

'Valtin' Pardoned

Richard Julius Herman Krebs, once "a professional revolutionist" and now, under the pen name of "Jan Valtin," a successful writer of "confessions," has received a pardon from Gov. Culbert L. Olson of California. The specific crime for which the author of "Out of the Night" unconditionally is forgiven was that of an assault with a deadly weapon. His victim was an old man who owned a little dry goods store. Arrested, convicted, sentenced to San Quentin Prison, Krebs served from 1926 to 1929, then was deported to his native Germany. He re-entered the United States illegally in 1938 and at the present time is an applicant for citizenship.

The Department of Justice, however, has lodged a long series of objections to "Valtin's" continued residence in the "capitalist country" which he formerly despised. By his own admission, he has been an advocate of the overthrow of the American Government by violence. True, he more recently has deserted both the Communists and the Nazis and is prominent in a propaganda movement which professedly seeks the destruction of all forms of totalitarianism. It likewise is a fact that the erstwhile "activist" admittedly is a fugitive from an indictment for treason standing against him in the country of his birth and that the Bolshevist secret police also would like to lay hands on him. Powerful friends, headed by William Allen White of Emporia, Kansas, contend that he would be executed if he were returned to Europe, and Gov. Olson agrees with them that "having come to realize the mistaken course of his earlier life, he has studiously applied himself to qualify as a useful member of society, * * * thoroughly believing in * * * the institutions of democracy."

But the California executive's pardon does not affect the deportation proceedings initiated last March by the Department of Justice. "Valtin" of course is in no immediate danger of being delivered to either the Gestapo or the O. G. P. U., but there are many questions concerning him which should be answered with satisfaction to the public before his right to remain in the United States permanently is conceded.