

BOOK RECORD

Conducted by ANTAR

How To Smash A Unionist!

An American "Labour Spy" Describes
The Art Of Keeping The Under
Dogs Down Under . . .

Specially Written For The "Record"

FOR long enough I have had a healthy contempt for anonymous spy stories purporting to relate fact rather than fiction. They may be idly enjoyable, but rarely indeed are they convincing. However, last week's English mail brought a "true spy story" that is the exception rather than the rule. "Labour Spy"—signed by an author calling himself "G.T.-99" and published by the enterprising English firm of T. Werner Laurie, is definitely convincing and definitely not enjoyable.

"Labour Spy" can, however, claim the distinction of being one of the most original spy stories ever written. If you are looking for tales of machievellian cunning and cold-blooded nerve don't bother to read it, for G.T.-99's story is far too authentic to concern itself with cheap thrills.

Revealing and Damning

If, on the other hand, you are interested in current American politics and in the peculiarities of the American industrial system, here is the book for you. In its own way it is as revealing and damning as Upton Sinclair's biography of Henry Ford, "The Flivver King." It is a book to drive good unionists mad with rage, and if, by any queer chance, it is read extensively by the American industrial classes it is surely a book to make them blush for their own simplicity!

"LABOUR SPY" is not the story of a clean-limbed young Englishman parachuting to hair-brained adventure behind the enemy lines, but the story of a conscienceless American machinist wheedling his way into big money by a systematic betrayal of organised labour to the "bosses."

G.T.-99 was for 20 years an operative hired by an industrial detective agency to keep his finger on the pulse of labour—and during that time he established a record that makes Judas look like a nervous amateur! It is incidental, but perhaps significant, that during those 20 years he also lied and wheedled his way into a position from which he could control the reactions of organised labour in an entire industrial State—and presumably made a fortune on the side doing it.

At last, after reading "Labour Spy," one realises why American industry has never been bothered by humanitarian legislation until Roosevelt's N.R.A.—why tear-gas, hand grenades and machine guns are legitimate anti-strike weapons, and why, if revolution

ever does overthrow the glorious American Democracy the Civil War will be a gentleman's disagreement by comparison.

G.T.-99 does not bother to make excuses for his occupation. He merely states lucidly and simply the employer's point of view in hiring men to defeat unionism from within. At times, in an off-hand manner, he quite convinces the reader that it was all to the good of the worker that unionism should, in certain instances, be defeated. But, all the while, he builds up a picture of labour bulldozed and beaten and betrayed into submission that would surely be repugnant even to a Nelson tory!

"Labour Spy," as I said, is a book calculated to drive any good unionist mad with rage—and no good unionist, for the sake of his soul, should shirk reading it.

As pure entertainment I have my doubts about it. It deals with people and with politics that cannot be fully comprehended by the average New Zealander. It is never really exciting except in its rare, restrained descriptions of brutality. And above all, it is disturbing in the contemptuous picture it paints of the mind and the gullibility of the "sucker"—a species not solely confined in its habitat to the United States of America.

"Labour Spy," by G.T.-99 (T. Werner Laurie). Our copy from the publishers.

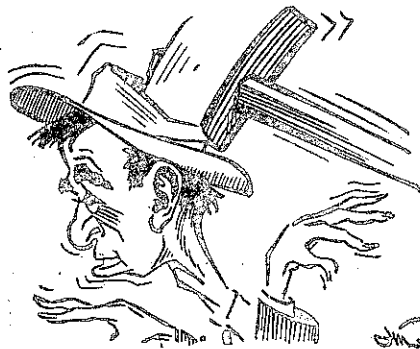
Blood Splashed But Very Good Fun!

IN an entirely different category is Bernard Newman's "Death Under Gibraltar." Despite Mr Newman's amusing little habit of making out it is all true, no one is in the least likely to believe him.

"Death Under Gibraltar" is, however, a singularly exciting thriller, spiced with enough realism to give it grip, and splashed with enough blood to make the reader slip off the critical pedestal and enjoy the whole business of scotching a Fascist plot to capture Gibraltar by way of that mythical tunnel under the straits every visitor to the Rock hears so much about.

Mr. Newman writes with a masterly pen. The narrative flows easily along from thrill to thrill, and he has the tricky knack of making his sex-interest hot but not reeking.

I liked his unmoral gipsy girl in "Death Under Gibraltar" as much as any improbable character I have met in a thriller for many moons.



The publishers Messrs. Victor Gollancz, certainly have a keen eye for thrillers. In the last year or so I have not read a Gollancz thriller that is a "flop." You might remember that, next time you are in the circulating library.

"Death Under Gibraltar" will beguile many a tedious railway journey and burn many an inch of candle or unit of power at midnight. It is one of those spy stories that are not altogether an insult to the intelligence.

"Death Under Gibraltar," by Bernard Newman, Victor Gollancz (London). Our copy from the publishers.

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