

traditional method cannot be met when that method is unsuited to the changed conditions of life. These sons and daughters will, however, soon marry and become parents themselves, however strongly they disapprove of parenthood; and poetry like parenthood is an instinct that cannot be long repressed.

It is again largely because of an educational system which links poetry up with geometry and French as "subjects to be done"—and to be "done" in school is to be "done-for" in private life—that poetry is viewed with as great suspicion by the intellectual middle-classes as by their social inferiors. The pulpit has assisted in deepening this suspicion. The poet always, it is thought, has a sinister design on the reader. Either he is trying to put over a spiritual or historical message of some dry sort, or he is claiming genius and its anti-social privileges; in any case he is drawing the reader from the quiet paths of enjoyable reading to the stern mountain of literature; a region from which one customarily returns jaded, if improved, to impress other travelers with a satchel full of poetic specimens, chipped from the hard rocks and carefully ticketed. This mistrust of the poet ensures that, dead poets only being "done" in schools and universities, living poets cannot economically practice the art for a livelihood. Patronage is dead these two hundred years, and the high-brow public is not large enough to support its poets by casual purchase of their wares. The result is that the writing of poetry is now largely in the hands of gifted young amateurs who publish a single book and then leave poetry for the more serious and remunerative work of prose, of idlers with money who want a literary reputation and find a series of lyrics less fatiguing to produce than a novel; and of retired judges, ambassadors, and heads of colleges and such who crown their career with a volume of graceful verse. People in fact who encourage, rather than dispel the lack of confidence in poetry; so that it is next to impossible for a serious practising poet to get a hearing from the middle-class public which is numerically large from the low-brow public which could afford to enough to support dozens of poets, and still less make them all men of wealth.



The public that is acquiring a short-story sense, and a film sense, and a fast-traffic sense, and a radio-sense is not a dull public; as it is not dull public, neither is it a lazy public. The enthusiasm for the cross-word puzzle and for home-made radio sets prove that. The theory that because industrial, commercial, or professional life weighs so heavy, poetry to make any appeal at all must be a narcotic, can no longer stand. On the contrary the daily round is so routine-ridden that, except where the standard of living is definitely below the poverty line, any stimulant to thought of an adventurous kind is most welcome, though indeed the adventure is bound by economic, ethical, religious, and educational limits. The poetry-sense has not been correspondingly cultivated with these other new senses largely because poetry properly understood makes demands at variance with the utilitarian system of education and life. As a marketable commodity it is in a vicious circle; the less it is wanted the duller it gets, and the duller it gets, the less it is wanted. A young workman cannot afford to apprentice himself to the poetry trade, which is suffering sadly from inefficiency and dilution. In the short-story trade wages are high. Though the goods are machine-cut he has the satisfaction of knowing that they meet a genuine demand. The models improve in speed and finish yearly.

But it would be the greatest mistake to push this metaphor farther, to regard poetry as a sort of perpetual coach-building and fiction as a sort of motor-car industry, to say that a coronation-coach lumbering and heavily gilded, or a smart barouche with armorial designs on the door drawn through the park by a pair of spanking greys, though all very well in their way, cannot be compared for speed, comfort or distinction with a 1925 Rolls Royce. True, language and conditions of life have changed so completely in the last fifty years that the greater part of traditional English poetry is utterly out of date except to scholars; what was once the pride of the roads we now think of as a lumbering coach. But this is my contention:—there is no reason why modern verse should not become to modern prose what the airplane is to the motor car. Properly handled, poetry has certain mechanical advantages over prose: prose can never rise off the ground; it

must keep to the roads or the open country. The low-brow, mezzo-brow, and the backward part even of the high-brow public does not realize this, and will demand an explanation of mechanical theory, if not a demonstration of practice.



Simply put, the intrinsic virtues of poetry are these: Its rhythms, rhymes, and texture have an actual toxic effect on the central nervous system. In the resulting condition, the imaginative powers are quickened and strengthened, voices are heard, images are called up, and various emotions felt of a far greater intensity than in waking life. This toxic effect is of greater or less strength according to the level of mental functioning required, which varies between the more or less sedate thought of day-dreaming and the monstrosities of trance or a deep sleep. The soup tablet firm that puts its advertisement into a rough rhyme

Why does the Huntsman devour the fox so?

Because there is nothing for dinner but Broxo,

and the student who masters his lists of facts by help of a rhymed *memoria technica*, "in 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue," are alike aware of this physiological effect verse has on mental receptivity. But besides the greater vividness of image and strengthening of music, the heightening of receptivity and sensitivity that verse properly handled brings, there is another great contribution, that is the awareness of a whole region of hidden association and implication behind phrases that in prose would be accepted at their face-value.

For instance, the adjective *pettifogging* would in prose be construed merely as the conventional insult for a lawyer. If the same adjective were to be used in poetry qualifying, say, a philosopher, there would be an increased vitality in the word; which thereupon for those aware of its etymology would recall its connection with Fugger, the great continental merchant-banker whose minions, the little fuggers, were so sly at their trade: the philosopher would thus be accused of having a commercial mind and the same attachment to verbal formula and ancient authority as a lawyer. At the same time the "fog" syllable would take on a life of its own; "pettiness" and "fogginess" though conceptions not originally bound up with "pettifogging" would color the lines in which they occurred and mate with the hidden associations of the other words there contained. One of the chief powers of poetry is in the poet's ability to control these hidden or forgotten associations of words while remaining in the toxic condition of which I have spoken, so that they interact in a sense distinct from the face value of the poem, a sense which cannot be understood except by those in the same condition of heightened sensibility. Poetry is able to use both the method of logic and the method of fantastic thought, which is *sensorial hieroglyphic*: and what cannot be expressed by either of these means can be conveyed in the musical side of poetry, the rhythm, rhyme, and texture, which have not, of course, fulfilled their function merely by inducing and maintaining the toxic condition.



This briefly is the theory of poetry as I understand it; but whether and if so, how soon the poetry-sense will appear in a wide circle of readers is another question. I cannot foresee any immediate social or political change that will produce it. A great deal of poetry that has been popularly admired in times past has been admired for reasons unconcerned with the peculiar powers of poetry as I have just outlined them; it has been admired merely for the elegance of the stories it told or the morality of its sentiments or the divine character it professed; and it is doubtful whether in Europe at least there has ever been widely spread a poetry-sense which, once the added receptivity induced by verse has been taken into account, has been distinguishable from a prose-sense. Perhaps some discovery by which food and other necessities of life could everywhere be obtained locally, together with a solution of the population question, might give the necessary background to a national revitalizing of poetry; for England must first be freed from the economic obsession which colors all human relations and qualities today. The difficulties of keeping supplies of food, clothing, and so on in circulation by the authority are now largely smoothed over by standardization of goods and by standardization of the consumers' minds by education and the press. If supplies became more plentiful and decentralization of industry and therefore of standardized mentality be-

came possible, poetry of a greater variety, freedom, and intensity might result. For the standardization of mind has achieved the practical result that the immediate and formal characteristics of any matter under examination, usually recognized in terms of value or efficiency, are alone discerned; other latent characteristics spiritual or personal are generally suppressed as contributing nothing to the mechanic purpose of life.

A Time-Killing Generation

THE THREAT OF LEISURE. By GEORGE BARTON CUTTEN. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1926. \$2.

Reviewed by PHILIP COAN

DR. R. CUTTEN some three years ago, on his induction as President of Colgate, said some strikingly skeptical things about popular sovereignty and the universal franchise. He seems then to have been performing merely the preliminary slicing through the insensitive epidermis of our ideals. This time, the knife goes right down to the quivering quick; he vivisects our beloved leisure, that treasured share of freedom from needful toil, now possessed by the worker after generations of industrial development and social struggle.

The pleasure of telling painful truths has its temptations but it has not been Dr. Cutten's guiding inspiration. He believes in the potential value of leisure, and accepts the old economic doctrine that the degree of civilization of a human group is a mathematical function of that group's proportion of time free from necessary cares. If he details what he considers the damage done by ill-spent leisure, it is without any purpose of gloomy prediction of an inevitable fate in store for us. Holding that leisure at its worst may bring on social decline, but that put to advantage it should lead to common betterment, he draws the darker alternative rather the more vividly of the two; it is but a way to make the better choice more desirable. One fancies that this motive found its way into the rather grim first noun of the title of his book, "The Threat of Leisure."



The book is a brief for education toward enlarging the average person's ability to make use not chiefly, as under some present educational systems, of his working hours, but rather of his spare time. A new education must be devised, he believes, to render the industrial worker fit to spend several hours a day at liberty. If any task outbulks that of making the world safe for democracy, it must surely be this enormous undertaking of making universal leisure secure from itself.

Dr. Cutten has handled the question so ably, he has opened so many more or less unsuspected windows, that one finds it inevitable to wish that he had handled his topic more completely. A longish essay of some 32,000 words dispensed with due allowance for grace of discourse, can hardly lead to adequate conclusions on so complex a problem. One would welcome an ampler presentation of many features. How much leisure, in aggregate hours, is there in this country today? Surely it would require a painstaking inquiry, and the sifting of much evidence, to determine. But if we knew the answer, we should have a definite idea of the magnitude of the question in its present phase. And among what groups, by age, sex, locality, or social condition, is this unknown quantity of space time variously divided? For all we know, it may chiefly be the idleness of the increasingly numerous and increasingly unemployed folk over fifty. Again, how has leisure affected the powers of survival and development in social classes that have possessed it hitherto? Here is a bearing on the problem surely well worth taking. Is high mental capacity essential to ample living in time free from the compulsion of toil? We need to know, for if leisure spells mere idleness and can spell naught else to the millions in the lower mental brackets, we may be dispensing it wrongly. What study of education for the working masses has already been made? Kallen and others have given much thought to whether cultural education for the worker will work. To consider these and all the other necessary lines and angles in the diagram of an intricate problem would require quite another kind of book, and probably ten times as long a text. Without accusing Dr. Cutten of a predilection for the Squeers methods in the imparting of knowledge, we may respectfully ask for "more."

A Bird's-Eye View

THE HISTORIANS' HISTORY OF THE WORLD. Edited with the Assistance of a Distinguished Board of Advisers and Contributors by HENRY SMITH WILLIAMS. New York: Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc. 1926. 27 vols.

Reviewed by WILLIAM MACDONALD

THE particular interest of this fifth edition of what for more than twenty years has been a standard work of reference will probably centre, for most readers and users, in the two supplementary volumes, numbered respectively XXV and XXVI (Volume XXVII in an elaborate index) and labelled "These Eventful Years," in which, to quote the publishers' foreword, eighty "famous men and women of our own day" tell "the story of all that has happened in the great quarter century just ended." To this alluring introduction the editor of the supplement, Franklin H. Hooper, adds the caution that the two new volumes have "no connection of any kind with the Encyclopædia Britannica," whose editorial organization was responsible for "The Historians' History of the World," that they are intended for connected reading rather than for reference, and that "each chapter is written for this work, and for this alone, and has not appeared elsewhere." What is offered, in other words, is a coöperative history of the last twenty-five years which is encyclopædic in scope but not a compilation in form.

The plan of the two volumes, while in general similar to that already familiar in coöperative literary enterprises, offers some novelties. First come four chapters by J. L. Garvin, the well-known editor of the London *Observer*, and now the editorial head of the Encyclopædia Britannica organization, in which the course of events, mainly political, during the period is rapidly surveyed. Then follow thirteen chapters on the World War, with eight more chapters devoted to the League of Nations, the war debts, and various economic situations for which the war was chiefly responsible. Next comes the procession of the nations, marshaled in thirty-six chapters, including one in which H. G. Wells unfolds his vision of the future and some of the wonders that shall be. With politics, economics, and social prophecy out of the way, the grand tour is brought to an end with a succession of chapters on literature, science, art and religion, music and radium, archæology and medicine, psychoanalysis and big business, the political awakening of women, and the achievements of sport.



It has become a commonplace to say that coöperative writing of this kind is bound to show overlapping, and there is plenty of overlapping in the political chapters of "These Eventful Years." Since the editor, moreover, in certain controverted matters, generously allows each side to have its spokesman, there is also something of contradiction and inconclusiveness. With the land operations of the World War surveyed by General Maurice, General Ludendorff, and General Mangin, the operations on the sea recounted by a British naval functionary and Admiral von Tirpitz, and the battle of Jutland described by Admiral Jellicoe and Admiral Scheer, the reader is left to decide for himself what the history of those particular episodes of the quarter century really is. Perhaps it is the editor's way of reminding him that something of local prejudice and personal bias attaches to most events since the days of the Cæsars.

The only man whom I have ever known who gave the impression of knowing enough to appraise an encyclopædia was Louis Heilprin, these many years of treasured memory, and even he, I suspect, must have felt the need of protecting his intellectual frontiers by carefully-drawn lines of demarcation. Certainly no one but a universal genius would attempt seriously to evaluate the multifarious contributions to a multifarious world experience which these two volumes contain. Two criticisms, however, may safely be noted. Some of the contributions are obviously journalistic, and a good many more are essentially special pleading. To the former class belong, perhaps inevitably, the four introductory chapters by Mr. Garvin, notwithstanding that the quality of journalistic writing in this case is high, as it is sure to be when Mr. Garvin holds the pen. What Bernard M. Baruch has to say about the inter-allied debts is little more than journalistic

padding, a modicum of form with no important substance. To the second class belong Léon Bourgeois's account of the League of Nations, Professor Laughlin's chapter on "The Madness of Paper Money Inflation," Maximilian Harden's sketch of "Germany's Place in the Sun," with Professor Carver's brief for prohibition capping the climax. The contrast is sharp indeed between the obvious prepossessions of such writers and the scholarly dignity and restraint displayed by Professor Carlton Hayes and Professor Charles Seymour in dealing with the causes of the World War and "secret treaties and open covenants." If the story of psychoanalysis is to have a place in a work of this character, it is fitting that Dr. Sigmund Freud should be allowed to present his side of it, and psychical research and the invisible world are certainly the special preserve of Sir Oliver Lodge, but since it appears to a layman that there are more scientists who dissent from the conclusions of these two men than there are those who accept them, the presentation of the case by these writers alone is distinctly onesided.

Whoever attempts a great deal must expect to be asked for much, and Mr. Hooker's two volumes show some rather surprising gaps. Dr. Canby, to whom has been assigned the subject of twentieth century literature, has apparently felt himself debarred, presumably by limitations of space, from paying much attention to "journalism, research, his-



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torical study, biography, criticism," "except in so far as they illustrate prevailing tendencies of the modern mind, or are creative in the literary sense," with the result that some of the most important and voluminous writing of the period either receives mere allusion or is not mentioned at all. The lack would not be worth noting if there were compensation elsewhere, but there is not. One searches in vain for adequate discussions of such questions as labor, agriculture, transportation, the development of universities and professional or technical schools, armaments, jurisprudence (except international law), the migration of peoples, the effect of the World War upon intellectual life and public opinion, and many other similar matters which have engrossed the thought of the present generation.

Perhaps the job was worth doing in spite of its sketchiness, its bias, and its propaganda. Anyone who will read through the approximately 800,000 words which the two volumes contain will be almost certain to have added to his knowledge, and will get a useful and comprehensive view of a good many problems that still await solution. Taken as a whole, however, "These Eventful Years" is only a symposium, some parts very good, some extremely bad. To class such a compilation as history would be to use the term in a highly unaccustomed sense.

A new play by Karel Capek is to be produced in Prague this autumn. The nature of the drama is being kept secret, but it is understood that it will be called "The Makers," and that it will be a fantasy in the manner of "R.U.R." and "The Insect Play."

Submerging the Yankee

THE CONQUEST OF NEW ENGLAND BY THE IMMIGRANT. By DANIEL CHAUNCEY BREWER. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1926.

Reviewed by HENRY PRATT FAIRCHILD
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ANTHROPOLOGISTS tell us that there are one or two primitive—or possibly advanced—tribes where no children are born. The population of the group is recruited by purchasing children from neighboring less well-regulated tribes. There are some Americans who, impressed by the indubitable fact that no one has ever yet demonstrated that any one race or people is superior to another, draw therefrom the conclusion that racial and national differences in general are inconsequential. An indiscriminate mixing of ethnic groups seems to them of no significance. If it appears that the American population, originally composed of well defined and selected elements, is now being built up out of heterogeneous contributions from two or three-score diverse sources, they regard the situation as not only innocuous but also unimportant.

Such as these, if they trouble to read Mr. Brewer's book at all, will doubtless toss it down with a yawn, and observe, "What of it?"

Mr. Brewer very wisely makes no attempt to prove that the immigration of the past half-century has hurt or is hurting the United States in general or New England in particular. He simply takes it for granted. His book is based upon certain definite and inclusive assumptions, which he does not open to question himself nor expect his reader to. He assumes that if the reader can be made to see the facts as he sees them, he will inevitably arrive at the same conclusion that he has reached. By taking this stand he avoids the bottomless morass of arguments about racial inferiorities and superiorities and the effects of race mixture in which so many writers on these subjects have allowed themselves to become mired.



Some of the postulates which the author treats as axiomatic are the following: The Yankee stock out of which the population of New England was composed up to the time of the Revolution, was drawn from high grade European sources and was still further improved by the selective processes of crossing an ocean, subduing a wilderness, and building up a new society. By the time of national independence it had developed certain characteristics that were both distinctive and valuable. It was these characteristics that made New England what it was, and profoundly affected the entire American society. That the disappearance of this population and the dissipation of these characteristics would be a grievous loss to mankind seems to Mr. Brewer a conclusion requiring no supporting argument. What he attempts to do is to show how, and to what extent, this dire result has already been achieved as a consequence of the immigration of the past fifty, and particularly the past twenty-five years.

In discussing this problem the author adopts frankly the attitude of a religious, specifically a Protestant Yankee. He believes in religion and in God. He writes as a Yankee to and for Yankees. He admits candidly that he believes in the marvelous, even in the miraculous. For the reader who does not accept these basic assumptions, there is no possibility of getting together with the author.

There is nothing particularly new about the general truths that Mr. Brewer portrays. They have been presented many times before. What is novel is his localization of them in New England and his presentation of a large amount of detailed statistics and other data, which have the effect of giving the facts a vivid and personal color, and emphasizing them as concrete realities.

The central truth, it is hardly necessary to observe, is that the New England Yankee has allowed himself to be supplanted and well nigh exterminated by alien hosts which have come with his full permission and largely at his express invitation.

This is, in truth, a stupendous and amazing phenomenon, the deep significance of which has escaped the American people simply because of its familiarity. That the descendants of pioneers, who had made superhuman sacrifices and endured untold hardships in order to subdue and appropriate a particularly favored section of the earth's surface, should within a half-dozen generations sit calmly