

A NEW PATTERN FOR A TIRED WORLD.

By Louis Bromfield, Harper & Bros., New York, 1954. 314 pp. \$3.75.

In a radio interview, Mr. Bromfield said he thought this new book of his was the most important of some twenty-eight he has written. And he complained that it seemed to be the one book that was being ignored by the reviewers.

It is not a book that should be ignored. Mr. Bromfield has something to say. And in diagnosing the world's ills he says a lot more sensible things than the glittering generalities of some authors pampered by reviewers.

Briefly, the thesis of *A New Pattern for a Tired World* is that we (the people of the U. S.) must realize that the basic troubles of the world, including communism, are economic and they cannot be solved by political conferences, treaties, armaments and world police action. Mr. Bromfield takes a close look at several nations—Britain, France, Brazil, Russia—to support his thesis. His basic remedy is "economic co-operation." He would like to see a freer trade policy, a uniform customs and currency system, and freer access to natural resources. As a beginning, he proposes that the United States and Brazil—with perhaps Mexico and Canada—form an economic union.

Mr. Bromfield knows Brazil first-hand, and his diagnosis of that country is the best of any in the book. He describes vividly the medieval stratification between upper and lower classes, the big and inefficient land holdings, the appalling policies of the government which strangle business and trade, the unrealistic attitude toward some great "future" of Brazil. And he has a delicious passage on land speculation in the big cities showing that it is effectively blocking progress.

Mr. Bromfield has sharp things to say about the Roosevelt-Truman administration, but gives no comfort to those who would return to pre-1933. He points out the utter bankruptcy of communism and the folly, if not worse, of eggheads who have followed "the line." But he treats the Colonel Blimps just as scathingly.

Indeed, it is very difficult to put Mr. Bromfield in a pigeon-hole on social policy, for just as he starts looking like an "isolationist," he talks internationally; and just as he seems to be veering toward radicalism, he becomes very conservative. (Maybe he puzzled reviewers, so they dropped him?)

But while Mr. Bromfield has many good ideas, they fall just short of a pattern. The whole book has a somewhat scattered effect. One would think that if this book is the culmination of many years of thought and study, it could have been organized better, and the main theme pulled together and strengthened. With a little more dynamic treatment and a general tightening up, this book could not have failed to make an impact.

—R. C.