IT'S A SMALL WORLD, AFTER ALL

"One World," by Wendell L. Willkie. Simon and Schuster, New York, 1943. Paper, 85 pp., $1.00. Cloth, $2.00.

[Wendell Willkie's "One World" is proving to be a sensation—no less. It is fitting, therefore, that THE FREEMAN offer its readers not one but TWO reviews on so important a book. It is equally important that the reviews be capably done. The biographical sketches of the writers we have been fortunate enough to secure for the task will suggest their competence; the reviews themselves will confirm it.—The Editors]

MARION WHITE is a figure of importance in contemporary American letters. She began her writing career as European correspondent for a number of American trade papers. Subsequently she blossomed out as a successful writer of mystery stories. For ten years she conducted the cooking institute of a national magazine. At present she is Managing Editor of "Woman," one of the larger-circulation monthlies in its field. Among Miss White's recent books is "If We Should Fail," a series of stories in which the author has transferred some of Hitler's choicer atrocities to American communities in an imagined Hun invasion of the United States. If that book doesn't keep you awake nights, no reading matter will. Her latest is "Sweets Without Sugar," a war-time cook book which is one of the current best sellers in its group. This one, also, will keep you awake, *with indigestion*, if your wife turns you loose on a supply of the good things it tells how to make, and your resistance fails you.

It is more than political curiosity which has prompted a million people to purchase this very splendid report of an American's trip around a war-torn world. It is far more than that. For here, in 200 pages of simple and pleasant reading, is the answer to that hope which has been fired in millions of hearts during the past few years —the hope of a new world in which war will have no place.

Mr. Willkie had the opportunity to see and talk with big people and with little people in the most legendary corners of the earth—on the streets of ancient Baghdad, on cooperative farms in Soviet Russia, in the guerilla strongholds of China. But his report is neither fantastic nor legendary. Indeed, when awards are being given for concise, clear-thinking journalism, first consideration in 1943 must surely go to this man who has been a Presidential candidate but never a news reporter. He presents these people he met as simple neighbors in a world of diminishing size, and in their own words he offers us their friendship and their desire for better understanding.

His experience, Mr. Willkie writes in his introduction, "gave me some new and urgent convictions and strengthened some of my old ones. These convictions are not mere humanitarian hopes . . . they are based on things I saw and learned at first hand, and upon the views of men and women, important and anonymous, whose heroism and sacrifices give meaning and life to their beliefs."

We are living in a new world, a world whose very dimensions have changed. At the end of the last war, as Mr. Willkie reminds us, not a single plane had flown across the Atlantic. Today that ocean is a mere ribbon, with airplanes making regular scheduled flights. The Pacific is only a slightly wider ribbon in the new air ocean, with Asia at our very doorstep. Far off countries are our present outposts of security; their peoples are our allies in a common cause. And when our boys come home from war, the people with whom they mingled in China and Africa and Australia will be as well-known to them as the people of other states in their own country. More so, perhaps, for they will have shared a common suffering.

In order to have peace in this world all peoples must be free, and this great march toward freedom has already started. Nothing can stop it, least of all Hitler. Nothing can fool the men and women on the march, least of all the big talk of the Western world. The Russians and the Chinese understand the importance of the fight which they have been waging alone. Age-old fears and superstitions are discarded as their sinews throb with a new international strength. These peoples know full well that they deserve the right to make some of the decisions concerning the post-war world.

Fortunately, the United States has a preferred position in this new world. We have developed, to use Mr. Willkie's popular phrase, "a reservoir of friendship" which is more heart-warming than any treaty ever written. This friendship is not new or short-lived. It has a sound base. Years ago our missionaries, doctors and teachers laid the foundation for it. Motion pictures followed, to introduce us in livelier substance. And today, in hundreds of far-flung outposts, American soldiers are arriving in the flesh, to cement the last bonds of understanding.

The future of the world will depend largely upon how we use this friendship. We can no longer shrug our shoulders at the plight of less fortunate peoples and console ourselves with the idea that they want nothing better because they know nothing better. By our own exploitation, we have made them aware of a better life. To follow up our teaching and help to improve living standards of other people would be little more than practical economy, because this very establishment of a higher standard of living would provide a greater market for our industrial goods and services.

Two of the most important chapters in Mr. Willkie's book are concerned with Russia, probably because he wants us to realize that in any post-war planning the United States must be concerned with Russia. He does not hesitate to report that he was tremendously impressed by what he saw in that vast country; he does not want us to overlook the facts.

"Many among the democracies," he writes, "fear and mistrust Soviet Russia. They dread the inroads of an economic order that would be destructive of their own. Such fear is weakness. Russia is neither going to eat us nor seduce us. That is—and this is something for us to think about—that is, unless our democratic institutions and our free economy become so frail through abuse and failure in practice as to make us soft and vulnerable. The best answer to Communism is a living, vibrant, fearless democracy. . . All we need to do is to stand up and perform according to our professed ideals. Then those ideals will be safe."

He saw much in Russia that reminded him of his own Middle West, when he was a boy in Indiana. The houses had the "neat buttoned-up look" of homes in Elwood, the pavements along the main streets were boardwalks, like those he remembered. Even the character of the

towns was the same, with the "hearty, simple tastes, the not too subtle attitudes of mind, the tremendous vitality." Many of the leaders were curiously like the rough, energetic men who created industrial America.

Wherever he went, he felt the surge of the new spirit which holds its promise for peace. In China, a young student whom he never met sent him a letter enclosing a draft plan for the establishment of a permanent peace after the war. He might have been an American boy at one of our own colleges, save for the quaint phrasing of his letter.

"Dear Mr. Wendell Willkie," the young man wrote, "let me assure you that China, one of the bravest and most faithful among the allied countries, has never been daunted or changed her mind while confronting all sorts of hardships; for we perfectly understand that we are fighting for the holy cause of liberty and righteousness, and we firmly believe that a bright future is waiting us ahead, and that God will give us the victory that we ache to get at."

The boy's plan was an interesting one, one that every American can well understand. He proposed setting up monuments to make people hate war instead of praising it; and he proposed that the last day of this war should be made a day for public sacrifices all over the world, and be named "Peace, Free, Pleasure Day." One of his propositions was "to increase the affection among human beings," toward which purpose he suggested that each nation raise peace funds with which to endow scholarships.

There are only three courses open to America after the war, Mr. Willkie declares. We may choose narrow nationalism, which inevitably means the ultimate loss of our own liberty; we may choose international imperialism, which means the sacrifice of some other nation's liberty, and which has never been the American way; or we may help to create a world in which there shall be an equality of opportunity for every race and every nation. He is confident that America will choose the third course, but to make this choice effective we must not only win the war, but we must win the peace also, and we must start winning it now.

—MARION WHITE