

eral trend but slightly. This is a peculiarity of human herds that is interesting and that can be made useful. It tells us, nationally and racially, about where we shall probably stop our race for numbers; thus giving us a wholly new outlook on social problems. We are in a position to predict with some degree of accuracy where we are going and when we shall arrive and to act upon the knowledge. For the first time we can say when a population reaches that optimum which gives every individual the greatest opportunity for personal happiness. Whether we shall take the necessary steps to circumvent Nature and keep ourselves at this point is another matter.

These demonstrations form the first part of the book. Then comes an endeavor to answer the question as to why populations develop as they do. This problem the author undertakes to investigate by a laboratory study of fruit-fly colonies, hoping thus to get information that would serve as a key to the same riddle when human beings are in question. Various races were raised and their vital statistics observed and noted. The rise and fall of nations recorded in a laboratory notebook, their national territories being one-pint milk bottles! To see exactly how much light is here thrown on various abstruse matters connected with population growth, one must turn to the book itself. In spite of the fact that fruit-flies and man are quite differently organized, their population growth is much the same. It is apparently controlled by identical laws. One need mention only one of the important conclusions which emerges. Density of flies shows down growth, just as density of people shows down growth; but in the case of the flies it can be shown that food supply is not the sole limiting factor as has been supposed by some investigators of human population increase. Perhaps the mere sight of so many stupid faces here, there, and everywhere depresses fecundity; and both flies and man react to the cause.

The third part of this exposition is concerned with an analysis of the bearing of the sex habits of Algerians on the growth of their population. The data are drawn largely from a recent memoir by Bunle, and are used because they are part of an unusual case history "which offers both adequate records and clean-cut racial and social discontinuities on a scale of respectable statistical magnitude." Perhaps the most important conclusion here is that during recent years the birth rate in Algeria has fallen markedly, although it is "known to be essentially uninfluenced by the intentional practice of contraceptive measures." Whether this conclusion is justified or not, it is difficult to say. One has the feeling that the use of intentional birth control measures is not necessarily precluded either by the relative ignorance or by the religion of the native Algerians. It is hardly a "known" quantity.

The "differential birthrate" and the effect of sex habits on reproduction are discussed in the concluding chapters. One might suppose that those are disconnected fragments of the subject, but this is really not so. The author believes that the evidence reveals an extraordinary correlation between poverty and the deathrate unconnected with ignorance and want of foresight, and he suggests that the poor man's wealth of children is the result of a high sex activity which is given full rein because of the absence of numerous social and intellectual interests available only to the well-to-do. Actual data on average sex experience, as reported here, are novel records for science. They are important records which ought to be common in order for the physician to have a basis for advice which he is often asked to give and is now unable to give. Pearl has made a start, but only a start, for, as he himself rather laments, his records were hospital records all made by old men from memory. How significant they are no one will know until additional compilations are available; but one is inclined to feel that old men are poor witnesses on this score. In memory they have become either Casanovas or St. Pauls,— usually the former.

Altogether this is a book which deserves and which will have a circulation much larger than among physicians and scientists. The author is one of our most eminent scientists and the subject is one of our greatest riddles. It is a sign of a new era when a publisher like Knopf, whose Borzoi lists have shown no entries of a scientific nature, should endeavor to give a technical book to a wider audience.

The BOWLING GREEN

THE Green is very pleased by several letters about Stella Benson. Boston writes:

You surely must own some objects which though perhaps not of tremendous intrinsic value have, because of what seems to be a fragility, real or imaginary, caused you to take unusual care of them. When a friend comes to visit and pauses to admire such objects, you perhaps, like myself, hover over them anxiously as he handles them, fearing lest in some way he injure them.

Now this is exactly the way I feel about Stella Benson. I have timidly dared to give her work to two or three friends who I thought would be most appreciative but there has always been a reservation in my mind as to whether or not I ought. Probably, though, she is fine enough not to be spoiled even then.

About a year ago when my fiancée and I were first discovering that we cared more for one another than probably any two people ever did before, she gave me a book to read on my trip back from visiting her. The book was "This Is the End." It was an old edition by Macmillan in a curious simple binding and with the musty smell that books of about ten years back seem to achieve. At that time, of course, I was most struck by the more sentimental parts of the book, particularly the verse about "None can spoil the day that I have made." The quality of the whole thing was positively thrilling and as we jolted along in the coach, lighted by oil lamps, I quite fogot where I was and quite forgot, too, that I was going in the wrong direction.

This book became with us a sort of fetish. It was "our" book and we were very much discouraged when we found it impossible to buy a copy in any of the better Boston book stores. They all reported it was out of print. Accordingly, I urged my own store to get me a copy at almost any price within decent reason, regardless of its condition from previous usage. Nothing happened and finally an accidentally dropped word let H. K., who had owned the copy we had read, know of our plight. He very kindly and sacrificially gave it to us. So now it occupies the place of honor.

Of course when "Pipers and a Dancer" came out I hastened to give it to my fiancée but it somehow failed to give us the same quality of joy that the earlier one had. It was Stella Benson but not our Stella Benson. So now I am glad to know that there is another which perhaps will have the spirit of the old.

It is surprising, of course, to know that Mr. Michael Arlen likes Stella Benson, yet I think after consideration one can see why. I am quite sure that your "raccoon-coated" students about to depart for New Haven and Boston will not care one bit for her. I am glad they won't.

Wilmington writes:

On your recommendation, I bought and read Stella Benson's "This Is the End." It is delicious, poignant, fine, Then I had to buy and read "A Poor Man." It is gorgeous—simply gorgeous. Now I have to buy all the rest. Damn you!

CHRISTOPHER WARD

THE HOLE IN THE STOCKING

"Well, then," said the Christmas fairies, making up their lists, "What would you give to an author who is writing a book?"

"The Gift of Solitude," said one; "that among the humorous multitudes of men he may pass unknown and unsuspected; I mean unsuspected even by his best friends who shall never guess the loving judgments of his heart. The man who is unknown can never be interrupted, except occasionally by his better demon."

"You are too cryptic," cried a volatile fairy, tossing her tiny package into the stocking. "I give him the gift of Folly: that he may always behave worse than himself and know himself an ass. He must know himself incapable of dealing with this shrewd perplexing world; outwitted on every hand, always in the wrong; this will give him those midnight sweats and horrors that are such good laxatives; it will give him humility, and adoration for those greater than himself, so that he will fall on his knees where no one sees him but never in public. Yes, I give him the golden seed of Folly and pray he may be wise enough to cherish it."

"It's a fairy's duty to be cryptic," suggested a third. "I give him the gift of Grace: that, being (as you have made him) a fool, he may yet mock other fools without unbearable offense, showing by the tone of his mockery that he includes himself in the discipline. Without Grace he is nought but a clown driving his pate on stone walls; he must have the gift of elusive words that change color while you look at them; he must walk a mile for a chameleon."

"The gift of Disregard," announced a stern-looking fairy whose coat was buttoned up to his chin.

"He must learn to pay no attention to what anyone says, not to be abashed by praise nor puffed up by attack; these are the great faults of authors. Certainly he must never subscribe to a clipping bureau."

"The gift of Patience," said another, putting in a queer-shaped parcel. "It looks a good deal like laziness, and will often be so considered. But it means that he must let his work take its own time, never be hurried by landlords or editors, be not too depressed if it does not seem to spread and sparkle on the page as it should, be content to let it ferment and work inwardly until the time has come. This is a sharp-edged gift and will not always be relished by our friend."

"You are too darned solemn," interrupted a young fairy with an Eton cut and so debonair a mien that even among fairies she was held to be a bit irresponsible. "For goodness' sake, give the poor fish something he can cash in on; give him Mirth; the kind of laughter that started from a star so distant that it hasn't reached us yet; let him be inventive in laughter as scientists are in physics; golly, there must be all sorts of undiscovered merriments; I think it's terrible to be still laughing at the same jokes that Chaucer started; give him the gift of the Absurd."

"Cash in on?" exclaimed a disillusioned-looking sprite. "Child, what leads you to think that a new kind of Mirth would be profitable? Give him Self-Forgetfulness, that he may enjoy the world with reverence and peace, and blot out for a while from his busy mind that hellish awareness of himself. Let him have room in his heart to pity others and lie hidden in a dream."

They fell to wrangling as to which of their various gifts would be most valuable to their beneficiary.

"These are all very intangible presents," said one. "I'd give him a sagacious publisher and leave the rest to luck, mice, and oblivion."

"Besides," remarked an observant fairy, "there's a big hole in the toe of his stocking, most of these little packages of ours will slip right through it."

"We'd better mend it," said a domestic-minded fairy, getting out her sewing bag.

"Yes, it ought to be mended, that's his particular weakness, his—"

"Gracious!" said Santa, coming down the chimney with a crash. "Don't mend that! If it weren't for that the poor devil would never write at all."

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

Back to the Indian

(Continued from page 425)

tion, and progress are equally degrading. These books are not history, not even good sense, especially when the author regards the sober march of civilization across the continent as an unfortunate curtailment of savage liberty, and puts his curse on his native land because he is not allowed to dance naked in the moonlight around a broached rum cask in Gramercy Park; yet there is poetry in them, the poetry of revolt against smugness and too much dull living. It is poetry, but rather muddy poetry. The return to paganism is likely to be rosier in theory than in practice. There is undoubtedly much to cause discontent in the spectacle of America as the fatted calf among the nations, but to choose rampageous Indians and political reprobates as ancestral models by way of a change from puritans, Quakers, and Virginia gentlemen is to strike a Parisian attitude which seems a little absurd in New York.

Ladislav Reymont, who became famous when "The Peasants," an epic tale of modern Poland in four complete and independent novels, "Autumn," "Winter," "Spring," and "Summer," won the 1924 Nobel prize in literature, died a few days ago. He was born in 1868 in what was formerly Russian Poland. One of twelve children of poor parents, he went to a public school, conducted under the Russian government's supervision, where it was absolutely forbidden to speak Polish. As Reymont was unwilling to obey this injunction, he was expelled from one school after another, until he was finally forced to give up his studies. He started his business career as a clerk in a store; then became a telegraph operator, then actor in a travelling stock company; a railroad clerk; a farmer; and even thought of becoming a clergyman and spent several months in the monastery of the Paulist Fathers at Chenstohova.

Books of Special Interest

Scottish Speech

SCOTTISH SPEECH AND POETRY

Scottish Poems of Robert Burns in his Native Dialect. By SIR JAMES WILSON. New York: Oxford University Press. 1925. \$2.50.

THE NORTHERN MUSE. An Anthology of Scots Vernacular Poetry. Arranged by JOHN BUCHAN. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co. 1925. \$3.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ALLAN NEILSON
Smith College

IN SPITE of the pre-eminence of Scottish poetry among the literary products of the various dialects of English, scientific study of the sounds and idiom of the northern vernacular has lagged behind that of the speech of some of the southern districts. More than a century ago a foundation for the study of the vocabulary was laid in Jamieson's Dictionary, but a remaking of this work in the light of modern linguistic scholarship is long overdue. About fifty years ago, Dr. J. A. H. Murray gave a model for the necessary preliminary local studies in his "Dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland," but imitators in other sections have been slow to appear. Meantime, the local dialects are passing, and there is a risk that unless vigorous action is taken, the spread of Board School English will have destroyed the possibility of gathering the requisite data.

Fortunately there is evidence that note is being taken of the emergency. Mr. William Grant and his collaborators have already shown that scholars with adequate equipment are in the field, and ten years ago, Sir James Wilson paralleled Dr. Murray's work with a study of the speech of Lower Strathearn. In 1923 he followed this with "The Dialect of Robert Burns as spoken in Central Ayrshire." Assuming that in the hundred and forty years since Burns published his first volume, the speech of his native county has changed little, Sir James Wilson has studied this speech in the mouths of old people who have never lived elsewhere and whose lives stretch halfway back to Burns. The present volume is an edition of Burns's best known poems, accompanied by a phonetic transcription, and a free translation into modern English. Thus for the first time it is possible for a non-Scotch reader to learn to pronounce Burn's words very much as the poet did. There remains, of course, the very important element of intonation and modulation which can still only be heard from those who have spoken the dialect in childhood, but what Wilson has done was very much worth doing, and he has done it in scholarly fashion.

In accounts of the dialect of Burns's Scottish poems, it is usually assumed that they are written in the speech which Burns used and heard at home. This assumption is somewhat rudely shaken by Mr. John Buchan in the introduction to his new Anthology. Burns (he says) is by universal admission one of the most natural of poets, but he used a language which was, even in his own day, largely exotic. His Scots was not the living speech of his countrymen, like the English of Shelley, and—in the main—the Scots of Dunbar; it was a literary language subtly blended from the old "makars" and the refrains of folk poetry, much tinged with the special dialect of Ayrshire, and with a solid foundation of English, accented *more Boreali*. No Scot in the later eighteenth century, whether in Poosie Nensie's or elsewhere, spoke exactly as Burns wrote.

At first sight this theory, if accepted, might seem to render futile such labors as those of Sir James Wilson in the book just described. But Wilson's contribution is largely a matter of phonetics and Mr. Buchan does not mean to imply that Burns did not intend his countrymen to pronounce his words according to their usual custom. He is thinking mainly of vocabulary and idiom, and even in this field he is not so radical as he sounds. In spite of an incautious phrase he would probably allow that no Englishman in the early nineteenth century spoke exactly as Shelley wrote. Most poets go afield hunting for fine words, rich in sound or association, and most poetry is tinged with the archaic and exotic. In the vernacular revival of the eighteenth century, Ramsay, Fergusson, Burns, and the rest salvaged many a word and phrase from the older national poetry, and they selected as all artists select. The fact that during the seventeenth century

Scottish had declined as a literary medium made the language used in the renaissance somewhat more apart from colloquial speech than is normally the case; but I am inclined to think that the difference is more one of degree than of kind, and to feel that Mr. Buchan over-emphasizes when he says that Burns's diction "was a creation, not the reproduction of a speech still in the ears of men."

All of this has little to do with the merits of Mr. Buchan's Anthology. It is, as an anthology should be, a labor of love, and the editor frankly admits it was made to please himself and with no other purpose. It is arrayed according to subject, and is a delight to browse in. I know of no collection of Scottish verse with so high a percentage of cream. The glossarial footnotes give what is necessary for understanding, and the commentary supplies clues for further reading and contains much pleasant philosophizing and acute criticism. Altogether a delightful volume.

Pepys the Man

SAMUEL PEPYS: A Portrait in Miniature.

By J. LUCAS-DUBRETON. Translated from the French by H. J. STENNING. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1925. \$2.50.

Reviewed by WILBUR C. ABBOTT
Harvard University

FROM a surprisingly small list of books M. Lucas-Dubretton has written a surprisingly entertaining account of the diarist Pepys. A pretty considerable acquaintance with Gramont, a knowledge of Disraeli's "Curiosities of Literature," a dip into Clarendon and another—astonishing enough—into Neal; a dash of Macaulay and, oddly enough again, of "Roderick Random"; a well-worn quotation from Carlyle to grace a footnote; these have been drawn to garnish the dish with a spice of references. But first and last the "Diary" of Samuel Pepys. Not all of the "Diary," chiefly that part which is more or less scandalous, seems to have provided him with his material; and the least creditable part of it with the impression he leaves of the great Secretary.

It is no part of a historian, not even of a reviewer, to gloss over the escapades of the great, the near great, or of any one else. Yet it would be far short of the truth to take this portrait of Pepys as a true one. It is, as it were, only the seamy side of the canvas. It is, if one may venture to consider such a lively trifle seriously, a little out of date. If the author knew more of Pepys than he has put in his book—and he evidently knows a great deal more—he might have made this a better account of even the man Pepys than it is, for even that man had his greater side. It would not have been so amusing from one point of view, but it would have been not only more truly interesting, and a very much better piece of portraiture. It is now fashionable to exhibit the greater figures of the world in undress, to stress the littleness of the greatest. We are—so one learns—to have the worst of Greville spread for our edification. There is a whole crusade to denigrate men and women of the past. Scandal has become a profitable publishing item, one must judge, and indiscretion the first qualification of authorship.

But as for Pepys, entertaining as the author's pages are, great as is his literary skill, novel as it may seem to those who have not read the "Diary," the current rather runs the other way just now. One may not venture to say with the greatest living Pepysian that "the 'Diary' has always been overrated," but it is certain that in the light of that scholar's own work as well as that of others, this figure which M. Lucas-Dubretton gives us is, as it were, a bit out of drawing, viewed as a portrait. That, he may well claim, was not his purpose. He draws what he sees in the "Diary," supplementing it from what sources he likes. It is not his purpose to instruct but to amuse. And if Pepys was the kind of a man he has portrayed himself, if he did the things he did, and was foolish enough to set them down, if an audience may be entertained by the raking up of the *chronique scandaleuse* of Charles II, why insist that Watteau should paint battle-scenes or Fragonard the virtuous employments of the worthy poor? It is ungracious and unkind; it is even the part of dull respectability to insist that a lively picture should look like a man. One must pay homage to M. Lucas-Dubretton's literary skill; yet one need not therefore agree with him that he has turned it to the best use. For surely here, if ever, the evil

that Pepys did lives after him, the good has been interred with his bones. Even for a miniature this portrait is too small.

The Russian People

THE SHADOW OF THE GLOOMY EAST. By FERDINAND A. OSSENDOWSKY.

Translated by F. B. CZARNOMSKY. New York: E. P. Dutton Co. 1925.

Reviewed by PITIKIM SOROKIN

Author of "Leaves from a Russian Diary" IF Ossendowsky's books are taken as fiction then his "Beasts, Men and Gods" and "Man and Mystery in Asia" are absorbingly interesting and valuable. Taken as scientific description his books do not warrant the praise and commendation that they do from the standpoint of fiction. "The Shadow of the Gloomy East" furnishes proof of this statement. The book, which has a somewhat romantic title, represents an attempt to characterize the Russian people. This characterization is quite worthy of a second class newspaper man. Ossendowsky stimulated, it seems, by the success which the "mysteries" and "romanticism" of his preceding books had among readers, continues to supply them in this book. In order to get these "mysteries" and exotic things he proceeds very simply. He chooses the beliefs or customs which existed three hundred years ago in Russia and describes them as existing now. The traits which belong to few individuals or to a small group, he ascribes to the Russian people generally. Is it strange therefore that the Russian people in his characterization appear as "mysterious," "Asiatic," "hostile and dangerous to mankind" or as "the naked man upon the naked earth," like "the Russians" whom I have seen occasionally in the American movies?

According to Ossendowsky the Russian villages are full of wizards, sorcerers, and hags. Everywhere there are shamans and fortune-tellers. A special caste of "poisoners" has been cultivated in this "mysterious" country. According to this description the industry of horse stealing was highly developed in Russia. Even such a common thing as transportation by horses—"yamshchina"—he has succeeded in depicting as "a mysterious relic of olden times." Simple fishermen, under his too vivid description, are transformed into "sinister, wildly romantic characters—the buccaners." This characterization demands further that there be "the brutes and cave men," mediæval floggers, mystics, and utterly immoral heroes. Ossendowsky meets this demand and creates "the devil's feast," "black ravens," and "old gods." In brief, if I try to characterize the American people by taking the Mormons' customs as typical of the American family, the adventists as the representatives of American religion, the Negroes as the American race, the Loeb and Leopold case as the proof of the existence in America of a "highly developed kidnaping industry" and so on,—my picture of the American people would be as good as Ossendowsky's picture of the Russian people. His book is a good "story" for a magazine section of a perfectly "yellow" newspaper.

This review could be finished at this point if there were not one charge conspicuously stressed by the author. This is the extreme brutality and cruelty ascribed to the Russian nation as a characteristic trait. We have heard the same statement from many friends of the Soviet rulers who in this way have tried to justify the cruelties of the Soviet régime. How far is this statement true? I think it is quite erroneous. It is true that the cruelties of the Russian revolution have been terrible. But all great revolutions—the Greek and the Roman, the German, French, Bohemian, English, and many others—were accompanied by the same degree of bestiality. In this respect the Russian revolution is not an exception. But, we may ask, who performed these cruelties in the Russian Revolution? The author himself points out that among the troops of the Cheka were Russians, Jews, Letts, Poles, Hungarians, Germans, Chinese, and the dregs of all nationalities. Who compose the Third International or the Soviet Government? It is composed not so much of the Russians as of these dregs of all countries. The Russian people have been the victims rather than the authors of the terrors. Was it not from Western Europe that the Marxian theories were imported into Russia and applied there by Marxian pupils? Where, in Asia or in Europe, did that brilliant example of "Christianity and humanism" styled the Great War originate? Taking into consideration these and many similar facts—among them comparative statistics of crimes and punishments

in Russia and European countries before the revolution—we must say that Ossendowsky's accusation is at least hypocritical. If there were not in Russia at present so many foreign "saviors" and "Kulturträger" in the form of Soviet rulers, foreign communists and socialists, pro-bolshevist writers and sympathizers, adventurers, and profiteers of all countries, the process of normalization and moral and mental regeneration of the Russian nation which has already begun would proceed much faster.

American Annals

A SHORT HISTORY OF AMERICAN PEOPLE. By ROBERT GRANVILLE CALDWELL. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1925. \$2.50.

Reviewed by RALPH V. HARLOW
Boston University

IN view of the recent increase in the number of these briefer histories of the United States—brief at least in comparison with Professor Channing's monumental work—it may reasonably be expected that a new offering of the sort will be marked by certain attributes of peculiarity or excellence, by something at least to distinguish it from others of its kind. People who have read, and libraries which have bought, "short histories" of similar scope may well ask on what grounds they should be favored with another.

The author of this latest contribution, Professor Robert Granville Caldwell, modestly, and sensibly, makes no special claim to distinction. His publishers, less modestly, offer the book as "at once an economic, political, and human interpretation," which takes into consideration "all the data that recent research has brought to light." The book itself proves to be a good, clear summary, or full outline, of the majority of the standard episodes in American history, from the European background to the eve of the Civil War. If critics carp at the omission of the Spanish Armada, for instance, or at the barest possible reference to William Lloyd Garrison, they may be silenced by the retort courteous: what do you expect in five hundred pages? Anyway, if some of the regular stock in trade is omitted, no disconcerting new exhibits are allowed to appear.

The section dealing with the colonies and the American Revolution will probably attract unfavorable comment, for here the author reveals no adequate grasp of his subject. The meeting of the first House of Burgesses did not by any means prove that "the Colonists had gained the right to govern and tax themselves," nor was South Carolina a "rice plantation" at the start. As for Chapter VI, "The Rising Quarrel," it might have been pieced together by anybody with the help of Montgomery's "Leading Facts" and a few other equally reprehensible elementary texts. The account of the Boston Massacre is merely poor, but the unsupported assertion that public opinion held Governor Hutchinson responsible for it is absurd. Then come the old stories of Franklin's "full dress suit of spotted Manchester Velvet," of the tea in Charleston left "to rot in a warehouse," and, later of Ethan Allen's demand for surrender "in the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress." The inclusion of these shopworn fragments would not in itself damage the work, even though they are not true; but the whole chapter is made up of generalizations, every one of which is open to serious question.

The period after 1783 is handled with more evidence of knowledge of facts, and of familiarity with "recent research," although an occasional curious blunder crops out here. The War of 1812, the struggle with Mexico, and the controversy over slavery are in general well done. And twice in the book, once in the summary of the Lincoln-Douglas debates, and again in the analysis of the figures for the presidential election of 1860, the author puts old material in a new light.

But the volume as a whole lacks character. It will give the reader no information that he cannot get just as easily, and more entertainingly, somewhere else; it will not stir his emotions, nor arouse his enthusiasm. It is marked neither by profundity of thought nor by brilliancy of generalization. The style is clear, but uninspiring, there are no epigrams, no vivid characterizations, no phrases or sentences that one feels impelled to quote, still less to remember. It is an example of mediocrity, not distressing, but of little real worth, not vivid enough for the general reader, and not informing enough for the scholar.