

Books

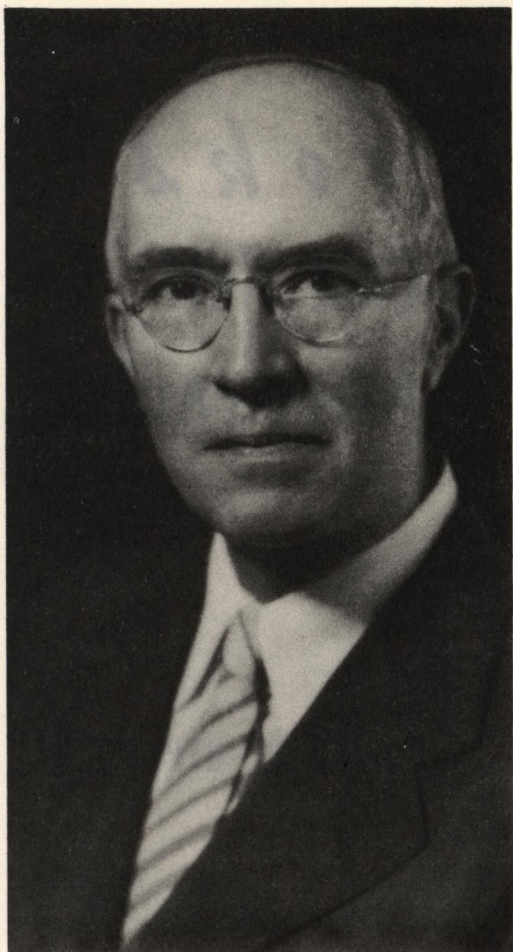
Can Sell
Americanism



By

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"American Speech Up!"



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Books

Can Sell Americanism

By James H. Gipson

TRANSCRIBED RADIO BROADCAST

produced by

AMERICA'S FUTURE, INC.

with

BILL SLATER, *Master of Ceremonies*

Editorial Office

"AMERICANS, SPEAK UP!"

**Suite 1716 220 East 42nd Street
New York 17, N.Y.**



BILL SLATER
M.C. of "Americans, Speak Up!"

SLATER:

(Over music of Theme Song; words and music donated to the cause of Freedom by Richard Coburn and Tom Satterfield, of Hollywood, and played by Richard Leibert, famous organist of Radio City Music Hall.)

SPEAK UP, AMERICANS, before your freedoms fade away!

SPEAK UP, AMERICANS, it's time for you to have your say!

This is Bill Slater, reminding you that in war as well as in peace it is a priceless American privilege to speak up for freedom.

Friends, now we have at our microphone the "poor fellow in the middle"—one of the book publishers whose problems were described by Irene Kuhn in our broadcast summary of her American Legion Magazine story entitled "Why You Buy Books That Sell Communism."

We were fortunate to intercept in New York Mr. James H. Gipson, who created a great book publishing business, the Caxton Printers, out on the sagebrush plains of Idaho. He has become famous for publishing only books that sell Americanism. And

Jim Gipson's life story is a challenge to all of us to Speak Up, Americans . . . for America.

MUSIC: 50 seconds fill-in, or local announcement.

SLATER: *Jim Gipson, one of your many friends in the East told us that the best description of you is just "Jim Gipson—American."*

GIPSON: Bill Slater, just tell them to put that on my tombstone!

SLATER: *But a long time from now—we hope. Now, Jim, we've read that your grandfather was one of the founders of the famous Greeley Colony in Colorado.*

GIPSON: Yes, my father and mother were pioneers there, and I was six years old when they moved to Caldwell, Idaho.

SLATER: *And where your mother, as I've read the story, was the only American mother to live to see four of her children in Who's Who.*

GIPSON: Yes, four of us were there.

My sister Ruth writes Juveniles; Alice is an educator in Massachusetts, and Lawrence, the historian, at Lehigh University, has been named Harmsworth Professor of History at Oxford University.

SLATER: *And yourself?*

GIPSON: I don't know why they let me in Who's Who. Anyway, Bill, Father and Mother arrived in Caldwell—it had all of 500 population then—with their eight children and no visible means of support! Father had lost his very modest means in the bank failures of the early '90's so he made a new start publishing a farm journal in Caldwell.

SLATER: *Well then, you started as the "printer's devil"?*

GIPSON: No, I started in the local bank; worked for nothing for the first three months, and then got all of \$15 a month.

SLATER: *Then how did you become a book publisher?*

GIPSON: I found out before I was seven that books are the best friends that we can have—a constant source of inspiration, pleasure and comfort through life. The first set of books I bought was 10 volumes of Shakespeare. It cost me four months' salary and took a year and a half to pay.

SLATER: *Now, when did you get your urge to create books?*

GIPSON: In 1903, after a semester at the Idaho State University, I had to give up my hopes of a formal education. . . .

SLATER: *But you found your education in books?*

GIPSON: Yes, such education as I have. We borrowed \$450 from an older brother and started our little country printing office.

SLATER: *And it has "grown like Topsy"?*

GIPSON: Yes, much like Topsy. It took 20 years to build up enough capital to realize my long cherished dreams of publishing books.

SLATER: *But small business could accumulate capital in those days.*

GIPSON: Yes, Bill, in those days the tax collector couldn't strangle us and we could plow our small earnings back into the business. We didn't have to support so many bureaucrats.

SLATER: *So you started publishing books. Won't you please tell us, Jim, why you chose the name "Caxton Printers"?*

GIPSON: Because William Caxton, the first printer in England, did more than any other person to establish a free press.

SLATER: *Well, you started with Western authors, didn't you?*

GIPSON: Yes, we did that because we felt that the history of the American frontier—the story of the winning and holding of the West—is one of the great epochs in civilization and that it should be written and preserved. So we began bringing out these books, four or five a year at first.

SLATER: *Gradually extending your market from West to East?*

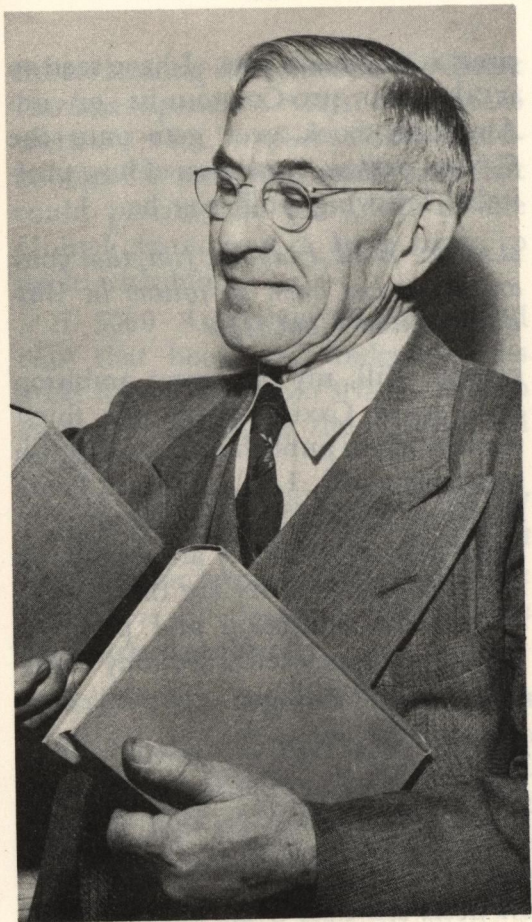
GIPSON: Yes, and building up our sales organization. We had no idea about how books were marketed, and no money to hire experts, so we learned by making our own mistakes. I thought that if an American had freedom—and was given opportunity—he could do almost anything.

SLATER: *Well, do you find, Jim, that being far away from big publishing centers, you have to reach out for authors—or do authors come to you?*

GIPSON: We never solicit manuscripts. About 1000 a year come to us now.

SLATER: *And you read them all, personally?*

GIPSON: No. Our staff agree on what they think are the best—but I personally read and pass final judgment on each one that we publish. Most of them have been rejected by the big publishing houses. But I consider that there are obligations and responsibilities which cannot be evaded if the



*Photo by Frank Q. Brown,
Los Angeles Times Staff Photographer*

J. H. GIPSON
President, The CAXTON PRINTERS, Limited

press is to remain free. I have seen to it that no pro-Communist or un-American book ever gets onto the Caxton presses, regardless of how profitable left-wing stuff may be.

SLATER: *Well, I take it, Jim, that your ambition has been to follow in William Caxton's footsteps?*

GIPSON: Bill, my one great ambition is to make Caxton Books the finest trade editions published in the English speaking world. I do not regard books as *mere articles of merchandise* to make money on. They are something rare and apart. They are the basis of all culture, education and progress. Without the printed word, any civilization would collapse very soon.

SLATER: *Now will you please tell us how you came to publish books on the side of freedom—when that was perhaps rather hard sledding?*

GIPSON: About 1939 I read an article in the old American Mercury by the late Albert J. Nock. He said that he'd been going from publisher to pub-

lisher, looking for someone to reprint Herbert Spencer's "MAN VERSUS THE STATE." Albert Nock regarded it as the most important book that could possibly be published in the United States—and I have come to agree with him.

If 5000 American leaders would read that book and understand its great lesson, we would still be able to escape the pitfalls of the all-powerful State.

SLATER: *So you published "MAN VERSUS THE STATE." Now did its reception prove that the New York publishers were right, or wrong, when they turned it down?*

GIPSON: That depends upon one's yardstick. It took us about 8 years to sell the first printing of 1500 copies. We still keep it in print because we believe that it has a lesson for every American—a lesson that Herbert Spencer must have seen the need for Americans as well as Englishmen to learn when he visited here in 1882. That was two years before "MAN

VERSUS 'THE STATE" was first published in London. It should never have gone out of print. We sell a few hundred copies a year now—and *should* sell many more.

SLATER: *Well, what was your next experience?*

GIPSON: As we went further and further in publishing Libertarian books. . . .

SLATER: *Now please pardon the interruption, Jim. I'm sure our listeners would like to have your definition of that term "Libertarian." I believe it is relatively a new usage.*

GIPSON: Yes, it is relatively new. A "Libertarian" wants every citizen to have the utmost opportunity, the utmost responsibility, the utmost dignity—and that is possible only under republican institutions—and remember, Bill, *that* "republican" is spelled with a small "r."

SLATER: *Well, I'm glad you mentioned that, because this is a non-partisan program.*

GIPSON: Bill, true "Libertarians" are partisans—*partisans of Freedom*. They are against all the theories of absolutism, fascism, communism, and against the theories of the so-called "liberals" of the 20th Century, the Fabian Socialists of England and their counterparts in America who haven't yet learned that *governments with too much power are the mortal enemies of human progress*.

SLATER: Well, now, I think, Jim Gipson, that we understand what you mean by "Libertarian" books. Won't you please tell us more about some of them?

GIPSON: Well, our books in that category were less and less favorably reviewed, or were not reviewed at all, in the metropolitan press—until one of our most important books, George Montgomery's "THE RETURN OF ADAM SMITH," wasn't even noticed by the metropolitan reviewers.

SLATER: Well, Irene Kuhn in *American Legion Magazine* showed pretty plainly how that "silent treatment,"

that you just referred to, can kill a good book. Will you, from a publisher's point of view, explain just why?

GIPSON: Bill, it's this way! Many librarians, both public and private, depend for guidance upon the "BOOK REVIEW DIGEST." That's a sort of Gallup Poll of opinion of the professional book reviewers. Now if the reviewers are preponderantly left-wing, a book which they don't like simply isn't reviewed—and consequently doesn't get noticed in the Digest.

SLATER: *Didn't you have an exciting time with Garet Garrett's monograph, "The Revolution Was"?*

GIPSON: Yes, that's another book, rejected by Eastern publishers, which became a Caxton Printers' best-seller—although it never was enthusiastically reviewed by the metropolitan critics. After we established it as "must reading" for Americans who love their liberty, reprint rights were sought by publishers in New York and Chicago.

SLATER: *Then there must be some copy-catting in the publishing field, as well as in fashions?*

GIPSON: Yes, Bill, someone has to set the fashion—even in freedom.

SLATER: *And to speak up for it!*

GIPSON: Yes, as you say in the opening line of your Theme Song, "Speak up—before your freedoms fade away!"

SLATER: *Now won't you please tell us, "Jim Gipson, American," just who, or what, started you on your way of thinking?*

GIPSON: My father and mother instilled into me as a child the principles of decent Americanism. Then on my way to World War I, in 1917, I had the privilege of visiting with Teddy Roosevelt, and what he said to me I shall never forget.

SLATER: *Well, can you sum up that preachment of Theodore Roosevelt?*

GIPSON: In substance it was this:

"Your generation and the generation following yours are going to have a tremendously difficult problem to solve—the problem of making representative, free

government stable and efficient. Promise me this, Jim Gipson: That as long as you live, you will give of your time, your thought and your energy to that problem to make free government work."

SLATER: *And you made that promise to Teddy Roosevelt?*

GIPSON: Yes, I made it—and have renewed it year after year.

SLATER: *But never, so I understand, have you held a political office.*

GIPSON: No. I have long felt that every community should have some citizens who will be tremendously active in public affairs yet absolutely above suspicion that they will ever seek something for themselves. I pledged myself many years ago to try to be that kind of a citizen—never an office-seeker.

SLATER: *Well, as such a citizen, Jim, what would you say to our fellow Americans?*

GIPSON: I would urge every one of them to remember that we have only one choice—that is between a strong central government and weak citizens,

or a central government of strictly limited powers and a strong, virile citizenry.

It is, I believe, the prime responsibility of our generation, and of each generation of Americans, to hand down to the next a country in which the area of personal freedom has been *increased*. Every one who can think, knows now that the area of personal freedom in America is being *decreased* day by day.

SLATER: *Thank you, Jim Gipson, American. Now won't you talk with us more about your way of living and thinking when you are in New York again, Sir?*

GIPSON: Bill, I'll be glad to. Sorry now that we have to say good-by.

MUSIC: Theme

Now this is Bill Slater saying good-by, and reminding you, wherever you are, whatever you do, in war and in peace, Speak up, Americans, . . . for America.

