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to famous American inventors like Edison, and the Wright Brothers of aviation fame, and here is another shelf given over to Exploration, from Admiral Peary to Admiral Byrd. Over the way is a section for modern architecture. Our eyes would turn to books on the giant skyscrapers, the Chrysler Building of 70 stories, the Empire State Building of 100 stories, and rows upon rows of majestic buildings without parallel in the cities of the world. Well might O. Henry call New York, when he saw the lights twinkling in a thousand windows on a winter's evening, "Baghdad on the subway."

Queer Characters

We would like to see a series of small books each devoted to the queer characters who flash in and out of American politics. In our day there have been Huey Long, and "Thirty-dollars-a-week-for-everybody-over-60" Townsend, Father Coughlin, and Upton Sinclair. On a lower level there were the men behind the Klu Klux Klan. The intricacies of American politics may mystify us, but Professor Harold Laski recently contended in the *BBC Listener* that in the last 70 or 80 years there have been more outstanding American Presidents than there have been outstanding British Prime Ministers.

Scenery and Music

The illustrated journals would show us, not only a standard of magazine production which is unique in the world, but a long vista of American scenery of unsurpassed beauty from Niagara Falls to the Grand Canyon, the rich prairies of the Middle West and the deserts of Nevada, the Rocky Mountains and the Great Lakes. By contrast with this natural beauty is the devastation brought by man on the once good farming land that is now known tragically as the Dust Bowl.

A music room would need to be attached to any library which purported to show America, for the States have always been rich in native music. The NBS programme, of which at least half is devoted to music, includes negro spirituals, "Hill-Billy" songs and patriotic airs, the plaintive melodies of Stephen Foster mingled with "John

Brown's Body" and "Marching Through Georgia." But it also includes some of the distinctively modern American music of Ferdi Grofé, Gershwin and Berlin.

The Melting Pot

But a short survey of this nature leaves out more than it includes. We have said nothing of cowboys and Red Indians; of a Detroit automobile assembly line; of the eleven million negroes; of the New Deal and its vast experiments in agricultural planning; of religion, which is a potent factor in American life and which has created at least one new creed complete with its own world-wide newspaper; of Radio City; of the outcrop of weird lodges such as the Elks and Shriners; or of new ideas in education. Mention must be made, though, about the mixture of races, dramatised under the name of "The Melting Pot." In New York an immigrant—that is, a person born overseas or the son or daughter of a person born overseas—is the average citizen. Names like Rubinsky, Marinelli, and Czernowitz predominate. One person in three in America to-day comes under this category, but they make up 73% of the population of New York. These incontrovertible facts are the hurdle which faces Roosevelt in anything he undertakes on behalf of the Allies. That he has been able to consolidate his people behind him as much as he has, indicates the stature of the man.

Finally, no survey of America to-day, even as brief and superficial as this, would be complete without a word about the American accent or the American language, so bursting with vitality that it coins startling new words and phrases more quickly than the old ones die. H. L. Mencken says in his book *The American Language*, that if 40 million people call it a "goods truck" and 140 million people call it a "freight car," then "goods truck" is just a dialect.



Top left: A taxi-driver touts for trade in any one of America's 100 large cities.

Above: The beautiful new bridge spanning the Golden Gate between San Francisco and Oakland, California.

Right: From the past—a fleet of prairie schooners creeping across the mid-continental deserts in the great Westward trek

