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Item: Memoranda relating to *Gideon Planish*, 1943.

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To PRODUCERSSubject SUGGESTED TREATMENT OF GIDEON PLANISH
by Sinclair Lewis ~~Aug 3 1943~~From William James Fadiman Date 7-21-43

Mr. Lewis, who is now on the lot and available for discussion with any interested producer, offers this six-page outline as a possible treatment for his recent GIDEON PLANISH. To refresh your memory, a synopsis of the novel is attached.

(PLEASE DO NOT LOSE OR DESTROY THIS
SYNOPSIS. RETURN TO READING DEPT)

S A V E P A P E R !

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For William Fadiman

Suggestions on the screenplay from Gideon Planish as made by Sinclair Lewis.

The fundamental story of the novel, Gideon Planish, is not an account of climbers and useless organizations and philanthropic fakers at all. The real story is that of a fairly good-natured, fairly competent college professor who would have remained a second-rate college professor all his life except that he was desperately and honestly in love with his wife, Peony, a pretty, jolly and warm-hearted girl, a number of years his junior. She is extremely extravagant and yet she is not the ordinary gold-digger because what she wants is homes and possessions and expensive meals to be enjoyed by both of them. Yet her extravagance does drive him on to perpetual striving and intrigue and that not in any ordinary commercial field but in a field where he is supposed to be altogether noble and humanitarian.

His problem is to hold her without either becoming too much of a hypocrite or wearing himself out with incessant conferences, speeches, committee meetings. If he can get her back to the rustic college where he met her, maybe he can hold her and satisfy her appetite for luxury and meeting celebrities without killing himself.

Now that is the real story as stated in the novel -- and it is not any "expose" but a love story. In making the film I would start it more than half the way through the actual book and would, without changing the characters as they appear in the book at all, suggest the invention of a number of new incidents along with the present incidents already in the book to portray this dramatic story of trying to hold love and not be ruined by the torrent of big city philanthropic activities. The real center of the book and

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probably the star of the picture becomes Peony, with Winifred Marduc as the second lead, Gideon as the third, Winifred's husband, Harold, as the fourth, and old Colonel Marduc as the fifth; we start the picture after Gideon and Peony have met the Marduc outfit or just before they met them. Winifred finds this girl Peony very competent in the way of being quick-witted, tactful and all sorts of people, very appealing to men and not disliked by women. Peony is a natural intriguer. The only thing is that it has never occurred to Peony that she could just as well have the career, with her husband as secondary, instead of his having the career, with her getting out of it only what he wants to give her.

Winifred's encouraging her to take the lead is already portrayed in the book but for the picture I would sharpen it and emphasize it. And Peony comes to occupy important positions on committees and to be an officer of different organizations as, in the story in the book, she has not yet done at the end. In the film Winifred would have far more control over her father and her father's activities than she does in the book -- she would be a real woman czar of philanthropic and sociological worlds. Peony even gets invited to lecture for money and in this lecture she expresses an extremely low opinion of male intelligence with poor Gideon, seated in the front row in the lecture hall, having to listen and take it.

The more Winifred boosts Peony, the chillier she is to Gideon till finally Gideon is able to hold his job with the DDD only by the intercession of Peony.

There is of course, in the picture, a background of committees, conferences, lectures in hotel ballrooms as in the book, but very much less of them and with much less emphasis on the wastefulness

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or actual crookedness of many such organizations.

Winifred's husband, Harold -- the Major -- is also played up much more and we have scenes in which Winifred puts him in his place, elegant and military-looking though he is.

All of this should be in the vein of comedy rather than of any bitterness. I suggest a scene of a tremendous public dinner, everyone in his or her most expensive evening clothes, with Winifred presiding, some woman professor or doctor as the chief speaker, Peony also saying a few choice words, and Colonel Marduc, Major Harold and Gideon, all three sitting up on the dais at the speakers' table, merely also-present.

There are photographers with flashlights, the interviews with the female dignitaries before the dinner, the celebrities and the celebrity hunters at their little tables looking up at the glory of Winifred and Peony. Harold and Gideon can not take it any longer. They sneak out of the magnificence of the huge hotel top-floor ball-room where the dinner is held; sneak down by back stairs and service elevators to the bar room downstairs; and there start in on some pretty earnest drinking as they condole with each other over being the husbands of celebrated women. They are joined by seven or eight other men, all perfect strangers to them, and to each other, who feel themselves equally blocked in one way or another by earnest wives. The meeting becomes a love feast of oppressed masculinity and pretty musical, when at the door of the room rings out a feminine voice calling a masculine name -- we do not hear exactly what name she is using; the word may be indistinct but the tune is unmistakable, and every single man at the round table springs up, turns toward the door, and weakly says, "Yes, dear?"

But when the woman stalks in it is to the bartender that she addresses her, "When are you coming home?" And the bartender

answers, "When I get good and ready -- scram."

All the aggrieved men drink to this masculine hero.

The domination of Gideon by Peony has gone to a point where she is likely to take his job away from him, when he receives an invitation from his old college to return and become its president. This will be the first time that we shall have seen this college, although it is possible that in a flashback we may there see the young Gideon wooing the young Peony. He goes to the college without Peony and is highly pleased at again being received as an important man.

He returns to New York and has a perfect civil war battle with Peony and Winifred. He wins only by threatening to give an interview to the papers about the private life of Winifred and Harold.

Reluctantly, Peony accompanies him to the college and takes her position as first lady of it. But she is soon pleased to be dominating even in this much tinier kingdom without having the slightly overwhelming Winifred bossing her. The film ends with Peony practically the president of the college and her husband -- though not too discontented -- president in name only. We end with a scene in which Peony tells how happy she is to be again just a sweet little housewife -- only of course Gideon will have to fire that dreary little professor of Greek, who hasn't been properly humble to her.

I have a notion that another scenario writer would, as this plan departs in many ways from the original plan and as the stress should be far more on comedy than is the book, handle the scenario much better than I could. But I suggest a few incidents to be considered:

Gideon off on a lecture trip and the exasperation of being greeted by horrible second cousins of whom he has never even heard. This incident is suggested in the book.

The former professor of poetry -- and advertising man who becomes a great journalistic military expert.

The frantic rivalry between various celebrities as speakers at a dinner.

The departure for a time from comedy into sheer drama and emotion when Gideon suddenly discovers that the little wife has become the big boss and that he can not laugh off the fact that it is she, not he, who is chummy with Winifred, Colonel Marduc and of all sorts of other combined socialite-philanthropists. Peony can sit on the Colonel's knee and play bridge with the French Colonel, at a big party, while Gideon is lucky if he isn't taken for the butler.

Gideon and Peony with rival booths at a big charity fair. Each of them is trying to give away improving money-begging pamphlets, but no one comes to Gideon's, while Peony's booth is jammed.

The pathetic yet exasperating comedy of the scholarly little crook who starts an entirely fake organization with nothing but a secretary and a glib line of talk and a desire to grab as many donations as possible for his assets -- Gideon tries to put him out of business but Peony takes a fancy to him and snatches him into a safer and more lucrative **job with the DDD.**

Throughout the story, the strong partisanship of Carrie for her father, Gideon, as against Peony. There can be a rather touching comradeship in their surprise and worry as they discover that Peony is manhandling, or womanhandling, both of them.

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Possibly the biggest scene in the screenplay would be a triangular one of Gideon, Winifred, and Peony in which Gideon fights Winifred foot-to-foot for -- not the domination but the friendship of Peony; and he, essentially the Caspar Milquetoast for all his oratory, who really just wants to be snug with his little wife, is accused by Winifred of being the traditional masculine friend trying to drag all women back to the harem.

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Theme: The satiric saga and career of a professional do-gooder and
uplifter who spends his life directing organizations and leagues.

Professor Gideon Planish wanted to be a Senator or a minister but he finds himself teaching public speaking at Kinnikinick College. His real career starts when he falls in love with Peony Jackson, a coed, and throws aside his understanding mistress Teckla to marry her. Extravagant Peony's yen for horrible bric-a-brac makes her start Gideon on the path of uplift via a Censorship Board, the editorship of a rural education paper, and eventually into a secure post in a Rural Education Foundation where Gideon learns the technique of mailing out literature with a Message and of prying funds out of the philanthrobbers - those wealthy souls with a vague yearning to do good in the world. Through contacts with other professional organizers Gideon works for every phoney uplift racket from crackpot church leagues to Cultural Eskimo Federations and out-and-out **anti-labor** Fascist groups. But Gideon esteems himself a liberal and he is happy with the Dynamos of Democratic Direction with which Colonel Mardue and his daughter, Dorothy Thompson-esque Winnifred, hope to found an American Soviet under their control. When war comes, Gideon sickens of uplift leagues and would gladly go back to Kinnikinick, but he is snared in his own web. Peony is now working with Winifred's feminist society which plans to give the U.S. over to the control of women and, of course, Winny. Already Peony is in control of Gideon, henceforth she is the dominant uplifter.

Reader: Ab Jackson Jr.

At the age of ten Gideon Planish, son of a veterenarian taxidermist in Vulcan (pop. 38,000) in the great state of Winnemac, aspires to become a Senator or a popular minister and tell the people in rotund and oratorical phrases all about Liberty and Plymouth Rock.

When Gideon registers at Adelbert College his hero is William Jennings Bryan and he can already quote the "Cross of Gold" speech with only a few mistakes. He does so to the startled Dean when he demands to be allowed to take Forensics and Extempore Speaking, but the Dean, after arguing with him for a few moments, coldly turns him down, for Public Speaking at Adelbert is reserved to upperclassmen.

Gideon also discovers that Debating is an upperclass perogative and he complains bitterly to a new found friend -- Hewitt Hatch -- that Adelbert apparently doesn't want intellectual and idealistic freshmen. Hatch, a cynical idealist himself -- an ex-reporter who sneers at the inevitable tie-ups between public speaking and the Home, Mother, The Bible, The Flag and The Cross -- is taken in by Gideon's estimate of Gideon. He proposes that he and Gideon start a Socialistic Society. In one minute he converts Gideon to Socialism, and Gideon is so flattered that he quotes his salutatory address (delivered at Vulcan High School) which begins: "The fruit of the seven seas and the broad fields of the legendary East and the broad-bosomed West have been garnered by our illustrious princes of transportation who have lent themselves to enlightened barter not to merely expand their own princely fortunes but to fill the hungry mouths of the clamouring multitudes."

The Socialist Club in the enlightened year of 1910 attracts five members: Gideon, the chronic non-conformist Hatch, an earnest young student of Scriptures, a labor organizer, and a wealthy parlor pink. Automatically Gideon becomes chairman and the meetings are pleasantly

spent in talk for and against Christianity, a State Church, Capitalism, Russia, Adelbert College, science, football, women and Packard cars. With his talent for organizing, Gideon proposes a weekly magazine and even writes Debs and Bernard Shaw for contributory articles.

It is Hatch, however, who proposes the more practical scheme of challenging the Adelbert Debating Society to a discussion of Government ownership of railroads. By informing the scarcely surprised Dean of this accepted challenge Gideon washes his hands of Socialism, finding it prudent since the Socialists are in bad repute just then (the Los Angeles Times building has just been blown up by the McNamara brothers) In return for his stool pigeon apostasy the Dean allows Gideon to take Forensics and Extempore Speaking. And, by blackmailing the Debating Society with the threat to reveal the accepted challenge. Gideon becomes a Debator.

The high point of Gideon's career as a Debator comes when he goes East to Erasmus College in Ohio and before a crowd of 75 maintains that Government ownership of railroads is not only inefficient but a menacing, subversive tenet of that most European doctrine -- SOCIALISM! After winning the debate (with the cooperation of God and the audience) Gideon is seduced by the hotel night maid -- a lusty German woman who is lonesome for the farm and her Otto. As he goes to sleep that night he thinks: "Nothing can stop me! United States Senator..."

That summer Gideon goes to sea as a waiter on a Great Lakes Steamer. In the darkness on the lower decks he firmly decides that he will be a Good Man -- a bringer of Messages of brotherhood and Democracy to a waiting, longing world. It seems as though Destiny is speaking to him.

Next fall at college Gid turns his talents to organizing a pressing establishment called Ye Olde Pantorium with 25% of the profits.

He succeeds, by dint of campus newspaper articles decrying unpressed pants, in driving a local pressing shop out of business, getting himself in debt, and nearly flunking out of college. On the side he organizes a Sophomore Prom (which never comes off.)

In Junior and Senior Years he is a class president, manager of the baseball team, and chairman of a dozen organizations. Hatch accuses him of trying to teach everybody on the campus how to go to the bathroom.

When Gid reveals his political ambitions and his yearning to solve the world's problems by old-age pensions, free trade, adequate defense and stern adherence to the policies of Lincoln and Jefferson, Hatch suggests that he and Gid go to the State Capitol -- Galop de Vache -- and observe the state legislature in session.

It is a disillusioning jaunt. From the gallery Gid listens to the legislators arguing not about Liberty and Democracy but about mending market laws to define limburger cheese and to extend the corporate existence of the Monarch Highlife Brewing Company. Observing minority leader Senator Kurtshaw leave the chamber, Gid and Hatch believe him a kindred soul and follow him to announce that they (or rather Gid) would like to get into politics and do big things like denouncing Union Labor and quoting the Gettysburg Address instead of wasting the public time on tripe about cheeses and beer.

Without attemptint to conceal his distaste for Gid, Senator Kurtshaw reminds him that State Legislators are badly paid business men trying to do what the public wants in order to get reelected. If Gid wants to go into politics he can damn' well go see his county committee. On the way back to Adelbert Gid decides that he will be a college president, line up the alumni for contributions, and double enrollment.

At 29 Professor Gideon Planish, Ph.D. of the University of Ohio is Professor of Rhetoric and Speech at Kinnikinick College in Iowa. He has a brown beard, a commonplace squatness, and an air of learning and a mistress. He has even spent a summer reading at Yale library and being snubbed by all the Yale professors who weren't reading at Oxford and being snubbed by Oxford professors.

Gid isn't altogether happy at Kinnikinick where he teaches routine classes to the two or three hundred students who attend that Episcopal river bluff seat of learning, but it isn't a bad life. In ten years he may be president, especially if he continues to cultivate W.C. Pridmore, local bank president and trustee of Kinnikinick. It is Pridmore's widowed daughter, Teckla Schaum, who is Gideon's mistress.

Freshly returned from New Haven in a new linen suit Gideon makes his calls of policy; first to Mr. Pridmore, then to the Book Shop and co-op, the Administration Building. To each friendly voice of greeting (to which Gideon's soul expands) he replies that New Haven and Yale are all right but give him good old Kinnikinick any day. Another policy call is to see Dr. Edith Minton, English Teacher and proctor of Lambda Lambda Lambda Sorority, whom Gideon plans someday to marry because she would be a credit to him and adorn his dinner parties.

After paying his respects to Edith Minton Gideon drops by to see the Rev. Dr. T. Austin Bull, president of Kinnikinick, a deceptive elegant who looks like an actor or a cavalry captain.

Now Gideon is free to visit Teckla Schaum who welcomes him with passion. With Teckla Gideon can be honest instead of expedient and it is a relief to be chatting with her over highballs. To Teckla Gideon is a simple and friendly young man. She has been sleeping with him for a year, having been lonesome for the smell of a man's pipe and the growl of his thunder since her husband was killed two years before.

She has a sincere passion for Gideon and she takes unquestioned joy in assuring him that he is a superior man. Someday she hopes he will love her though she knows she is thin, plain and four years older than he. She exclaims ecstatically over the \$11.99 bracelet that Gideon brings her from New York. In her mind it pays for all the reading, notes, suggestions and quotations she does for Gideon's speeches.

"She's one person that appreciates what I am," thinks Gideon. "It's a darn shame she's so small town and ordinary. It wouldn't be fair to take her to New York and Washington to face those snobs and intriguers."

Gideon falls in love at first sight at his opening class in Introductory Rhetoric and Composition. He is dishing out selected quotation (written down for him by Teckla) from English novelists to prove that the magic art of writing is adherence to scientific rules of paragraphing when he sees the girl -- plump, shapely and exciting. She is in the front row agreeing with him with her eyes. Her eyes continue to agree with him and approve of him while he shows the class (by acting out the respective parts) how a rich full mellifluous diction sells vacuum cleaners to a pleased housewife whereas crude language fails miserably.

When the girl who introduces herself as Peony Jackson from Fairbault, Minnesota comes to the platform after the lecture and shamelessly confesses that she wants to take Oral Interpretation of the Drama in order to have another class under Gideon, Gideon knows he is in love. Regardless of the Sacred Laws of Kinnikinick College, Gideon makes a date to meet her at Postum's Drug Store at ten that night.

Gideon is cross with Teckla that evening and manages easily to leave her at 9:30. No, Teckla will never do as a wife who can climb the heights with him. But Peony Jackson, now there's a girl.

Gideon does not dare run the frightful risk of being seen in public buying a co-ed a soda more than once, and the taboo that rules Kinnikinick and makes a wide gulf between faculty and student gives Gideon all the anguish of a Capulet inexorably separated from a Montague. At a faculty dance for the benefit of the Freshman Class, Gideon, after his expedient dances with Mrs. Bull, risks a dance with Peony who seduces him with her eyes and promises to meet him next night in the park. So well does Gideon cover his interest in Peony that the jealous Teckla berates him after the dance for neglecting her for that old Mrs. Bull.

In the park next night Peony and Gideon mutually confess that they love each other and become secretly engaged since college rules are against having married students. Gideon is ecstatic when Peony chatters that she can see him as a Senator or a Governor and how she will delight in helping him get to the top by believing in him and giving dinner parties. This is certainly the girl for Gideon!

It is a disappointment to Gideon that Peony is obviously not suited for any of the parts in POOR PAPA'S PRIZE, the class play which Gideon directs by virtue of being professor of public speaking and having seen three stage plays in his life. But he makes Peony stage manager and meets her during rehearsals for stolen kisses in a bower behind stage flats. He gives that up when Dr. Edith Minto almost catches them there. Only Gideon's talent for intrigue and Peony's like flair save them.

Gideon has no way to see Peony now and he is tortured by thoughts that she may fall for some hairy chested clown of a football player. It requires all his cowardice to keep from telephoning Peony, who, far from seeming hurt by his neglect, actually ignores it. Professor Gideon Planish even begins to have insomnia at nights, probably because he doesn't see Teckla as often as usual, deeming it not quite moral to

be sleeping with her too much when he loves Peony so.

The night the play is produced is a bad one for Gideon. No one seems to applaud him! Don't the fools realize who hammered every phrase of Irish dialect into the comic hired man? Apparently they don't, for the comic gets the applause. It's bitter gall to Gideon.

The insomnia keeps up. As a cure Gideon decides to walk the six miles out to a rustic lakeshore shack belonging to the Pridmores which he and Teckla have often used as a bower of love to see if a return to nature won't bring sleep and relief. Tired by his walk, he is already asleep when Peony arrives and wakes him. Gravely she tells him that a shameless hussy who follows a man out to a shack in the woods deserves all she gets. She proceeds to shed her clothes.

Gideon, shocked, becomes moral and suggests that she use the other bed. He is almost awed by the fact that this girl loves him so much that she doesn't care whether she can "trust" him or not. Peony, shamed by his morality, bursts into tears and, growing up as much as is possible for him, Gideon crawls into her bunk.

Immediate marriage with Peony is a must now for Gideon. He calls on Teckla next morning. "I guess the kindest way would be for me to come right out..." he begins.

"Gid, I imagine you've come to tell me you've fallen for some girl," says Teckla so calmly that Gideon resents her lack of tragedy. "Is that it?"

Relieved at the ease of breaking with Teckla, Gideon fumblingly tells Teckla that it must appear to Trustee Whidmore as if she threw him over. Teckla agrees. "Maybe you will grow up," she says. "Maybe I'm fond enough of you to want you to. Maybe that girl--blast her--can do it. I never could. So run along and I'll take care of Father Pridmore. Oh, Gid, be true to that poor girl, won't you? Women need loyalty so much."

Gideon hastens to Mrs. Bull, the president's wife, and with many a "dear lady" convinces her that he fell in love with Peony only because she was so much like Mrs. Bull. As a result Mrs. Bull uses her influence with President T. Austin Bull to such an extent that Gideon can marry Peony without losing his job and that Peony can even keep up classes as a special student. When Gideon visits the Jackson Family in Faribault, Whipple Jackson, Peony's wholesale grocer father, learns that Gideon has a hankering for politics and promises to get him in all the lodges and introduce him to all the Boys. But that's too much like work for Gideon Planish

Four years later (1926) Gideon is Dean of Kinnikinick College and the readiest public speaker in town. He lives with Peony in a bungalow whose main decoration is a gold and scarlet cabinet. It is the measure of Gideon's love that he likes it. They have a baby now -- Carrie - and a car; Gideon is only two months behind in payments for the latter.

It was really Peony who made him, Dean Gideon realizes when he comes close to being honest with himself. It was she who made a friend of Teckla and Mrs. Bull and urged Gideon to offer himself to President Bull for all kinds of committee work. Since the Deanship carried a \$200 pay raise Peony promptly bought a \$300 antique Chinese rug to grace the bungalow.

Gideon's favorite speech topic is Flaming Youth. There is no better denouncer of hip flasks, parked car petting and dancing in all Iowa than Gideon. His success with such speeches at local Rotary Club luncheons sets Peony's busy, acquisitive brain to buzzing. One day she suggests to Gideon that the Chairman of the County Censorship Board has just resigned and that it might be politic to call on Mrs.

William Basswood who is the power of the entrenched morality of the district and so pure minded that she thinks kittens should wear stepins.

Gideon easily gets the Chairmanship of the Censor Board with a few well-chosen remarks about novels which pander to the lowest vices of man. Thereupon Peony picks *The Tattooed Countess* by Carl Van Vechten (which she has heard is hot stuff) to censor. It is a setback when Gideon cannot find the book on sale at any of the county's five book stores, but by diligent search he locates two copies at a cigar stand.

The owner of the cigar stand, who never reads anything but *Chic Sale* and *Louisa M. Alcott*, opines that the two books must have come in with a job lot of magazines and *Easter Cards*. He refuses to promise not to sell the two copies.

So, egged on by Peony, Gideon holds a public meeting in Hawkeye Park to denounce the vile tome and call for a boycott of the cigar store. The net result is that the cigar store handily disposes of 100 copies of the book (including three copies which Gideon and Peony buy to send to friends as presents) and that Gideon is invited to attend a Republican County Committee Rally by a Boss who sees political timber in Gideon.

The rally held in an armory decorated in a harvest motif, proves disappointing to Gideon. Most of the delegates talk about taxes and caucuses instead of *Flouring Youth and Democracy*. Gideon sees that a successful politician must have facts in his speeches as well as fine phrases. Then and there Gideon decides that an appointive political job is what he wants, not one of these snide elective jobs, even though the Boss speaks of running Gideon for the Legislature in a year or so when he knows the ropes and the voters.

Gideon continues his career in Censorship to such an extent that his name is always on Page 7 in the papers and the cigar store owner establishes the first real bookstore in the county and takes up reading seriously. He begins to get invitations to speak regularly and is put on the letterhead of the Sympathizers with the Pacifistic Purposes of the New Democratic Turkey as a State Director. Gideon is too new at the business of Organized Uplife to be anything but honored by his selection.

Peony decides for Gideon that he must begin to ask fees for his service as a lecturer. At fees of \$25 to \$75 a speech invitation fall off to eight or ten a month. Peony manages to spend the extra income so well that the Planishes go \$300 into debt, while Gideon tours the state denouncing the Younger Generation as young hellions and harlots headed straight for perdition. He even invents a term -- singe cats -- for them which gains nationwide popularity. Sometimes he wonders whether the kids really do all that stuff he tells about in his lectures.

Gideon is sensible of Peony's part in his rise to renown and affluence, and he loves her all the more for it and allows her to buy new clothes at all the shops.

With practice Gideon becomes the perfect lecturer who can look any ideology or chicken croquette in the face, who can spot a Chaire lady as far as he can see, and who always collects his check before leaving the hotel banquet room. At the end of the year Gideon is \$700 in debt thanks to Peony, but Peony's father comes through to make the Planishes solvent.

Gideon's fame spreads. Soon he is contributing articles to Rural Adult Education, a Des Moines magazine, at 2 cents a word on Consolidated Schools, Country Schoolteaching, and Economizing on the Farm. Peony uses the checks to buy imitation French imitation porcelain

clocks, a new Buick, and a picture map of Iowa with Jack in the beanstalk climbing a 400foot corn stalk and dolphins disporting with Neptune in the Des Moines River.

Before the year is out Gideon is \$1,687.79 in debt and Gideon has been offered (and accepted) the editorship of the magazine at \$4200 a year. After trying vainly to get the college to pay him \$4500 Gideon resigns and he and Peony and Carrie move to Des Moines. At last Gideon feels that he is getting somewhere in the world.

So Gideon sets his foot on the upward path that leads to a world of committees, organizations, and leagues to mold opinion, discuss conditions and situations. He is a soldier in the Far Flung battle of Ideology! He is a Success in Life according to the best American tradition; He lives in a larger city than before; he knows many more people much less well; and he has a somewhat larger income and much larger expenses.

Gideon soon learns that editing a magazine means learning tiresomely a lot of tedious things and not just writing editorials on Trends and talking to fascinating authors. Gideon learns. What troubles him is that he is getting only half his salary and the landlord of the ducky flat which Peony redecorated at a cost of only \$300 is dunning them for the rent. This time it is Gideon who writes Whipple Jackson for money and even then he has to go back to itinerant lecturing to survive.

This time Gideon puts himself, inspiration, beard and all, in the hands of a lady lecture agent, known as The Dragon, who schedules him at high school Lyceums and Kiwanis Ladies' Night.

Let us look at a sample day in Professor Gideon Planish's lecture life. He arrives in Washout at 7:37 A.M. after a sleepless night of changing trains to be met by the Committee and interviewed and photographed by the Press. A Husband then drives the good Doctor Planish

to a hotel where he tumbles into bed in his flannel union suit only to be wakened an hour later by the reporter and photographer who walk in without knocking. Again Gideon tells that Washout is the most beautiful city in the State and that he approves of women parachute jumpers.

At 9:52 the telephone rouses Gideon from a sound sleep. A distant cousin is on the wire. By noon Gideon must be up to lunch with a Wholesale Stocking Convention after which the Husband takes him for a tour of the city. The rest of the afternoon Gideon spends being interviewed by high school girls who ask identical questions and at a tea (no cocktails). At 8 that night he speaks on the Youth of Today for the Current Events Club of the Methodist Church and is heckled by the ubiquitous Communist in the audience. After that he gets his check and telephones Peony. Then he reads True Confessions until his train leaves at 12:30

This regime brings a flood of checks that puts \$1100 in the Planish bank account by summer and gives them a new car and piano, both nearly paid for. It also allows Gideon to put up margin on stocks. When he takes up golf with a crowd of investment counsellors, factory managers, lawyers and music dealers, Gideon is sure he has Arrived. Being asked to give a 15 minute radio speech weekly convinces him of it. Meanwhile he continues to edit the magazine and write his witty column called Cornpone and Popcorn.

One of his essays attracts the attention of the Reverend James Kitto, president of the Heskett Rural School Foundation of Chicago. A little inquiry informs Gideon that the Foundation controls 3 million left to it by a chain store king and that Kitto and his staff don't spend half the interest.

Burning to uplift Rural Schools and do good to mankind and get his hands on that unspent money, Gideon resolves to muscle into the Foundation and eagerly accepts Kitto's invitation to the annual conference.

The Managing Secretary (and consequently the power) in the Foundation is Miss Bernardine Nimrock. Gideon beams when he sees that T. Austin Bull is a delegate. Peony can get Bull on his side through her friendship with Teckla and Gideon himself has lined up the owner of Rural Adult Education on threat of blackmailing him for past salary. It should be a cinch to supplant Miss Nimrock.

When Gideon meets Professor George Riot, also a delegate, he is sure of success. George Riot, brilliant professor at Wisteria College for Women, attained fame by his book Don't Be Afreud in which he advocated Federal penalties for virgins after 26. Over cocktails Gid explains to George that he'd like to use his experience to do good as managing secretary of the Foundation, and George promises his support. He coaches Gid to play up to the Foundation's figure heads -- Dr. Christian Stern and Hamilton Frisby -- and Peony and Gideon are hosts at dinner to these august philanthropists.

Behind scenes George arranges the secretaryship for Gideon at \$3900 a year. In his acceptance speech Gideon makes much of the sacrifice in accepting the post at a lower salary. Inwardly he is gleeful; the editorship of Rural Adult Education never paid him over \$2800. Later, when Miss Nimrock comes to beg him not to take over her place after she's given ten years to the Foundation, Gideon has some anxious moments, but Peony comes in at the right time and gets rid of the woman by reminding her of the nice pension the Foundation has granted her.

So the Planishes move to Chicago, intent on Serving Mankind and Uplifting the Masses.

Peony shops for an apartment and at last finds one depressingly

inferior to their cottage in Kinnikinick or their flat in Des Moines. By laying out \$362.75 for adornments Peony makes the place livable. She also sees enough of George Riot to make Gideon jealous.

Meantime Gideon busies himself with the business of the Foundation. He takes part in innumerable Conferences where he unflinchingly states that Rural Education is a fine thing. He publishes pamphlets, especially one called *New Light in the Little Red Schoolhouse*, written by Hamilton Frisby, Foundation Trustee, and disposes of them in quantity to village philanthropists by the ruse of printing in gold the names of all buyers of over 100 of the books in one lot. He bombards the Press and rural schools with advice stolen from Columbia University and the Carnegie Foundation for Rural Education.

But foremost in Gideon's work and dearest to his heart are the letters soliciting funds. Not yet has Organized Philanthropy become the eighth major industry of the U.S. but Gideon can foresee that it is going to be valuable to be stationed close to the waxing flood of gold. Using lists known to the vulgar as sucker lists, Gideon mails out a letter that brings in contributions. Also by retitling Miss Nimrock's pamphlet -- *Statistics on Salaries in District Schools* -- to *Our Secret Shame*, Gideon makes many a sale.

Gideon's genius at foreseeing the stock market crash of 1929 brings him to the acute attention of Mr. Hamilton Frisby. Not that Gideon really foresaw it. No. Peony had plunged the Planishes so deeply in debt that she became afraid and refused to let Gideon buy any stocks in spite of the fact that Gideon often demonstrated to her (on paper) how he could have made \$7,880 clear in one day. But Peony was adamant; no stock buying on margin. To cover up with his friends Gideon said that the market was going to crash. When it did he got the reputation of being a prophet. .

Frisby even invited Gideon down to his shooting box in Louisiana

and tried to pump Gideon on the way about where he got his inside dope. It is soon apparent that Gideon had no inside dope. He is such a simple fool that Frisby at length tells him the Foundation facts of life. As a professional organizer -- an uplifter and moneybeggar -- Gideon ought to know that there are two classes of people who contribute to do-good outfits: the philanthrobbers who rush to contribute to any organization with the simple-minded hope that it will do good and the moguls who give to escape income tax and get their names white-washed for posterity. Frisby advises Gideon to use the Foundations funds to the hilt to advertise Founding Father Heskett, a business pirate whose children turned out to be congenital idiots. Gideon immediately asks for a salary raise. Frisby tells him not to be foolish; how would raising his salary advertise Heskett?

Gideon ekes out his income by chiseling on expense accounts and accepting bribes from schoolbook publishers for plugging their product. He is getting ahead in the Uplift World. Already he is a trustee of the True American Federation to Attack Racial Prejudice which has done a great work in convincing people who had no racial prejudice before. This was about the effect of 97% of uplift organizations, Gideon knew. Nevertheless Gideon accepts with alacrity the Federation's invitation to its annual Conference in New York.

There Gideon and Peony meet and mingle with the elite of the do-gooders and joiners: Bishop Pindyck, Msgr. Fish, Senator Bultitude, General Gong, Ramona Tundra, the movie star, and Colonel Charles B. Marduc, that diety among advertising agents and owner of a dozen magazines. Gideon butters up to Marduc like a dog to a bitch in heat.

But Gideon also musters George Riot, Dr. Christian Stern, and a fine manly clergyman, Dr. Elmer Gantry, in an effort to line up his own Foundation's trustees to move the Foundation to New York and replace Mr. Hamilton Frisby with Gideon Planish. In spite of Gideon's

careful maneuvering Trisby gets wind of the plan and fires Gideon forthwith.

Gideon weeps on Peony's shoulder about the lost job. Practical Peony has Gideon write George Riot for a temporary job and Gideon goes to New York alone while Peony and Carrie go to Minnesota to live off her folks.

George and Dr. Stern bring Gideon to the attention of Captain Seth Gishorn, distinguished explorer, who heads the Association to Promote Eskimo Culture. "You're evidently a real leader in intellectual advancement, but in this Eskimo racket I do most of the oratory and committees myself," says Gishorn when Gideon states his qualifications, but he hires Gideon at \$40 a week to answer phone calls, lunch with lesser donors and keep up the circulation. By chiseling on expenses Gideon soon earns \$60. a week.

The Eskimo Association occupies a forgotten building with a number of other like cultural projects and some crassly commercial business outfits including a Bible publisher who is so efficient that he can buck the big Bible Trust. Naively Gideon tries to find out something about the Eskimos from Miss Cantlebury, the secretary, who tells him that Captain Gishorn has never been closer to the frozen North than Maine and his aid to the Eskimos consists of an annual \$600 contribution to a mission in Greenland. It's a private racket for Captain Gishorn who doesn't even pretend to do good except to the suckers. His prize exhibit, a supposedly educated Eskimo, is really a Cree Indian who plays professional billiards when not helping the Captain to drum up collections.

Gideon soon sends for Peony who installs herself in a flat in the Bronx and marvels at being in the great city of New York.

Through the Association Gideon meets William T. Knife, pillar of the Antinomian Church since he retired from making a million in the

soft drink business by applying the principles of St. Paul to his life and business. Mr. Knife, the genius who gave the U.S. Okey-Dokey, the largest selling soft drink in America, is currently engaged in skipping about the country at his own expense telling audiences that union labor is no good and that reading the Bible and praying before work will cure selfish desires for shorter hours and longer wages.

It doesn't take Gideon long to convince Knife that he is just the man to write Knife's autobiography for an honorarium of \$5000. So Gideon labors at Knife's humble twenty room suburban manor and listens to Knife relate gems from his life such as the fact that he makes all servants take a Bible test and a Wassermann Test before he hires them; that he has offered to furnish Okey-Dokey free to any Church which will use it in Communion and let the company advertise the fact; that as a boy he saw the value of religion in business when he tattled on a friend who stole some candy and was rewarded by the shopkeeper.

In New York Gideon runs into his old college friend Hewitt Hatch, now a labor news reporter on the Herald-Times. Hatch meets Peony and marvels. "My God, she believes in you, Gid! I didn't know there were any women left like that." Gideon agrees, vastly pleased. He plans to see more of Hatch but never does.

Through Knife, Gideon meets other worthies in the do-good business. There is the Honorable Ernest Wheyfish who renounced politics shortly after he was defeated for re-election to Congress and founded the National Christian Excelsior Crusade with the purpose of getting the worker to church and out of union and communist meetings. Also Gideon meets H. Sanderson Sanderson-Smith who is forming a Citizens' Conference on Constitutional Crises in the Commonwealth with U.S. Senator Bultitude as Chairman of the Board.

When Gideon finishes Knife's autobiography George Riot gets him a job with the Modernistic Educational Bureau which sells encyclopedias to a selected list of suckers by electing them governing members at high dues and sending the books, rewritten from other encyclopedias by a group of intellectual commandos in a clothing store loft.

When Sanderson-Smith offers Gideon a job with the Citizens' Conference on Constitutional Crises in the Commonwealth in Washington at \$4500 a year, Peony jumps with joy. Gideon has momentary qualms. He knows that the CCCCCC is a reactionary, anti-union lobby, and he still counts himself a Liberal. It takes Peony five minutes to persuade him.

The CCCCCC is big time. Sanderson-Smith, by turns a surrealist, Theosophist, nudist, spiritualist, has something here - a well-heeled outfit that issues a magazine full of strikers beating policemen and pictures of Stalin attending a synagogue and which displays the same tender tolerance with Communists as Communists display toward their opponents. The magazine reaches the desk of every industrialist in the country and it is easy to persuade them to kick in to the CCCCCC with large contributions to hold Communism at bay.

On the profits Sanderson-Smith sends three very charming young boys through college.

The main function of the CCCCCC is lobbying and Peony blossoms at having congressmen and bureau chiefs to dinner. So this is Fame!

Senator Bultitude known as "The Great Liberal" receives not a penny from the CCCCCC. It is enough for him that his association with the organization brings him large campaign funds from industrialists. Also a moving spirit in CCCCCC is the Reverend Ezekiel Bittery who is enlisting a private army called "The Gospel Gentlemen" from former Ku-Kluxers and who writes exposures of the Jews for the magazine.

When Franklin D. Roosevelt is elected, the CCCCCC attacks the

New Deal (many of the anti-Roosevelt jokes including the one about God thinking he was Roosevelt were Sanderson-Smith's brain children) and comes out for factory improvement as a cheap means of keeping the workers from demanding wage and hour legislation.

Gideon is not happy with the CCCCCC. He can no longer call himself a Liberal. Privately he contacts his old Reformer friends to ask them for jobs and he confesses to Peony: "I'll wager there'll be more money - I mean a more dignified social position - in being associated with anti-Fascism than with Fascism. Besides, I'm an old-fashioned fighting Liberal and a man can't turn his back on the people."

Providentially Gideon meets Carlyle Vesper, a simple gentle man who has wrangled remarkable sums of money from Mrs. James Piggott (railroads and silver mines) and Miss Ramona Tundra (movies) to finance a church to end all churches called Every Man a Priest. So Gideon joins Vesper in the Lord's Service at \$5000 a year. For front men Gideon lines up William Knife and Bishop Pindyck.

Peony is crushed when she learns of the change. She liked the lobby and celebrity atmosphere of Washington. She and Gideon have their first real quarrel over the change.

Seeing that Carlyle Vesper is so unworldly that he doesn't even answer feeler letters from philanthrobbers eager to contribute, Gideon has a talk with Victorian Mrs. Piggott and Miss Tundra. When he leaves he is Director-General of the group with an additional \$10,000 in funds and Vesper is reduced (on Gideon's plea) to a \$35. a week clerk.

Vesper tries to committ suicide when Mrs. Piggott tells him, but he lacks the nerve to swallow the sleeping tablets.

The Every Man a Priest Fraternity runs itself and funds are plentiful. Gideon turns it into a Militant Christianity group and

sets Vesper to handling the cranks and crackpots that unfortunately infest all uplift group offices. Knowing that soon Mrs. Piggott and Miss Tundra will turn to something sexier, Gideon keeps his eyes open.

So Deacon Wheyfish crosses Gideon's path. The Deacon is a genius in his way. He can take an ordinary sucker list and smell out the names that will contribute. There is no doubt but that the Deacon could have been one of those professional money raisers who waste no time on amounts under \$100,000 and who garner huge sums for worthy causes by dinners, "boiler rooms" and polite blackmail for from 5% to 95% of donations. But the Deacon would rather boss his own show. Right now he heads the Better To Give Society which coordinates donations and passes them along to worthy groups with quite a bit of the donations sticking to the Blessed To Give mail chutes.

"Give till it hurts!" is Wheyfish's main slogan. His theory is that donors aren't helped by contributions unless it cramps their lives. He wants to educate the public so that people get so in the habit of giving that they'll be ashamed not to sign any pledge for charity funds. He is fond of stating that philanthropy in dollars and cents is the 8th American industry but that it should and must be the first.

Givers fall into three classes, says Deacon Wheyfish: those who contribute from a passionate love of God (never very large amounts); those who give from a restless feeling that they ought to be useful; and those (largest of all) who give through fear, vanity or self-interest. For each type the Deacon has his own methods. Democracy is the keynote of The Deacon's system; he wants contributions from the lowest and most shiftless among the masses.

Fired by the Deacon's words and out of a job because Mrs. Piggott got bored with Militant Christianity, Gideon joins the Blessed to Give

Brotherhood and goes with Wheyfish to dying widows' bedsides to get them to sign pledges before it's too late to store up treasure in Heaven. The literature practically informs every income taxpayer that he must donate 15% of his income to charity by government order.

Wheyfish and Planish succeed in getting a Name for their board of directors -- no less than Major Harold Homeward, son-in-law of Colonel Charles B. Marduc, advertising and magazine genius, and legal husband of Marduc's daughter known to all Intellectuals as Talking Winifred.

Colonel Marduc has amassed 5 million in Advertising and his firm is now so hoity-toity that they handle patent medicines, contraceptives, and liquor through a dummy corporation. In addition Colonel Marduc publishes a dozen magazines ranging from trade journals to LOWDOWN which consists of the confessions of highly seduced maidens written by male hacks. He is a sturdy wencher, a drunkard, and a man who feels that Destiny calls him to the Presidency to save the country from the New Deal Socialism.

Winifred Marduc Homeward, the Colonel's daughter, is the American woman careerist. It is a long shot bet that she will be dictator of the U.S. and China by 1955. She never stops talking about Conditions and Situations. Winifred Homeward, the Talking Woman. She belongs to 27 welfare organizations, edits a feminist liberal weekly which lacks nothing but readability and circulation, and believes in every Cause which a woman's college graduate could possibly believe in.

Major Homeward, her husband, is merely a consort but he is royalty. Therefore Gideon entices the Major to a bar and then to dinner where he and Peony and a hastily summoned George Riot get the Major into a state of liquid happiness and plant the idea in him that Gideon is just the man to head an organization to make Marduc President of the United States, a real organization with plenty of uplift

and idealistic movements.

Carrie drops in and withdraws sniffily. Peony wonders what's come over her daughter at 16 - leaving a good private school for a public school overrun with Micks and Jews and Wops. And talking about nonsense like biology and Hemingway and mechanical drawing.

A most important part of any uplift organization is Research. It reads up on the biographies of some men like the Reverend Ezekiel Bittery, say, and sends for his pamphlets under assumed names and eventually discovers that Ezekiel Bittery is a Fascist. All during this time Bittery will have been saying to everyone whom he can entice to his meetings that he hates Jews, colleges and good manners and loves Fascism, Kukluxers and Hitler. That's Research.

Just now Gideon puts Research to work ferreting out Colonel Marduc's relation to Governor Tom Blizzard, a simple millionaire manufacturer of farm implements with a 12 room log cabin in New York.

Hewitt Hatch whom Gideon encounters gives him the lowdown. Blizzard's hat is in the ring for President; in fact, it's in any ring for anything. Hatch thinks Blizzard has the edge on Marduc for the Presidency and that both Blizzard and Marduc think they're using Winifred as a guide to the Presidency whereas in reality Winifred is using them. Hatch thinks little of Winifred. She not only gives her own version of the Sermon on the Mount, but she carries her own portable Mount with her at all times. She's the first Lady Messiah and her righteous screams are so loud against Fascism that she almost makes Hatch tolerate Hitler.

A week later Gideon is summoned to Marduc's throne-room decorated by the self-styled "Gertrude Stein of Interior Decorating". Gideon salaams and offers to form any kind of organization provided it was on the right side. Which is the right side? "In any

controversary your side would probably be the right side, Colonel," says Gideon and cinches the job with a bonus of being invited to dine with the Colonel.

At dinner Winifred takes over the conversation to denounce Hitler so ferociously that every one present becomes stubbornly certain that Hitler is a fine, jolly fellow who loves girls and sausages and beer. As she talks on the company longs to sit on the front porch at good old Berchtesgaden and talk about fishing.

To aid Gideon in forming his new organization Marduc lends him one of his bright young men - Sherry Belden, Yale 1928, Skull & Bones and Phi Beta Kappa, who smokes a pipe and wears tweeds and counts himself a Liberal because he praises Gandhi, usually for the wrong things. With Gideon are associated Winifred, Senator Bultitude, Governor Blizzard, Ramona Tundra, Dr. Christian Stern, Bishop Pindyck and Rabbi Lichtenselig. There is also a Professor Topelius who plans to bring eternal peace to Europe by a Federation run by Americans and Professor Topelius. Actually Topelius hates Americans because he thinks they eat lunch at drug stores.

Also there is a genuine Economist, Professor Campion, and Ed Unicorn who have exhausted every anecdote in books and lectures that he ever heard as a Foreign Correspondent. For funds Marduc nicks an aloof investment banker, a burly oil man, and Leopold Altzeit, international banker.

Peony finds it easy to become lady in waiting to Winifred whose other friends have been long talked to death, and Winifred confidentially tells her with a shout that it worried her to think of having loafers and lower bracketeers vote and decide major issues. While Winifred is for Democracy she thinks important decisions should be left in the hands of an expert -- like herself.

Gideon's Society for the Global Glory of Colonel Marduc is finally called The Dynamos of Democratic Direction and it is planned to have a Powerhouse in every community. The unexpressed purpose of the DDD is to supplant the government with a Soviet headed by Colonel Marduc. The ordinary citizens, especially those yokels West of Buffalo, are told that the DDD will bring Democracy and one unending Christmas morning to the American people and the world.

For 3 years -- 1938 -to 1941 -- Gideon serenely directs the DDD while the rest of the world is not so serene.

Let us look at a day -- Dec. 5, 1941 -- in Gideon's life. He returns that morning from Washington where he has appeared as an Expert on Eskimos before a Congressional Committee. He is not quite able to live on his salary, his beard is grey, but he still loves Peony and is dubious about his daughter Carrie now in Hunter College.

To Carrie her parents are survivals of Flaming Youth. Sometimes Gideon worries that Carrie isn't more feminine toward the Wolves and Hell Raisers and Intellectuals -- not that he wants Carrie seduced, but he wishes she wouldn't act superior to the idea of seduction. Gideon has long since given up trying to give Carrie's young men inside information

on the International Situation. All of them disliked Hitlerism and expected quite calmly to go to war someday. They were never impressed by Gideon.

At breakfast Gideon reads the headlines to Carrie who has already read them. He takes the subway to his office which he enters like a sultan entering a harem -- a simile that is apt because there are only $2\frac{1}{2}$ men to fifty women in the office. The half is Carlyle Vesper who is supposed to be office manager but is really a flunky.

In his fine Georgian office Gideon allows his secretary to flatter him, reads his mail, and dictates replies after glancing at the Confidential Special File which contains the annotated names of philanthropers good for at least a thousand. One letter this morning disturbs Gideon. It is from Johnson of Minneapolis, a local powerhouse leader.

Johnson writes that he's pretty discouraged. The DDD seems to be trying to make a mystery of Democracy and their inside information consists of stuff like the fact that Zeke Bitterly is a Fascist. Johnson has known that for 20 years. Johnson is worried. There is such a clamor of authoritative voices in the land that they're likely to make the Common Man disgusted with all authority and drive him to anarchy or comic strips.

Gideon dictates a flattering letter to Johnson and turns to peruse a letter of praise from Dr. Elmer Gantry -- the Streamlined Clergyman and Radio Preacher. Beamingly Gideon reflects that he and Gantry made a nice sum by selling DDD buttons as a private racket. But back to business. Gideon dictates a letter to an Editor advertising the DDD and making up a Greek author to hang a quotation on.

At a luncheon of a Sociological Club at the Grand Hosannah Hotel Gideon speaks on changes caused by German occupation of Paris. Then he meets Winifred in the Baboon Bar and they go to a committee meeting

of the Call to Arms League though Colonel Marduc (isolationist until he read editorial comment after a speech before a Defense First anti-war meeting) firmly believes there will be no war.

At six Gideon speaks briefly on the radio. At 8:15 he and Peony enter a Hall where Gideon debates with George Riot, professor of Bonnibel College, on "Resolved: in case of war women should bear arms. For the affirmative Gideon makes a moving speech. Many believe he is earnest. Then Winifred makes a talk in which she praises True Democracy and intimates that civilization will go smash if people don't listen to her.

Outside the Hall Winifred's chauffeur, a taxi-driver, and a Doorman are wondering what the hell democracy is. The taxi-driver thinks it means rich guys ought to give more tips to poor guys. The chauffeur is against it if Winifred is for it. The Doorman, accepting a tip, allows that Democracy is all nonsense if it says he's no better than his brother Jake who is still digging potatoes in Maine. When Winifred is driving Gideon and Peony home she bewails the fact that stupid, stolid people like her chauffeur can't be persuaded to listen to The Voice of Democracy.

That night Gideon bewails the fact that while he and Peony make \$8,000 a year they're really poor people in New York. Does Peony ever think it might be pleasant to get into some good religious organization in a small town? "That's how people degenerate, like in that play White Cargo", comments Peony. He couldn't ask her to associate with farmers again after all her years of struggle, could he?

Saturday, Dec. 6, Gideon flies out to Bonnibel College with George where he takes the negative of should women bear arms in case of war and delivers an earnest, moving speech. He also gets an honorary Litt. D. degree, bringing his total up to 8, including the Ph. D. he earned.

He is back Sunday to take Peony to church to hear Dr. Gantry who says that Europe is at war because people don't go to church and that he and God are displeased about it. After church there is a meeting of the National Directors of DDD where Gideon is forced to quell Winifred's inside tip speech that the Japanese are really seeking to get on with necessary business.

The highlight of the meeting is a non-stop sentence definition of Democracy in lyric prose that is meaningless. Mr. Johnson who has come out from Minneapolis to see what the DDD really is adds a sour note by condemning the definition and asserting that the organization seems to be a bunch of congenital alumni and two very articulate women who sit around patting each other on the back.

At this moment comes the news of Pearl Harbor. Gideon phones Marduc who states that the U.S. will whip the little yellow bastards in 5 months and calls a conference for that night.

Gideon returns home to find Carrie with a young man. The young man walks out when Gideon begins to talk of what a great opportunity it is to enlist and how he wishes he were young enough. Carrie begs Gideon not to hand out slogans anymore. The boy who left was a pacifist six months ago; tomorrow he enlists in the Marines. It is blasphemy to Gideon to deride slogans.

In his hotel room Mr. Johnson writes his son who is in the army and tells the son that he is enlisting, too.

At his conference that night Marduc puts the resources and publicity of DDD behind identifying Marduc with post war negotiations to get people referring to the "Marduc Plan" for cutting Europe into small duchies. Marduc thinks maybe the Japs did him a service at Pearl Harbor.

Governor Tom Blizzard calls Gideon next day. He's going back to the United States. He's disgusted with all the pressure groups which are trying to make this The Organized States of America, Inc.

Blizzard thinks he's got a darn good chance of the Democracit Nomination in 1944 and he's reverting to Main Street. While he's gone he wants Gideon to keep him posted on Colonel Marduc's activities.

Gideon accepts the job of spy for a hundred a month.

The War brings lean times to the uplift leagues. Gideon has a marvelous idea: why not save expenses by combing all of them --with Dr. Gideon Plainish as executive secretary. He starts out to list them all and stops at 2000. He picks a list of 20 and visits them, only to find that many are only a telephone and that the big ones all have the same idea only they want to dominate the cooperative merger.

The DDD busies itself in denouncing Bittery and Sanderson-Smith as Fascists (the government has had them in jail for two months) and in announcing to members that the government wants scrap. Naturally it plumps for the Marduc Plan for Post War Peace.

One day Gideon meets Hewitt Hatch, now in a major's uniform. When Gideon states that he's thinking of joining. Hatch uses a sibilant four letter word whose meaning is most clear.

During this time near-tragedy stalks Colonel Marduc. After a quarrel with his latest mistress Marduc picks up a girl in a bar. She is Flaude Stansbury who works for DDD and who is married to Carlyle Vesper. The apartment to which Marduc takes Flaude makes her cry with joy, but when Marduc visits Flaude's apartment several days later -- a rear walk up on the East Side -- Carlyle Vesper suddenly appears with an open estraight razor and only the presence of a detective whom Winifred has set to watch Marduc saves the Colonel from death. Marduc pays the detective blackmail and gives Vesper and Flaude enough money to take them back to the Middle West.

Thus it is that Colonel Marduc learns that Winifred intends to climb to power over his body, dead if necessary. For that day on

Winifred takes charge of Marduc's career by polite blackmail. Just now she is busy giving out information that the Koreans are about to rise against the Japs.

To Peony Winifred confesses that she is starting an organization of her own design: to put the U.S. into the capable controlling hands of women. Winifred intends to run for the city council. She hires the bored Peony to boss her corps of secretaries, and Peony finds a new interest in life what with business college and the movement. She even refuses to meet George Riot at their favorite hotel d'amour any more!

Gideon's better self --not wholly stifled by years of upright and good-doing -- is beginning to question his soul about making money out of professional patriotism when Dr. R. Austin Bull invites him to be the Speaker at Presentation Day ceremonies of Kinnikinick College. He accepts immediately. "I'm going and maybe I'm never coming back," Gideon exults.

Peony refuses to go. Instead she gives Gideon a gala farewell which consists of innumerable taxi trips to bar, to restaurant, to theater; and expensive dinner for which they wait two hours; and a viewing of a play which Gideon has seen before. The outlay would have made up a ransom for a small prince.

Consequently Kinnikinick has never looked better to Gideon. It's quiet, peaceful, rural and Gideon has friends there. He finds he has been homesick for Kinnikinick for years. Even Teckla comments on the fact that his heart seems to be still in the backwoods. It comes to him as he is speaking to the students that maybe he should be asking them about Democracy instead of telling them. When Bull announces that he is retiring and that Gideon can have the presidency of the college Gideon almost accepts on the spot before he remembers Peony.

He promises to think it over. He is fed up with City Life. Organizations and Conditions.

But when Gideon returns Peony takes him out for a real New York evening and he doesn't dare say anything about the Presidency. Carrie has gone to work in an aircraft factory now and the young men of DDD are leaving for war and throwing more burdens on his shoulders. Finally Gideon does get up courage to tell Peony about the offer.

Peony thinks he is crazy. When he puts his foot down and says that he really does want to go she reminds him of the years of toil and sacrifice she devoted to his career and suddenly furious she tells him that but for her he'd have been out of DDD long ago. She coos up to him after that and Gideon agrees that maybe it would be sorta slow back in Kinnikinick but still...

The sudden death of T. Austin Bull brings matters to a crisis and Gideon makes one last plea to Peony. She is weakening when newly elected Senator Tom Blizzard arrives. There's a big rally on at The Imperial Temple tonight with plenty of Washington Big Shots. Would Gideon and Peony like to come? They can sit on the platform. Maybe they'll be useful to the Blizzard machine some day.

There are 15,000 people at the rally and Peony sits next to the Chancellor General of the United States. She is bubbling over. Surely Gideon can't ask her to give this up for college teas. "I know," says Gideon.

Peony rattles on: "Don't worry if Marduc lands in the alcoholic ward and leaves you without a job. The way I stand with Winny and Tom Blizzard, I can always support you, and you can stay home and have a nice, long quiet rest."

So speaks the New Feminist.

"Someday we're going to have a penthouse on East End Avenue," exults Peony.

"Yes?" says Dr. Gideon Planish. He knows he will never recover from his soul sickness though he follow the path of notoriety for another quarter century.

THE END

TITLE GIDEON PLANISH
 By Sinclair Lewis

COMMENT:

Sinclair Lewis turns his trenchant sneer and his bitter satire here on the Uplift Racket with its professionally money-wasting committees, leagues and federations for and against everything under the sun. He creates a Cooks' Tour of all such organizations from the lunatic fringe to the most sedate and weighty committee in a merciless expose of their methods and of the Reformers, grafters and crackpots who run them...

February 7, 1943

Reader: Ab Jackson Jr.