

and perhaps never heard his name. A hundred years after his birth, as we turn to him again, how often shall we not find the hopes a time of vast upheaval has set stirring, uttered in his pages, and hear him pleading for the truth of human values in the whole scale of life against the public meanness, married to blind waste, and the indifference to things of the mind, and the contempt of beauty, and the stunting of emotion and imagination, that we have tolerated so long. England is

The Times

infinitely richer in gift, in resource and productiveness of mind than she lets herself seem to be, because she has allowed stupidity to have power to prevent the blood of life from circulating through her limbs. That was Ruskin's faith: and in the enlargement of our vision to see things in their true relations, in the animation of our hearts to express our hope and passion, who shall measure the influence of that burning, tender, indignant, and deep-seeing spirit?

FROM A VICTORIAN NOTE-BOOK

BY W. L. COURTNEY

THAT hapless Victorian age! It is always being exploited for some purpose or other, either by its ruthless enemies or its too-indulgent friends. Sometimes it blossoms forth from the quiet pen of some garrulous Nestor 'a mine of memories'; sometimes it is advanced as a stalking horse by some critic who wishes to lead a raid against the most modern poetry; sometimes it is offered as an excuse for the long reign of sentimentality in England and the lasting vogue of Dickens. And in the background there is generally someone with the epigrammatic wit of Mr. Lytton Strachey, ready with his stiletto to stab overgrown reputations. Heaven knows what the twentieth century may have in store for us in the way of 'realistic' drama, psychologic novels, and unmusical verse. But we know at all events what the nineteenth century gave us. It gave us peace and cultivated leisure. It showed us a society

externally at least decorous. It adorned itself with a constellation of great names — in art, in science, and in literature. It was prosy and garrulous, and full of the triumphs of the middle class. Its taste in furniture and house decoration was execrable. It preferred to clothe the female form divine rather than unclothe it. It was 'homely' without being altogether stupid. It lived in houses and not in flats, and took its meals in its own dining room and not in restaurants. It danced waltzes and polkas, and even stately quadrilles, and was not conversant with Tango Teas or the mysteries of Jazz.

Here is a lady who, under cover of anonymity, pours forth a number of anecdotes from her carefully collected memoranda concerning the manners and customs of the later Victorian era. She — or her editor — calls her book *The Note-books of a Spinster Lady*, and it is claimed that she presents

us with a lifelike picture of the most notable men and women of her day (1878-1903). Indeed, she gives us full measure, well pressed down and running over. It does not matter much who she was, for she has evidently had the advantage of mixing with all sorts and conditions, and writes familiarly about the idiosyncrasies of the great. Perhaps she moved mostly in cathedral closes, and was conversant with the topics which interest Deans and Archdeacons and Bishops; for the atmosphere reminds us somewhat of Trollope, and the episcopal love of anecdotes is well known. She suggests the kind of lady whom not to know is to argue one's self unknown. She has traveled much and seen much and collected much, and has many interests—in ghost stories, for instance, and racing anecdotes, and the behavior of artists and Bohemians. Also she knows how Queens comport themselves and Prime Ministers and foreign diplomats. Evidently a gossip-loving lady, who brings into her pages the people we are never tired of hearing about—Gladstone, and Disraeli, and George Eliot, the Empress Eugénie, and the indispensable Benjamin Jowett.

Let us begin with a pleasant little duel between the Emperor Napoleon III and the Empress Eugénie. Apparently the pair did not always live on terms of the most affectionate friendship. At one of the parties at the Tuileries, Eugénie had been talking very imprudently, and after the guests were gone the Emperor took her by the hand and led her to one of the looking glasses. 'Do you know,' he asked, 'why you are different from this mirror? It reflects, and you do not reflect at all.' But the Empress's retort was quick: 'And you, sir, do you know why you do not resemble this mirror? It is polished, and you are not.'

Now let us come to the great rival orators of the Victorian Era—Dis-

raeli and Gladstone. The duels between the two men were rather like the famous wit combats that used to take place at the Mermaid between Shakespeare and Ben Jonson. Ben Jonson was like a Spanish galleon moving with slow stateliness, while Shakespeare was like an English privateersman, quick, and ready to tack and change his course with every changing wind. Over and over again Gladstone used to get up in the House of Commons and with his weighty oratory demolish the arguments of Disraeli. And yet a moment later his opponent would spring to his feet again, like a jack-in-the-box, and, with some piquant remark, contrive to get the laugh on his side. Once, after an unusually earnest and powerful speech of Gladstone, Disraeli rose to his feet and said, 'Really, the right honorable gentleman is exciting himself unnecessarily. He has been pounding away on the ministerial box until even the quill pens have begun to dance on the table.' Of course the House laughed, and the spell of the orator was broken and the force of his appeal spoiled. Our Spinster Lady relates another incident occurring at a Royal Academy dinner. In his after-dinner speech Disraeli descanted in mellifluous tones on the 'high privilege it was to be thus surrounded by works of imagination and art.' But as he went downstairs afterwards, leaning on Lord Rowton's arm, he turned to him and said, sneeringly, 'Uncommonly little imagination and still less art.' This was overheard, and repeated to Gladstone, who exclaimed warmly, 'Now I call that diabolical!'

Would you like to hear about the old Lady Salisbury, who was called 'wicked Lady Salisbury' because she had card parties on Sunday? She used to go out hunting at the age of eighty in a scarlet habit, and as she was quite blind her horse had a leading rein, held by the groom who accompanied her.

Whenever they came to an obstacle the groom would say 'Ditch, my lady,' or 'Hedge, my lady,' or 'Hurdle, my lady,' as the case might be, and would then put his horse at it, followed by hers. It was not her custom, apparently, to go to church, but on one occasion she made the attempt, and so mistook the hour that she reached the church door just as the congregation was coming out. 'Oh, well, my dear,' she said to her daughter, 'anyway, we have done the civil thing.' Poor old lady, it is a grief to learn that she was burned to death in the fire that destroyed the west wing at Hatfield. The pearls that she wore round her neck were destroyed, the gold of her rings was melted, and there remained nothing but a heap of ashes and one big diamond which she had worn on her finger. There are references in the book also to the Duke of Wellington — of course when he was an old man. The Duke had taken the side of the King in Queen Caroline's trial, and that made him very unpopular with the mob, which had espoused the cause of the somewhat flighty and indiscreet lady. One day the Duke was riding down Piccadilly when he was confronted by a number of men at work upon the road, who, as soon as they recognized him, formed up in a line, refusing to let him pass till he should cry, 'God Save the Queen.' There was no other way of getting home, and the odds were all against the Duke. It would have been folly to resist, so with calm, good sense the old man raised his hat, 'Well, gentlemen,' said he, 'since such is your good pleasure, "Long Live the Queen," and,' he added, as the ranks opened to let him pass, 'may all your wives be like her!'

I have not space to refer to the many excellent ghost tales and stories of Black Magic which will be found in this volume. But room must be made for

an anecdote about Lincoln. Lincoln, as we all know, led an exceedingly simple life, putting on his own coals and 'blacking his own boots, too,' as Cecil Spring-Rice once said. When Lord Lyons went over to America to announce the marriage of the Prince of Wales, he happened one day to witness Lincoln's morning tasks, and looked on in considerable surprise. 'We do not black our own boots in England,' he remarked. 'No,' said Lincoln quietly, looking up, 'whose boots do you black, then?' Here are two episodes in a very light vein. One concerns a letter that an Irish girl wrote to Mr. Tim Harrington, M.P. It ran: 'Honoured Sir, I write to you for justice. I am the girl who split the policeman's head open with a spade, and they got up a subscription for me, and then went and gave it to Biddy Maloney, who only threw hot water over a bailiff.' It is said that Mr. Balfour wanted to read this letter out in the House of Commons, but Tim Harrington would not part with it. The second story deals with a certain illustrious poet, illustrating, by the way, the different methods of composition practised by eloquent bards. 'Get up, Maria,' the poet said one night to his sleeping wife, 'get up and strike a light. I have just thought of a good word.' 'Get up yourself,' replied the indignant Maria, 'I have just thought of a bad one.' If it cannot be affirmed that all our Spinster Lady's stories are new, at all events there are a great many which most people will probably read for the first time. She is a little inaccurate about the 'delightful verses on the subject of Positivism.' The verses in question were written, I think, by Mortimer Collins, and they ran thus:

There was an ape in the days that were earlier,
Centuries passed and his hair became curlier,
Centuries added a thumb to his wrist,
He was a man — and a Positivist.

ECONOMICS, TRADE, AND FINANCE

SOCIAL REFORM AND EFFICIENCY

BY DR. JULIUS WILHELM

WE are experiencing the greatest revolution of all time, which seems to be placing political power in the hands of workers in every country. Now they must show what they can do. The successes of social reform during the last few decades have been very encouraging, for before the war the burdens imposed by social policy nowhere restricted the development of export, and certainly did not result in increasing to any great extent the cost of the production of commodities. Germany, the country where workmen's protection and workmen's insurance were most comprehensive, was also the country where economic progress was most marked. So great was the success of the organization of trade and industry that the world would have belonged, economically, to Germany, if she had only had the patience to work on quietly for another thirty years, instead of allowing her neighbors to feel her supremacy and to realize the danger of most markets being conquered by her. In any case, German social reform was not an obstacle, but an inducement to advancement in all domains, and if now the industrial world of the older order is joining forces with America with the object of rendering Germany economically harmless, that is due to a fear of the latter's greatness and to a recognition of her efficiency, which other nations desire to utilize for their own ends.

The second country, as to whose youthful strength there can be no

doubt, is America. The United States represents the type of the bustling country of large-scale production, which seeks to lead the van in each and every domain. In that country there is much German efficiency, coupled with the possibility to turn it to the best account in an enormous territory rich in raw materials. The country has succeeded in escaping the financial catastrophes of a long war; another year of war and its financial system would have been shaken to its foundations, but it entered the war so late, and had before then so enriched itself as a neutral country, that it confronts peace economy as the actual war profiteer. It has granted the largest credits, and of all the belligerents has been least weakened by loss of capital and man power. It is becoming the banker and shipping firm of world economy. It holds a monopoly of raw materials, and the world is entirely dependent upon its will, at all events for the immediate future. England and France are subordinated to it in the matter of credit policy, and in any case England's unique position as a provider of money and the world's forwarding agent is a thing of the past. And how has America won her present position? By paying the highest salaries and wages, but alas! it must be confessed, by requiring the greatest achievements from the workmen, and by employing machinery, automatic apparatus, and the Taylor system to an almost ludicrous extent. The record achievements in the speedy production of houses, ships, machinery, motor cars, and locomotives prove the ascendancy and are the pride of the American producers on a large scale; every working minute is taken ad-