

# The Saturday Review

## of LITERATURE

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY



VOLUME X

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JULY 7, 1934

NUMBER 51

### An Adventurer in the Conquest of Disease

A SOLDIER IN SCIENCE. By Bailey K. Ashford. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1934. \$3.50.

Reviewed by THEODORE ROOSEVELT, JR.

THESE are certain great soul-satisfying occupations that make of life an enthralling adventure where one begrudges even the hours of sleep. Among these is exploring. By exploring I do not mean merely to search by land or sea for unknown places or people, but rather the larger significance of seeking for what is undiscovered in any branch of human endeavor.

There is a thrill that comes to those who "take the golden road to Samarkand" that is as heady as wine. When "the stars are setting and the caravan starts" men live fully. No one feels this more keenly than the medical scientist, for on every voyage that he starts with his microscope new worlds are lying ahead.

Dr. Bailey K. Ashford is primarily an explorer. Not only has he dreamed greatly but he has turned dreams into achievements. In his book, "A Soldier in Science," this stands out in every chapter. He is never contented for long with the easy days of routine. He finds some disease that is troubling the people, some illness like the pernicious anemia which has been crippling the generations, and which has been accepted as an inevitable cross to be borne in life. At once his mind starts considering on the wherefore and why and before long he is deep in research and investigation.

It is hard for me to write dispassionately of his work, for I have seen the results and I know him personally. In the war I was a member of the same Division.

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### Swan in America

By GENEVIEVE TAGGARD

COOL, cool reflection, swan-shape motion, O  
Rare, wan, self-gazing, dying, glide . . .

I take king-fisher to break with rings the slow  
Hypnotic figure. I choose the open wide

Wing of the buzzard or the spread of the hawk,  
Or wild geese in a wedge like an arrow-head.

Bird, symbol of our aspiration, as we walk  
Country and stare upward, let it ever be said

We choose first the breasted daring of the air;

Eagles we do not see and the hurry-song of the lark,  
Before this tranced attitude, this rare Creature peering into water ruffled with the dark.

And yet old gods, old legends and old songs

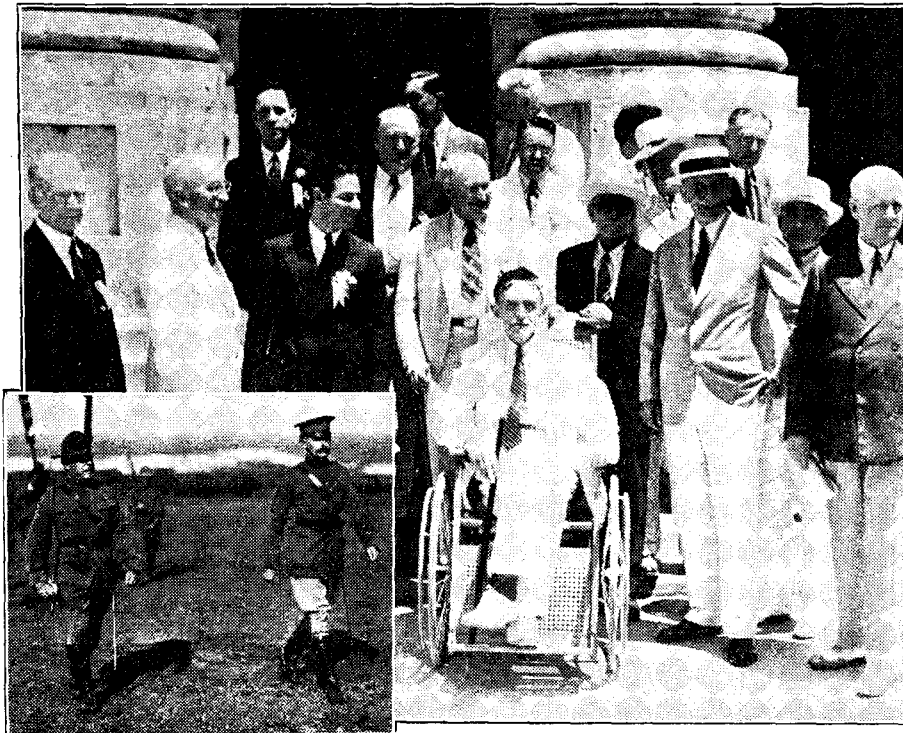
Sleep on the waters potent with the swan;  
Our Irish brothers and the Grecian throngs

Saw the phantom with the breeze upon

This water-drop, the soul. American lore  
Plods the great continent searching the symbol-prize.

Will we come eventually to this little shore

To watch the swan with fascinated eyes?



DR. BAILEY ASHFORD (SEATED) AT THE PAN-AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION, SAN JUAN, 1934. (Photo by Harwood Hull.)  
Inset, Dr. Ashford (right) awarded Distinguished Service Medal, 1925.

### The Fear of Mind in America

BY IRWIN EDMAN

FOR a nation that prides itself, as does our own, on the wealth and energy it lavishes upon education, we are as a nation almost pathologically afraid of those habits of reflection and analysis which education is supposed to promote. There is probably no country in the world so suspicious of its intellectual classes or so inclined to laugh at them, so convinced that those who live chiefly by and among things of the mind are foolish or trivial or insincere. The repeated outcries against the Brain Trust are but the latest and perhaps not the most typical instances of the American fear of mind, especially mind disciplined by academic training and professional intellectual standards.

So widespread is this type of distrust even among the allegedly educated, among informed men of affairs, among journalists, preachers, and even among teachers themselves that the phenomenon demands examination once again. "Once again" is said advisedly, for observers both native and foreign have often been struck by the fact. The traditional explanation, not without some justification, is that the frontier tradition lingers among us, spiritual even where the frontier physically has passed long ago into history. It is the commonplace of historical criticism of American life that we are perforce a nation committed to the exaltation of action. Contemplation is admired only in a society mellow with leisure and with accomplished material achievement. Where there were forests to be felled, and a continent to be cleared, the life of the mind had to wait. Where there the necessary had to be done, the luxury of thought could not be indulged in.

The explanation would be more satisfying if it did not happen to be a fact that a pioneer civilization produced Jonathan Edwards and Benjamin Franklin; and Emerson and Thoreau came to flower long before the nation could be called old or effete. And it is only by a kind of anachronistic rhetoric that American life

today can be said still to display the marks of the frontier.

There are both deeper and more contemporary causes for the uneasiness so often displayed in this country in the presence of mind or of those who espouse it or who illustrate the career of mind in their own careers. Some of these deeper sources of distrust of the intellect have nothing to do with America exclusively; they have to do rather with the general malaise of the human creature, always the victim and devotee of his habits, to anything that carries with it the hint of change. Reflection does just this. It arouses and accents uncertainty. It opens new and often radical perspectives. It is, in the language of Bertrand Russell, "No respecter of persons or established institutions." "It looks into the pit of hell and is not afraid." It is but necessary to go back into the history of Christian theology, to observe how troubled the Church has been from the Gnostics onward, by those who brought too independently to bear upon authority and dared to reshape revelation by reflection.

One has but to review the social history of England to see what a deep distrust a people moulded deeply by social habits (and nourished by them) has had for its intellectual classes. It has been repeatedly remarked how suspect a vice is "cleverness" in England, how intelligence has been looked upon as a tacit or rather talkative enemy of virtue. Perhaps it is only among the ancient Greeks and the modern French that intelligence itself has been esteemed a virtue, perhaps the only virtue, far more genuinely so than obedience or chastity, or conformity, or thrift. Yet even the Greeks condemned and killed Socrates, and there were many enemies of Voltaire. The habit of intelligence is of its very essence sceptical, curious, and questioning. The plain man (and the history of American life is primarily his history), has never had much use for the iconoclastic and experimental habit which

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### Don Cossacks

AND QUIET FLOWS THE DON. By Mikhail Sholokhov. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1934. \$3.

Reviewed by the GRAND DUCHESS MARIE

THE Don Cossacks are the descendants of adventurous men who sought freedom from the various restrictions of the more populated and organized areas of ancient Northern and Central Russia amongst the vast empty spaces of the Southeast. In bands they fought wandering tribes which since time immemorial had grazed horses and cattle on the fertile plains and finally settled permanently upon the land they had appropriated.

For centuries the Cossacks held the furthest outposts of the Russian Empire and were the guardians of its boundaries. A warrior race not remembering bondage or servitude of any sort, they remained a free people both in spirit and organization. In times of peace the Cossacks tilled the soil, bred horses and cattle, but they were more enterprising than their brothers the peasants. They were, therefore, wealthier and their standard of living was higher. They performed their military service in regiments of their own which were incorporated as separate units into the army and furnished according to a long established custom their own equipment, including a horse for which they were reimbursed by the state. Retaining his old characteristics, the Cossack even in modern times remained restless at heart and was always in search of some excitement to relieve the monotony of a peaceful existence.

Mikhail Sholokhov, a Cossack himself, gives an inspired and true picture of Cossack life and spirit. He knows his subject intimately. You feel that he himself has grown up amongst his heroes, that he knows their every thought and gesture. The landscape is familiar to him down to the smallest stone on the shore of the Don and to the tiniest blade of grass. His love for everything connected with Cossack life is passionate and he communicates this enthusiasm to the reader.

For a Russian there is music in the breadth and rhythm of this truly Russian

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### This Week

THE LIFE OF CARDINAL MERCIER

By JOHN GADE

Reviewed by Stanley Went

HITLER IN DER KARIKATUR DER WELT

By ERNST HANFSTAENGL

Reviewed by Dorothy Thompson

TO THE VANQUISHED

By I. A. R. WYLIE

Reviewed by William Harlan Hale

FIRST AND LAST

By RING LARDNER

Reviewed by Basil Davenport

YEARS ARE SO LONG

By JOSEPHINE LAWRENCE

Reviewed by Amy Loveman

PROPERTY OR PEACE?

By HENRY NOEL BRAILSFORD

Reviewed by Alfred E. Zimmern

THE BOWLING GREEN

By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

### Next Week or Later

JOHN KEATS

By LEONARD BACON



## The Fear of Mind in America

(Continued from first page)

so often accompanies the procedure of intelligence. The plain man is worried not simply by the fact that criticism of the established carries the implication of change. He has, in all countries, but particularly in America, the suspicion, in varying degrees well grounded, that the intellectuals as a class lapse easily into irrelevance, remoteness, and verbalism.

This charge against the American intellectual classes is not altogether lightly to be dismissed. It is very natural for a class whose business is the making of distinctions, developing, teaching, writing, and expounding theories, to become self-hypnotized by those delightful enterprises. Intellectual work may for all the solemnity of its apparatus and intention, be essentially trivial. American professors and publicists have been far from free of playboy irrelevance. They have talked on issues of the first human importance and talked, as the plain man has observed, beside rather than to the point. One has but to review the intellectual fashions of the last twenty-five years, the successive enthusiasm for new formulas and the repeated abandonment of them, to realize how the intellectuals so easily pass from interest in ideas for the illumination of experience to fantasy-like preoccupation with the experience of ideas. Five years ago the more intellectual journals were filled with the pros and cons of humanism, one year ago with technocracy. And a good deal of the enthusiasm of young and ardent minds for communism—the very language of dialectic materialism betrays them—is as much a concern with the dialectic of their dogma as it is with a way of either solution or salvation.

There is a high sense, of course, in which any sustained thinking must become irrelevant. It must deliberately turn from embodiment in the transient, in the incidental, and the particular to reflection upon general and ultimate issues. The practical man does not make a fine distinction between the detachment that is necessary for reaching or searching for the relevance that is essential to dealing with formulas. Part of the contempt that has been brought upon the analytic habit of mind has been or should be charged up to the trivial dialecticians, the playful verbalists of the intellectual life. They have in the minds of a large public which should but does not know better, helped to bring the highest enterprises of the intellectual life into disrepute.

A considerable literate public has indeed been led to believe that all intellectual enterprise is an obsession with the fine spun. The intellectual class in American life has been regarded with something of the disdain or repulsion that the full blooded always feel for the thinly fastidious and the preciously esthetic.

American life has been cursed, more than life in most other countries, by a sharp division between the practical and the impractical, and the pursuits of thought as well as of art have had among us a put-on and a trivial character. We have probably the largest pseudo-intellectual class in the world, that amorphous group which reads book reviews and not books, the chatterers in the salons, and those who write with such an audience in view. In that pseudo-intellectual class should also be included the poets who, as Mr. Max Eastman recently pointed out, make a cult of unintelligibility, the philosophers who play a logical counterpoint for the mere virtuosity of the exercise, and the critics of music and painting who are more interested in developing esoteric theories of those arts than in those arts themselves. The plain man may be wrong in thinking that all wisdom can be put in words of one syllable, but he is justified in having some suspicion of thinkers who think that no truths can be uttered save in words six syllables long.

The self-consciousness, the snobbishness, the estheticism of much alleged intellectual work in America is, among other things, a consequence of the fact that the intellectual classes have been made to feel alien in the general setting of American life. They have retreated to their little coteries and their elaborate daydream-

ing because they have been as a class cut off from the main stream of social and political activities. They have returned the scorn with which they have been treated and emphasized the isolation to which they have been subjected. Thought as well as art becomes decadent when it is cut off from the nourishment of the life around it and from the responsibilities of participation in that common life. The intellectuals have been educated to irresponsibility and have been charged with the irresponsibility to which they have been trained.

The net result has been such an enmity, of late not tacit, as has always existed between town and gown in small university towns. Two reasons for this enmity flow from the tension and uneasiness created by the economic crisis. On the one hand, the luxury of triviality and estheticism might be indulged in boom days. In times of prosperity America has indulged its intellectuals as it might indulge children. What did it matter if a few abstracted spirits amused themselves with obscure trivialities? Even practical men might endow highbrow movements in arts and letters, and culture, the more esoteric the better, might be endowed by millionaires in the same way they might endow the reproduction of operas in languages they could not understand. But with the economic crisis, the always nascent suspicion of triviality has grown. The intellectuals seem to be playing while Rome is burning, and among the luxuries that have to be dispensed with—on this millionaires and state legislatures seem agreed—are all the research and educational enterprises that cannot justify themselves on severely practical grounds.

There has been another and almost precisely opposite reason for criticism of the intellectual class. This flows from the fact that since the beginning of the crisis, intellectuals themselves, even those who used a few years ago to have a high scorn of political and social problems, have turned from the more esoteric fields to theoretical proposals or practical participation in political and social life. They have ranged in their theories from reform to revolution, and in practice have entered into public life, municipal, state, and above all, federal.

All the charges that have been levelled against theories in the past have been



THE CLASS OF 1934  
Cartoon by Talburt, Washington  
Daily News

resuscitated. Long ago Plato in the "Republic" pointed out how amused the populace would be at the idea of a philosopher ruling the state. The familiar charges of triviality, of fine-spunness, or irrelevance, or radicalism, or erraticism have been revived. The same public that likes to accuse intellectuals of busying themselves with things that do not matter, has grown savage at the sight of intellectuals busying themselves with things that do matter, immediately and urgently. We once had ridicule of a "schoolmaster President"; we have now the spectacle of criticism, ranging from ridicule to abuse, of professorial advisers to a President. The deep-seated distrust of mind, like other deep-seated and repressed antipathies, comes to the surface in times of crisis.

It is no use pointing out, as has been repeatedly pointed out, that the practical men had their turn in the seats of the mighty, and cannot be said, by the most practical calculus, to have made a success

of it. It is no use protesting that the whole hope of democracy lies in using its trained and expert intelligence in the direction of its affairs. For at bottom it is not a class, but a way of life that is distrusted. It is not an intellectual group but intellectuality itself that is feared. What is feared as a matter of fact is something that the professional intellectual class in America has been sometimes, and is still in large numbers, far from displaying. The genuinely intellectual habit of mind is far from being merely intellectualistic. Theory, *theoria*, in the fine old Greek sense, is far from being merely theoretical. To think, in a genuine sense, is to see things in their own terms and in their own order and connection (the last phrase, is, of course, Spinoza's). Theory, in the noblest and truest acceptation of that term, is vision. It is the vision detached, consistent, and comprehensive. It is not the utterance or the propagation of a dogma. It is the attempt to understand. Such attempts at understanding are the best guarantee of freedom, for they are free from anything but the motive of complete and comprehensive seeing. The fear of mind is at its heart the fear of understanding and the fear of truth. It is fear that our prejudices may be exploded and our dearest superstitions made untenable. In its extreme forms it produces that enraged anti-intellectualism which seems to animate the current political régime in Germany. The welcome to mind is the welcome to understanding and ultimately to peace. For whatever be the evils we may have to face, the chaos that may lie ahead of us, only a candid attempt at understanding will help to remove those evils and to clarify that chaos. And where mind cannot remove evils, at least by understanding their conditions, we may be enabled, as Spinoza long ago observed, to become at peace with nature and with ourselves. The fear of mind opens the door to sentimentality on the one hand and brutality on the other. Neither brutality nor sentimentalism will cure our present distresses.

## A World War Hero

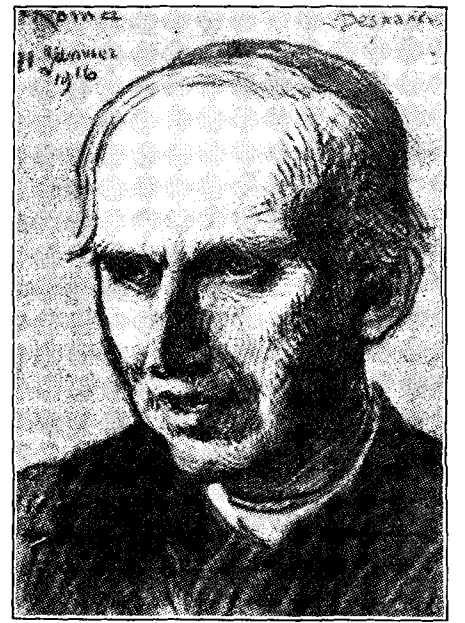
THE LIFE OF CARDINAL MERCIER.  
By John Gade. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1934. \$2.75.

Reviewed by STANLEY WENT

THE Great War produced many humble heroes, but few from the ranks of the leaders. England failed to produce a Nelson, France a Napoleon, Italy a Garibaldi. Among the Central Powers, grim old Hindenburg alone approached heroic stature. It was left for trampled Belgium to give to the world the two outstanding heroes of the war, and in doing so to exalt the power of the spirit. The world is the richer and human dignity the greater because King Albert declined the easy way of safety and Cardinal Mercier opposed his moral authority to the physical force of von Bissing, and prevailed.

The present work is the first full-sized biography of the great Cardinal. Doubtless it is not definitive, as the author is well aware; only in the long perspective of time will Désiré Joseph Mercier take his rightful place in the procession of history. Meanwhile it is well that we should have the facts of the Cardinal's life and a sympathetic appraisal of the great part he played in the events of his time. There is also perhaps a positive advantage in having the biography written by a Protestant, whose work, nevertheless, has received the imprimatur of Cardinal Hayes.

It was the accident of war that thrust Mercier into the conspicuous position he occupied in the eyes of the world; but apart altogether from the war the Cardinal was one of the really great figures in the Catholic hierarchy. To the qualities that made him such Mr. Gade does full justice and on the whole maintains an admirable balance in his portrayal of the triple rôle of saint, scholar and ecclesiastical statesman. The Cardinal was a born teacher who brought to his vocation an immense erudition, a special enthusiasm for the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, and a broad and astonishingly liberal culture. His piety was profound; his faith at once simple and majestic; his personal



CARDINAL MERCIER

From a drawing by Albert Besnard.

asceticism such as to cause anxiety to members of his household.

The general reader will turn naturally to the chapters dealing with the four years of war which marked the high point of Cardinal Mercier's career. Just how many army corps that tall, dignified figure was worth to the Allies can never be accurately appraised; that he contributed powerfully to the moral condemnation of Germany, and hence to her ultimate defeat, is not to be gainsaid. During the whole time of the subjugation of Belgium he reinterpreted for the world the phrase, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's." Submitting punctiliously, though always under protest, to the physical power of the invaders, and urging a like submission on his people, he never lost sight of, or allowed the German authorities to lose sight of, the moral rights of the Belgians. His pastoral letter, "Patriotism and Endurance," of Christmas Day, 1914, circulated despite the prohibition of the conquerors, became, as the author says, "the fundamental Charter of Rights and Duties of occupied Belgium."

In the post-war years the Cardinal devoted himself heart and soul to the famous Malines "conversations," undertaken to explore unofficially the possibilities of reunion between the Anglican and the Roman Catholic churches. Perhaps some successor of Mr. Gade may yet record as one of the most significant acts of Mercier's life the summoning to his deathbed of his friend Lord Halifax, the leader in the "conversations" on the English side. Halifax, at eighty-four, answered the summons, was present at a communion at the bedside, and received as a farewell gift the Cardinal's pastoral ring, which he wore thereafter on a chain until his own death a few months ago.

## Astronomical Earth

EARTH, RADIO AND THE STARS. By Harlan T. Stetson. New York: Whittlesey House. 1934. \$2.50.

Reviewed by ARTHUR H. COMPTON

THE earth as an object of astronomical study has been somewhat neglected. It has long been known that the ocean tides are due to effects of the sun and moon. There are other minor effects of the gravitational pull of these neighbors on the motion of the earth. Dr. Stetson, who in this book describes these and other astronomical aspects of the earth, has made himself a leading authority in this field. One of his most interesting contributions is the correlation between the tides and the strength of radio signals. This is just one of several ways in which the positions of the sun and moon affect our earth. Others include changes in the weather with the sun spots cycle, auroral displays associated with sun spots, etc. He has presented also a brief discussion of the major characteristics of the cosmic rays, which appear to be visitors from remote portions of interstellar space.

The charming informality of Dr. Stetson's style, combined with his thorough mastery of the subject, makes this volume one of unusual interest.