

should be deeply grateful to Professor Carvalho Neto for this remarkable service that he has rendered to better knowledge of their own country.

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Child of the Dark. The Diary of Carolina Maria de Jesus. By CAROLINA MARIA DE JESUS. Translated by DAVID ST. CLAIR. New York, 1962. E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc. Illustrations. Pp. 190. \$4.50.

In 1947, when she was thirty-four years of age, Carolina Maria de Jesus came to the *favela* of Canindé, one of the slums of the Brazilian city of São Paulo. Unemployed, pregnant, and abandoned by the Portuguese sailor who had been her lover, she collected boards at a construction site five miles from the favela, carried them there on her head, and with her own hands built the shack which was to be her home. There she began a struggle for survival, made even more desperate by the three children she bore—the sailor's son who came three months after her arrival, a second son in 1950 fathered by a Spaniard "who was white and gave [her] . . . love and money" before he returned to Europe and, in 1953, a daughter by a shameless Brazilian defined as "a rich white man." To escape from her misery Carolina spent her spare moments in writing futile, imaginative novels which, with their portrayal of life in palaces where all was beauty, found no eventual favor with the *Reader's Digest* when submitted to its editor; fortunately, she also wrote this precious diary of her own life.

The diary covers only three of Carolina's nearly fourteen years in the favela. A truly great book, it brings vividly alive a woman of astounding courage, strength, gentleness and wisdom, in her dramatic conflict with Hunger which threatens to destroy her and her children. It describes social conditions which are rightly termed the cancer of modern civilization, and it is largely motivated by Carolina's desire to make this world a better one. The formal education of the Negro author ended in the second grade, but she proves that life can also be an educator if one has the ability to observe and the energy to think.

The narrative covers the account of how she earned the food to keep herself and her children alive. It describes her shack with its rotting boards and cardboard roof, the tin cans that served for dishes, the mosquitoes killed by the seemingly risky process of running a burning newspaper over the walls, the mud and the stinking

garbage in the yards. It tells of the favela's sickly children and of the sick morals of the adults.

How are the tremendous social problems of such a slum met by religious organizations and State agencies? Churches give occasional aid, but it is pathetically inadequate to the need. Brother Luiz may come to preach resignation, but Carolina thinks that if he were married and "saw his children eating rotten food already attacked by vultures and rats, . . . [he] would rebel, because rebellion comes from bitterness" (p. 92). As for the State agencies, Carolina has only scorn for their work. She tells how she herself was shuffled from bureau to bureau when she called for aid at the Offices of the Social Service. "Welfare agency!" she exclaims, "Welfare for whom?" And when the Health Department put on a street show to encourage people not to use the river water where snails were making them ill, it left no medicine for the 160 positive cases reported from the single favela. One of the Department's recommendations to favelados who were dying of starvation was that they build bathrooms as a health measure! As for the State Children's Shelter, it is described as a hell of horrors and a school of immorality.

Carolina has little to say on race relations, though she notes that "in the old days . . . the blacks . . . took care of the whites. Today it is the whites who are taking care of the blacks" (p. 33). The whites rule Brazil, she says, and she hopes that God may "enlighten . . . [them] so that the Negroes may have a happier life" (p. 39). When told that, in the United States, Negroes were not wanted in the schools, she "kept thinking. North Americans are considered the most civilized. And they have not yet realized that discriminating against the blacks is like trying to discriminate against the products of Nature" (p. 127). As for herself, she is happy to be black. "I adore my black skin and my kinky hair. The Negro hair is more educated than the white man's hair. Because with Negro hair, where you put it, it stays. It's obedient. The hair of the white, just give one quick movement, and it's out of place. It won't obey. If reincarnation exists I want to come back black" (p. 72).

And what of the politicians who have the power to change social conditions? Carolina has little faith in them. Only at election time do they show up with their promises; once elected, they try only to get rich. And so, when her book was finally published and a state senator asked for her autograph, she wrote: "I hope that you give the poor people what they need and stop putting all the tax money into your own pocket. Sincerely, Carolina Maria de Jesus" (p. 14). "Those who govern our country are those who have money, who don't

know what hunger is, or pain or poverty. If the majority revolt, what can the minority do? I am on the side of the poor . . . We must free the country of the profiteering politicians" (p. 47).

"Democracy is losing its followers," she feels. "In our country everything is weakening. The money is weak. Democracy is weak and the politicians are very weak. Everything that is weak dies one day" (p. 46). Loss of faith in democracy is not confined to the poorest. When Carolina had stopped at the shoemaker's, Senhor Jacó "said that if we had communism he would live better, because what his shop produced didn't pay his expenses. In the old days it was the workers who wanted communism. Now it's the bosses. The cost of living makes the worker lose his sympathy for democracy" (p. 118). Carolina herself suggests a different solution. "The politicians," she writes, "are a long way off from the people . . . But the people must not get tired . . . They must fight to improve Brazil so that our children don't suffer as we are suffering" (p. 62). Her final admonition to all politicians is to remember that "people do not tolerate hunger" (p. 37). Her book is by no means one to interest only Brazilians!

Albuquerque, New Mexico

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Minha campanha. By FERNANDO FERRARI. Pôrto Alegre, 1961. Editôra Globo. Pp. 238. Paper.

The author of this book is the *gaúcho* Fernando Ferrari, several times elected by the people of his State, Rio Grande do Sul, to the State and Federal Legislature. In 1947, in the capacity of State Representative, Ferrari wrote the entire chapter on the "Ordem Social e Economica da Constituição Gaúcha" (Pertaining to the social and economic order of the Constitution of Rio Grande do Sul). Later he was elected Federal Congressman and, immediately after that, he was chosen to be the leader of his party in Congress. In May of 1959 Ferrari—thanks to his idealism and efficiency—was nominated by the students and workers of his State to run for the Vice-presidency of the Republic, in the elections of 1960. Ferrari had as his opponent, the president of the Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro (Brazilian Labor Party)—João Goulart—and also the "mineiro" Milton Campos (representative of the State of Minas Gerais). In spite of having obtained nearly 2,500,000 votes, Ferrari was defeated by his "fellow-gaúcho" Goulart, now President of Brazil.

The present book contains 21 chapters and constitutes, from the first page to the last, a "libelo" (pamphlet) and at the same time an