

By ROBERT CLANCY

There's an old Greek or Yugoslav proverb: "You can toss Nature with a pitchfork, she will always come running back." The more strenuously she is tossed, it might be added, the greater the impact of her return.

In this bit of homely allegory, may we not find the key to our cyclical economic headaches? We have vainly been trying to stave off the consequences of our colossal folly. Instinctively we must know how futile and fake our efforts have been, because now we are apprehensively waiting for what we know must come sooner or later—that frightful return of Nature spurned—a *depression*. A few feeble gestures are still being made to ward off the return, but the prevailing atmosphere is one of shaky waiting.

The Nature-tossers' most devastating weapon (they think) is to ignore her. Perhaps their most defiant act is the ignoring of the earth under our feet, the waters of the sea, the organic and inorganic gifts of nature, yea, the great globe itself. They've been telling us: "Land may have once played an historic role in a feudal society, but today it is insignificant." Rot! Feudal or free, capitalist or communist, land and its ownership was, is and will be the deciding factor in man's economic weal or woe.

To root out the abominable thought-tumor that denies this, man will probably have to undergo some terrifying operations. Tossing away the earth itself means having the earth itself some day flung into our faces. And this not because Nature hates us and wants to destroy us, but because the Old Lady loves us! If we will have to crawl in the dust among the ruins of our tinny towers of Babel and fill ourselves with mud to keep from dying, it will only be Nature's way of telling us to start again, on the right basis, minus the rebellious pitchfork.