Chicago Jewish weekly, that none should "doubt that in very many European countries the nationalists would bring about the expulsion and extermination of the Jews

if this could be done without fear of intervention or retribution."

Fascist brigades of varicolored shirting have been formed in this country, also, and there is not lacking a rather wide-spread apprehension among Jews that they will be among the principal targets of the Fascist ritual of purification.

Opinion is edited by James Waterman Wise, liberal-minded son of Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, whose own tongue is as a scorpion to intolerance. The symposium is based on a previous article in *Opinion* by Rebecca Pitts whose thesis is that the basic causes of present-day anti-Semitism are economic, and that the "obsolescent capitalist order, based on the profit system, is resorting to Fascist expedients" to keep itself in power. These expedients, Miss Pitts maintained, include persecution of minorities to divert popular attention from the issues at stake, and to fight Fascism effectively, she said, the great masses of Jews must throw in their lot with the revolutionary workers.

"I fully agree with Rebecca Pitts's analysis of the Jewish situation," wrote Michael Alper, a graduate of the Jewish Institution of Religion, "that anti-Semitism is primarily an economic phenomenon which will disappear with the destruction of the capitalist system (vide the Soviet Union); and that if the Jew wishes to survive, he must identify himself with the historic movement (Communism) that is destined for creative survival."

Fascism vs. Communism

Mr. Alper said that "as the crisis will continue to deepen, the economic struggle will be not between capitalism and socialism, but between Fascism and Communism. The middle class will hold the balance of power, and the outcome of the struggle will rest in their hands. To the extent that Jews will aline themselves with Fascism, to that extent will they be doomed, not merely economically, but also culturally, both as Jews and citizens. Only Communism can save them as against Fascism."

"There is no group where cut-throat capitalism has taken a more dread toll than among middle-class Jews," wrote Rabbi Edward L. Israel, chairman of the Social Justice Commission of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. "They might turn with others of their class to Fascism were it not for their racial sympathy with the prophetic ideals, and their realization that the Jewishness which is still meaningful to them makes them inevitably victims of Fascist chauvinistic propaganda. The fear of rousing prejudice may somewhat arrest the process, but the inevitable trend of the Jewish masses in this economic revaluation is toward the Left."

"As Fascism threatens our country,"

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The Importance of Being Emily

"Brittle Heaven" Brings New Light to Bear on the Fast Disappearing Mystery of Emily Dickinson and the Identity of the Man Who Inspired Her Poems

NEXT, probably, to the now faint question of what ever became of Charlie Ross, the most important long-distance mystery in American fireside chat has been the identity of the man who so captivated Emily Dickinson that she wrote poetry by the bale in a futile attempt to still the beating of her heart. Frivolous and prying souls, eager to disclose the undoubtedly fetching person, have named half a dozen as the possibilities with, in each tabulation, the Rev. Dr. Charles Wadsworth, a Philadelphia dominie, heading the list.

Thanks now to "Brittle Heaven," the honor of having inspired one of America's truly great poets is shorn from the Rev. Dr. Wadsworth and a dashing military man, Capt. Edward Bissell Hunt, is accused. The new play comes on the heels of four important biographies and at least one other drama on the subject and, so spirited, so persuasive and real does it seem, that henceforth any writer on the subject will have to marshal bristling facts to disprove the Hunt theory.

The Messrs. Vincent York and Frederick J. Pohl spin a plausible and romantic story to show that Emily not only received flaming inspiration from Captain Hunt but, in receiving it, deceived her once best friend, Helen Fiske Hunt, wife of the thrilling soldier.

Helen Fiske Hunt was the Amherst girl who grew up to write "Ramona." Emily Dickinson was the Amherst girl who grew up to be one of the most ardent of our poets and the most deliberate of our husband-stealers and that in a time when the theft of a husband was no minute felony.

Forthright, Blunt, Brilliant

In the early 'sixties well-born young women, if they had the misfortune to fall in love with a friend's husband, locked the sad truth in their secret hearts and went on about the business of baking cakes and keeping house. Emily, forthright, blunt, brilliant, was well-born but the only locking up she did was of the more candid of her romantic verses. And, after her death, even these came to light—and were published.

It was this publication after death which was the source of the only other play ever written about Miss Dickinson. Three seasons ago Susan Glaspell wrote "Alison's House," a gentle and uneventful tap-dancing of the Dickinson family's dismayed skeletons. Much to every one's enormous



Dorothy Gish and Helen Huberth in the final scene of "Brittle Heaven," the new play about Emily Dickinson

astonishment, including, no doubt, Miss Glaspell's, the play received the Pulitzer

Prize. For a few weeks there was undisciplined talk of cowhiding the Prize Committee, but that faded when the Committee went into shamed solitude and the silences. "Alison's House" had to do with controversy within the family concerning the desirability of making public poems which so plainly exposed a furious attachment for a married man. The elders feared the scandal, the youngsters feared the oblivion of their genius sister.

But this spirited, well-traced, and knowing play does no such frittering with debatable facts. It takes the origins from Josephine Pollitt's biography, "Emily Dickinson: The Human Background of Her Poetry," and translates them into terms of theater. Carefully, with rare understanding, it establishes the girlhood friendship of Emily and Helen, showing it to have been one of the most beautiful

and fated friendships. Then the person of the captain is introduced and the beautiful but fated friendship crumbles into small, protesting pieces. From the beginning, altho she first believed him a monster and a libertine, Emily is helplessly caught up by the magnetic captain.

Miss Dorothy Gish, who has never made a bad performance in her life, makes an exceptionally fine one in the rôle of Emily Dickinson. Here is no languishing, pale, and frustrated poet smiling bleakly through her bitter tears. Rather, as Miss Gish plays her, here is a courageous and factual woman whose intellect inexorably prevented her from being either simpering or weak.

The fate of literary plays customarily is disappointing. In the Times Square theater the canny managers flee from the production of them as tho from a particularly virulent plague. In the elegant language of the boys, "they don't make a nickel," and, naturally, a play that doesn't make a nickel, or can't, is a play to be avoided night and day. It is possible that "Brittle Heaven" won't make a nickel, but even if it doesn't it will have satisfied a great many persons weary of the lithographs of contemporary drama and it will have performed the still more needful task of stripping away much of the hollow and certainly silly legend that has grown up about the vague personality of Miss Dickinson.

"Brittle Heaven" transforms Emily Dickinson from a national, and irritating, mystery into a human, and beguiling, person.

That, presumably, is what the theater is for.

(*Letters and Art* continued on page 24)

The Ten Best Plays

(The plays in this list are the choice of this department, and are not necessarily the consensus. As more plays are produced, the list will be revised. The order of listing is alphabetical, and has no relation to merit.)

"**Continental Varieties**," a super-vaudeville in the European manner with Lucienne Boyer and Vicente Escudero starred. At the Little Theater.

"**Conversation Piece**," bland words, music, and lyrics by Noël Coward, with an exceptional performance by the beloved Yvonne Printemps. At the 44th Street Theater.

"**Judgment Day**," Elmer Rice's violent melodrama about a European dictator and his fanatical supporters. At the Belasco Theater.

"**Life Begins at 8:40**," a large, opulent, sprawling musical revue studded with beautiful scenery, girls and clowns. At the Winter Garden.

"**Merrily We Roll Along**," a play in reverse, covering the years from 1934 to 1916 in the life of a dramatist. At the Music Box Theater.

"**Personal Appearance**," an impious, outrageous comedy debunking tours by film stars. The funniest show of the new season. At Henry Miller's Theater.

"**Small Miracle**," a melodrama, in the "Grand Hotel" technique, the action of which takes place in the lounge of a theater during the course of a play's performance. At the Golden Theater.

"**The Distaff Side**," a distinguished English play about the women in one family, and what happened to them. At the Booth Theater.

"**The Farmer Takes a Wife**," richly satisfying folk-play of the Erie Canal in the 'fifties at the time of the encroachment of the railroads. At the 46th Street Theater.

"**The Great Waltz**," a vast and costly operetta spending \$500,000 to prove that the elder Strauss was jealous of his son. At the Center Theater.

W. B.