



## MILITARY OBJECTIVE!

**T**IME was when the only part children were allowed to play in war was to give up certain food their little bodies needed so that the troops could have it.

That was in the unenlightened days before airplanes and delayed-fuse bombs.

Now the kiddies are permitted to die just like their daddies. Today they are *military objectives* to be blown to bits by bombs, to be buried in the ruins of their schools, to be raked by machine-gun fire as they cling to their mothers' skirts.

Thus, the world progresses. Thus, the science of mass-production mur-

der becomes more proficient. Thus, war loses its last vestige of so-called "glamour."

With slaughter of these innocents an admitted part of military strategy, war can no longer be condoned by any sane and decent person. Yet many people still shake their heads hopelessly and say: "What can I do? How can I prevent war?"

Next time you tuck your youngster into his crib look at him and see if your heart will accept such a defeatist attitude. Rather, accept this truth—that if enough people say: "There must be no more war!", there *will* be no more war!

World Peaceways is a non-profit, non-crank organization that has made definite progress in maintaining peace and is determined to do more. We need help—*your* help. Why not sit down right now and drop us a line?

WRITE TO  
**WORLD  
PEACEWAYS**

103 Park Ave., New York City

# The World Today in Books

NORMAN COUSINS

**S**HORTLY before Christmas 1934, a tall, fair-haired young man walked into the New York offices of a prominent publisher. He announced himself as John Gunther, London correspondent of *The Chicago Daily News*, and said he had come in response to an invitation from the president of the firm. A few minutes later, Cass Canfield, president of Harper & Brothers, and John Gunther were on their way to lunch.

Out of that meeting grew a book that has influenced publishing concepts of books dealing with world affairs. It was called *Inside Europe*. Those who read it came away with the feeling they had seen Europe fluoroscoped.

John Gunther's *Inside Europe* made—indeed, continues to make—publishing history. No other book dealing with current affairs has ever approached its record. It has sold both here and abroad approximately 500,000 copies—about three hundred times the average book of its kind—and has grossed close to \$1,750,000. At the moment, and probably for a long time to come, John Gunther is and will be the most valuable non-fiction property in the world.

*Inside Europe* has been translated into French, Spanish, Dutch, German, Norwegian, Swedish, Hungarian and Finnish, has been published in fourteen countries, banned by

three—Germany, Italy, Yugoslavia—and “pirated” by one—Chile, which simply published the book without authorization, arrangement, or even acknowledgement. It has provoked controversy and debate everywhere.

As a personality, John Gunther is even more interesting, perhaps, than many of the colorful people who parade through his writings. Unlike most newspapermen, he actually looks the part. A movie executive told me that Gunther is Hollywood's idea of the perfect type for a foreign correspondent—interesting features, witty, clever, with a proper balance between sophistication and boyishness. He is strictly a Chicago product—was born, grew up, and was educated there. He is thirty-eight.

Gunther is an indefatigable worker. *Inside Europe* was written after working hours, on weekends, and even during what foreign correspondents call their “holiday”—a vacation period in which they usually visit their native lands and stretch their busy fingers. Though Gunther has become a free-lance writer and no longer follows so arduous a routine, he continues to spend twelve to fifteen hours a day on his work. After he left *The Chicago Daily News* as a regular work-a-day correspondent, he set up a home in Connecticut, where he did most of his writing. But he felt he was “losing touch with

## Books Reviewed in This Issue

BOOK	AUTHOR	PUBLISHER	PRICE
<i>Inside Asia</i>	John Gunther	Harper's	\$3.50
<i>Bombs Bursting in Air</i>	George F. Eliot	Reynal & Hitchcock	1.75
<i>Who Are These Americans?</i>	Paul B. Sears	Macmillan (People's Library)	.60
<i>The March of Mind: A Short History of Science</i>	F. Sherwood Taylor	Macmillan	\$3.00
<i>Night Over England</i>	Eugene and Arlene Löhrke	Harrison-Hilton	2.00

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## AMERICA IN MIDPASSAGE

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and MARY R. BEARD

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things," and several months ago moved to New York, where he now lives with his family in an apartment facing Central Park. Gunther does little or no work at home. His research and writing he does in an office which he rented in the midtown section of New York—close to Radio City—and he has hired a secretary, though he answers phone calls himself.

He has an active collaborator in all his work, Frances Gunther, his wife, a talented writer and an authority on world affairs in her own right, who acts as his editor and who carries a large share of the research and writing. Frances Gunther's epigrams were the sparkle of Viennese café society; she is perhaps the most consistently quoted person in her husband's writings. "Remove liberty from Germany," she remarked, "and you unite the country; remove liberty from France, and you have a revolution." Again: "No Austrian can be trusted to be a Nazi twenty-four hours a day. It takes too much energy." Once she posed the question, in referring to Madame Chiang Kai-shek: "Was this the face that launched a thousand airships?" About Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, a devout Christian, she quipped: "There is Methodism in his madness."

It is not generally known that John Gunther wrote three novels—all of them now out of print—before he tried his hand at history-in-the-making. His first novel, called *The Red Pavilion*, was published in 1927 and evoked somewhat of a minor storm in Chicago, locale of the story, among groups which felt Gunther was "too daring" in discussing the romantic affairs of a young couple. The other two novels were *Eden for One* and *Golden Fleece*.

ALL this is by way of introducing a new book by Gunther—the second of what may eventually be an "inside" series. It is called *Inside Asia*, though—as Gunther explains in a note—it might more properly be called *Outside Asia* since he was "outside, looking in," unlike his experience in Europe, where he worked within the coils and springs of the Continent for so many years. Precisely the same superlatives which greeted *Inside Europe*—and which, in all likelihood, have been used on few books since—should now greet its twin, *In-*

*side Asia*. For Asia has been Guntherized, with all the trimmings, and a great many people who all along never bothered to read news dispatches under Vladivostok, Manila, Delhi, Teheran, Chungking, Mukden and even Shanghai or Tokyo date-lines will suddenly become aware that a continent—and an important one at that—exists on the other side of the Pacific Ocean, that much of what happens there concerns us as vitally as do events on the other side of the Atlantic.

As in *Inside Europe*, John Gunther has constructed his story with personalities as the center, politics as the radii and events as the circumference. In giving so much attention to individuals, Gunther is, of course, broadening the appeal of his book. For most people are more interested in the personalities who do things than in the things they do. Yet even though a number of critics are certain to deplore what they may describe as an attempt to write for a large audience at the expense of a proper balance between events and event-makers, there is a strong case in favor of the Gunther ratio.

I asked John Gunther recently whether his emphasis on personalities grew out of a belief that, by and large, individuals helped shape events more than events helped shape them. He replied that he was no historian or philosopher—"just a newspaper reporter"—that he had never studied history in that particular light, that his sole interest was in getting the story, if a story was to be gotten. "But I will say this," he added, "I wrote *Inside Europe* out of the conviction that Europe was the prisoner of three men. I wanted people to know who these men were, how they lived, what they did, how they had managed to dominate Europe, what Europe thought of them and what they thought of each other. In so doing, it was necessary to broaden the picture and include other personalities and other events."

*Inside Asia* follows a similar pattern. Perhaps even more than Europe is the world's largest continent a prisoner. Asia has been fair game for all whose muscles were large enough to carry off her treasures. Fair game long before Japan decided that she, too, had the right to hoist a flag of imperialism in the Far East. "The history of modern Asia," says Gunther, "has been that of predatory western powers struggling among

ance. . . . He builds a railway station before the tracks are laid"; Chaim Weizmann, Jewish Zionist leader, is "first of all a scientist, then a politician, but there is also a good deal of the artist in his nature."

The idea for *Inside Asia*, and very likely for a series of books on other continents, came not from Gunther's publishers but from his nine-year-old son, John, who told his father that it would be poor business if he didn't tell people about what was happening in Asia, too. But whether John Gunther will move on to the Americas for another "inside" book has not been announced by the publishers.

It is possible that *Inside Asia* may be criticized in certain quarters as insufficient in formal scholarship. It was never the intention of the author, however, to write a detailed, complete study of Asia—that would have required a library instead of a single work—but to construct a compact, useful guide of Asia's politics and personalities for the layman. His book must be evaluated therefore on the grounds of what it set out to do. And that it has accomplished its mission, no one can deny.

THE late James Harvey Robinson said in his *The Humanizing of Knowledge* that a great many people found books too dry, too forbidding. There was a great need, he added, for books which would be "humanized," made readable and therefore useful.

The People's Library, organized by the American Association for Adult Education with a grant from the Carnegie Corporation, and with the co-operation of the Macmillan Company, is an attempt to put Robinson's suggestions into practical operation. The Library, moreover, has attempted to eliminate another bar to book reading—prohibitive price. Accordingly, its books—bound in cloth—are being sold at approximately one-fifth the usual price.

Recently issued in the Library series is *Who Are These Americans?*, by Paul B. Sears, whose former books, *Deserts on the March* and *This Is Our World*, show he is excellently equipped to write about basic facts in America's development. In the present book, Mr. Sears simply and effectively tells the story of our land and the people who settled it. Though in the final analysis it might be called an interpretative history, it hardly suits the conventional definition of that term. There are no dates,

no attempt at historical sequence, no repetition of our major events, not even a reference to our national heroes. *Who Are These Americans?* has a broader function: it seeks to introduce Americans to each other and help them understand the complexity of their various natures, what their own role is and has been in the development of their country and what they can do to help develop it further.

This is the one type of over-simplification that even formalistic historians will endorse. For it is directed to an audience which might otherwise have remained uncertain and even ignorant of the widely diverse nature of America and its people.

THE *March of Mind: A Short History of Science*, by F. Sherwood Taylor, is a compact, well-knit, and well-organized account of the story of science and its leading figures from ancient times up to the present. Dr. Taylor makes no attempt to make a minute analysis of every single event in science's history; his purpose is to present through broad, interesting strokes the highlights of science for the average reader. His book is among the best of a number of short, popular histories of science which have appeared during the last few years.

Dr. Taylor tells the story of science largely by recording man's attitude to it through history. At the same time he shows science's relation to man at the various stages of its development. Scientific progress today, he says, has its manifestations in modern industrial civilization—a "complex machine depending on co-operation of a vast number of persons who are very imperfectly aware of the function they are performing, and may be quite indifferent to the welfare of any but themselves."

CAN it be that modern war is so terrible, so appalling, so efficient, that it may be a factor for peace? Now that no one can escape its fury



—not even government officials who were privileged comparative safety in previous wars—is it not likely that those whose power it is to declare wars might now exercise greater restraint? Further, since modern war represents a series of retaliatory measures—each of which is intended to be more destructive than the last—even aggressor nations must now anticipate receiving as good as they can give.

If you have been thinking along these lines, you will want to read *Bombs Bursting in Air*, by George Fielding Eliot, a sane, sensible military authority whose work is written neither in an ink of bias nor in the shadow of a grinding axe. Major Eliot examines the main aspect of modern warfare that distinguishes it from the old—death from the sky—and says that the cost of conflict has become so great that even nations with superior military strength have become extremely reluctant to gamble on the consequences.

But what about the mountain of armaments that man has been building all these years? What is their function if they are not going to be utilized in direct combat? Their function, says Major Eliot—and he points to Germany as Exhibit A—is to provide the threat behind another way of exacting their pounds of flesh—blackmail.

"Can Germany afford a gamble in which she throws on the gaming boards all that her present rulers have gained, all the fruits of years of effort, in the hope of winning a military victory which even if won may prove but fleeting and illusory in its benefits? . . . The masters of Germany are not fools. Why should they take the risks of war, and undergo the strains which it will impose upon their none-too-assured economic and social structure, while they have a better and safer method of achieving their objectives?" Thus the threat of war—or international blackmail—may dominate, or attempt to dominate, the world.

Suppose blackmail should fail? Suppose forces are set in motion—as, indeed, they seem to be today—from which the world cannot free itself? Suppose even the rulers are unable to halt the headlong plunge into open conflict? What if war *should* come?

Assuming the lineup will be the same as it is now—British and French leading the bloc against the

totalitarian combine—Major Eliot says Mr. Hitler's chief hope of victory is by lightning blow. Since lightning blow today means one thing—large-scale bombing attacks—this naturally raises the question of the vulnerability of large cities, such as London and Paris, to air raids.

It is here that Major Eliot's book is of particular value and importance. For he provides a clear, reasonable discussion of the part aircraft may play in the next war. He discounts, on the one hand, the extravagant claims made on behalf of the modern fighting plane—that it can completely destroy cities and win any war; on the other hand, he thinks it foolish to underestimate the potency of an air attack. His middle ground is the bombing of cities can be highly destructive—allowing for important factors which are essential to any attack—but that it is by no means conclusive. Indeed, it still remains a weapon of uncertain value and untried possibilities—the Spanish War laboratory notwithstanding. Its greatest effectiveness may be in the psychological field.

There is a lot more to bombing a city than merely flying over it and releasing the proper lever. Factors are both numerous and complex. And thanks to Major Eliot, they are no longer complicated, for his book is the clearest exposition yet to come forward on this subject. Not only is it written by an expert; it is expertly written. Straightforward, concise, *Bombs Bursting in Air* is a valuable handbook and guide to air power in the next war.

**F**OR a number of years the historians have been applying their stethoscopes to the heart of Great Britain in an effort to determine whether one of the great dramas of history—the crumbling of empire—was unfolding. There were indications, some surface, others substantial, that the greatest empire since Rome had passed its peak and was moving downward—imperceptibly perhaps but nevertheless downward—and that in our own lifetime we might witness its dissolution.

Eugene and Arlene Löhrike are not professional historians; yet they are perhaps even better qualified—suited would be a better word—than the historians to detect essential trends, to chart directions. For they are persons who, it is clear from their *Night Over England*, have combined a love

of the real England with a remarkable perception and understanding of Britain's inner self. They have lived in Sussex, they have been able to feel the things Englishmen feel when they talk about their countryside; they are aware—as English people might be aware—of the true significance of English accomplishments in art, in letters, in science, in industry. They liked the way the English had no desire to challenge time and space. They liked the way time was found for everything, for work, for leisure, for thinking. They liked the English reverence for the soil. They liked the lack of helter-skelter ambition—people got ahead through brains and hard work, not through their elbows. They liked the “comfortable feeling that the English have about England, much the same attitude, in times of peace, that men used to have toward warm slippers and a pipe.” And—this was one of the reasons they had gone to England—they were attracted by the light thrown out all over the world from a speck of island.

But now they fear that that light—particularly in the last year or two—has begun to dim. “It seemed to us as though the England that had once achieved the dimensions of an empire and an almost irresistible force in the world had now shriveled and shrunk, or was shriveling and shrinking, to what England had been before the time of growth—an island, a small island cut off from the world. The hand that gripped her, and they were old hands, were not pushing England forward but reining her back. . . .”

Whether recent shifts in British policy—made since the book was written—have changed the authors' feelings about England's decline is difficult to say. After Munich, they sensed that the government had “bartered away cheaply the only spirit that had ever kept England or another nation alive and a living force in the world.”

And yet there is still hope. A hope they thought they saw in the heart and core of England—“strong and resolute, gazing up from the furrows and workshops, more stubborn even than the black terrors of September, determined that England should live.”

Direct quotation is the only way in which the literary flavor of *Night Over England* can best be described. For it has a warmth and flavor not generally found in non-fiction in the field of world affairs.

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