

**The Skjds-station  
(Posting Station).**

Where the body of the dead Englishman was lying.

"At last the horses drew up at the entrance of an old Gaard, which was also the Skjds-station of that district. Solli had called out immediately, and a young woman in the Gudbrandsdal dress stepped into the courtyard.  
"Yes, yes, stakkar, he lies upstairs," she said, glancing sympathetically at the three travellers. "Come, I will lead the way."  
"They passed up the massive stairs outside the old house, and reached the covered verandah."—Katharine Frensham.

out well-trained and well-educated boys, not crammed, but taught to think and learn. There are also some schoolbooks which come as near the ideal as those which he advertises. It is not always fair to lay the blame of intellectual and moral failure at the door of the schoolmaster. As long as capacities and dispositions vary, as injurious traditions, bad examples and laxity of discipline prevail in the family life, the best of schoolmasters will have an uphill task in striving to counteract these hostile influences. There is much in the constructive part of Mr. Wells's educational scheme that is eminently suggestive. As a small matter of detail, it may be remarked that Mr. Wells calls certain parts of commercial arithmetic by the name "head-sickening and complex rubbish," and recommends their excision from the course, but this would surely be a severe handicap for a boy intended for a business career.

Doubtless the training in the English language is that which especially appeals to the sympathies of the literary man. Every one who has to do with students will agree as to its importance. The difficulty that some of our best science students, engaged in research work, find in expressing their results in decent English is sometimes distressing to their teachers.

The difficult topic discussed under the head of culture of the imagination is treated with tactful skill and praiseworthy restraint, but in the end he leaves the matter very much as he finds it. The one power which alone is able to save the



**The Valley of the Two Rivers.**

Where Katharine and Clifford passed on their way to Peer Gynt's Cottage.

"They left the bridge, passed along the main road, through fragrant fir-woods, and came to a most picturesque spot where two rivers, one of them the glacier-river, met and rushed on together as one. They crossed this long bridge, and found themselves on the other side of the main valley. Here they looked back, and could discern the big Solli Gaard, perched proudly on the opposite mountain ridge. Then their way lay along the easy road by the winding river. It retreated from them, returned, retreated. The sun jewelled the clear part of it with diamonds, and the strange milky glacier part of it with opals. Finally it left them, and they could scarcely reconcile themselves to its departure, but strolled back once more to enjoy its gracious company."—Katharine Frensham.

thoughts of the young from the seductive influences of evil is the Christian belief in responsibility to God, and the full appreciation of the ideal of life set forth in the teaching and example of Christ. To this, however, Mr. Wells does not here refer.

The section on Universities is not written with as full a knowledge of facts as the earlier chapters. Many and radical reforms are certainly needed, and these will come sooner or later. His account of university lecturers and their relation to students, and of their lectures as excerpts from text-books, while it may be true in certain educational institutions, is certainly not applicable to most of our present day Universities.

When a youth takes his place as a member of the State, with possibilities of rising to the highest place, one of his duties will be to take part in the selection of the members of that aristocracy of brains, that is to bear rule. In the ideal republic this is done by the election (in some way not specified) of juries, who without fear or favour proceed in each constituency to elect the representative. By this expedient he hopes to escape both from the Scylla of a corrupt democracy like that of the United States, and from the Charybdis of an oppressive caste system of government like that of our monarchy. Those who have experience of the way in which even the most carefully safeguarded electoral board can be manipulated by a caucus or by an astute party wire-puller will not be sanguine as to the success of this plan even among the high-minded and intelligent products of the culture of the new republic.

Mr. Wells has a strong faith in the possibility, efficiency and stability of his new organisation, and sets it forth in an attractive form. One feels, however, constrained to doubt the truth of the fundamental postulate on which the whole future rests. Considering the complexity of human nature and the variability of human capacity, is it possible so to manipulate the forces controlling evolution as to produce and mould the individuals concerned so that they will collectively work together with a single eye to the maintenance of the new Utopia? Is the scheme really more practicable than any other scheme of socialism, such, for example, as that set forth by Schäffle in his "Gesellschaftliche System der Menschlichen Wirtschaft," or his "Quintessenz des Socialismus"?

Be its faults what they may, the book deserves a wide publicity. It is interesting now, it will be equally interesting if read a century hence in the view of the history of the intervening period. As a literary work it is excellent, as one would expect from the practised hand of the author, and his vocabulary is copious. He expresses his dislike of neologisms, but is not quite free from their use, as in the case of the twice-used word "mattoïd," which may be commended to the attention of lexicographers, as it has not as yet found a place in any of the modern standard dictionaries known.

ALEX. MACALISTER.

### THE YELLOW VAN.\*

"No. 5, John Street" was a very interesting book, but I must admit that I read Mr. Whiteing's advance upon it, "The Yellow Van," with a pleasure that was not only new, but partook somewhat of the character of relief. I was afraid that Mr. Whiteing might do as so many well-meaning people have done, lose himself in the East End. The enigma of the town populations is a very awful one. I should not dream, of course, of complaining of people devoting themselves as nobly as they do to the problem of London. But I do complain of their talking about it as if it were the problem of humanity. Perhaps the queerest thing in modern life is the fact that when we want to talk about the ordinary man, we call him "the Man in the Street." The street is the one place where from the beginning of the world the ordinary man has least often been. The ordinary man is not the man in the street, but the man in the field. It is good, rather it is magnificent, to probe and study among the evil unlucky of the great towns. But it is not good to get used to that life, for the very evil and ill-luck of those evil and unlucky is that they do get used to it. The man who is to remember and arouse their humanity must remember that there is such a thing as humanity, varied but simple, delving the soil in France, looking at the stars in India. The East End

\* "The Yellow Van." By Richard Whiteing. 6s. (Hutchinson and Co.)

is not everything; it is not the East; neither is it the end.

In "The Yellow Van," Mr. Whiteing has travelled outside London and discovered England, the ancient England with all its good and evil, its dulness and its jollity, its tyranny and camaraderie, its strange old diseases and its eternal health. And his work gains in consequence a certain genuine freshness and largeness which is not to be found in the more cramped cleverness of "No. 5, John Street," with its irregular talent, its patches of brilliant truth, and its patches of black and useless information. The cause of the difference does not lie, of course, in the people who are studied (the poor are the poor everywhere, to those who like theories a riddle, to those who like human beings, simply human beings), but it lies in the atmosphere imparted by the intelligent, intolerable people who have studied the matter. Over the landscape of the East End lies the influence and atmosphere of cranks and philanthropists and statisticians and officious and insolent men, men without laughter or humility. Over the countrysides of England through which the Yellow Van travelled lies the influence and atmosphere of the old political heroes of England, rustic and rugged idealists, from William Cobbett to Joseph Arch.

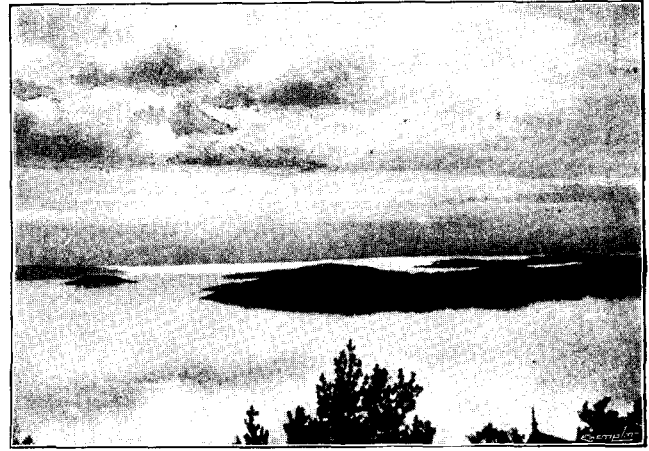
The main outline of "The Yellow Van" is by this time sufficiently well known; it is concerned with the peregrinations of the little group of men who preach throughout the shires of England the idea of the land for the people. The author describes excellently the good-natured Toryism of the oligarchs, the far deeper and darker Toryism of the rustics, the contentment of the oppressors, and the more awful contentment of the oppressed. The whole political matter of the book seems to me tactful and vital. As a novel, however, it suffers from the same difficulty from which "No. 5, John Street" suffered, the difficulty indeed from which all novels of that type are bound to suffer. It is not, I think, to be expressed, as it often is expressed, by saying that political affairs are too serious for fiction. It is rather that fiction is too serious for political affairs. Fiction, like religion, studies the soul and the eternal things, politics study the material necessities. These ought never to be ignored; but as long as men are men, they will be momentarily forgotten in the presence of anything semi-spiritual, whether it be a new religion or a good story about a duke and a schoolmistress.

G. K. CHESTERTON.

#### A HISTORY OF ENGLISH POETRY.\*

Professor Courthope's new volumes respectively on the poets and the poetical drama from Spenser and Marlowe to Dryden, forming the two central pillars and embracing the two central names, Shakespeare and Milton, of the palace of English poetry, substantially increase the debt of gratitude which all English scholars and literary students must acknowledge in regard to a work so nobly conceived and so greatly planned as "A History of English Poetry." At a time when such a large proportion of the available literary talent that is not drawn into the vortex of fiction is occupying itself more and more with mere fragments of literary criticism, in which the limitation of theme and the dispersion of literary interest enables them to write with an assumed omniscience and a spurious appearance of finality, the more honour is due to a scholar such as Professor Courthope, who devotes the accumulated stores of a profound scholarship to the formulation of a sound body of literary doctrine and the construction, upon a solid basis of synthesis, of a consistent viewpoint over the whole moving panorama of the imaginative thought of our country. For a permeation of Life with that ideal light which alone makes human life in any progressive sense tolerable—a light which the optimist firmly believes to be an irradiation from the Eternal Spirit—we are conscious, if we reflect, that we are indebted primarily to our poets. The adequate recognition of this all-important fact, however, is extremely restricted. The men who are capable of bracing their fellows to a conception of the ideal are frequently unaware themselves of the extent to which they are dependent upon poetic capital. Ignorance of it leads to that extreme callousness in regard to poetry which is peculiar to periods of frivolity and demoralisation. To quicken men's

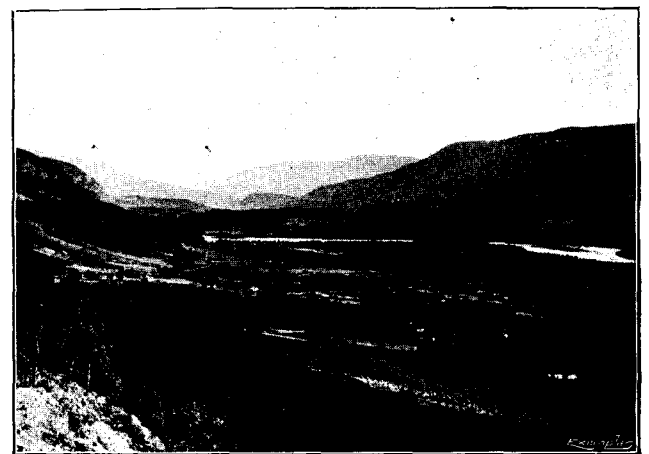
\* "A History of English Poetry." By W. J. Courthope, C.B., late Professor of Poetry in the University of Oxford. Vols. III. and IV. 10s. 6d. net each. (Macmillan.)



The Glacier River.

"Then those wonderful rivers: one of them coming straight from a glacier and therefore unmistakable, even though the changing clouds might give to it varying shades of colour. Grey and glacier, blue and glacier, rose and glacier, black and glacier, white and glacier, golden and glacier. And the other river, not less beautiful because less complex. And the two together winding through the valley: now hidden from sight, now coming into view again, now glistening in the far distance, and now disappearing finally—no—no more glimpse if one strains the eye—one more greeting, and then, farewell—they have gone their way!" —"Katharine Frensham."

perception in the matter through the medium of emotion is the special function of men of interpretative genius such as Emerson and Ruskin. To interpret after this fashion is to stand among the illuminati, at one remove only from the higher slope of Parnassus itself, and is obviously reserved for one or two at most in a generation. To Professor Courthope falls a task which obtains far less recognition, though the qualifications for it are perhaps hardly less rare—the harvesting namely of systematic thought upon the stream of tendency in English Poetry. The value of such work in directing a current of thought and meditation upon the underlying influences in poetry, and the difficulty of getting men whose minds are sufficiently pliant yet erudite, to address themselves to a subject of such vast extension, yet to which the public mind as a whole is so callous (as shown by the fact that no serious attempt has been made to furnish a synthetic view of English Poetry on a scholarly scale since Thomas Warton's "History" of 1781), these are two only of the many considerations which must incline every serious critic to regard the present work with a deep and profound respect. Firmly believing, as we do, not only from an æsthetic but also from a strictly practical point of view, that the possession of a reserve of the highest imaginative power, in a race so slow to respond to any imaginative appeal as the English, is the most valuable asset that we have, the importance of establishing rapport with a scholar of such earnestness as Professor Courthope in his attempt to cover this immense tract of English Poetry in its process of development, cannot, we think, easily be overestimated.



The Gudbrandsdal Valley.

"At one moment dark-blue clouds hung over the great valley, mingling with the mists in fantastic fashion. Then the blue clouds would give place to others, rosy-toned or sombre grey, and these two would mingle with the mists. . . . Then there would come a moment when mists and clouds were entirely separated; and between this gap would be seen, as in a dream, a vision of the valley beyond, mysterious and haunting. Verily a land of sombre wonder and mystic charm, this great Gudbrandsdal of Norway, with its legends of mortal and spirit, fit scene for weird happenings and strange beliefs, being a part of that whole wonderful North, the voice of which calls aloud to some of us, and which, once heard, can never be lulled into silence." —"Katharine Frensham."