

loving public. At least its pages are cut.

Michael Collins and the Making of a New Ireland. By Piaras Beaslai. Two volumes. Harper and Brothers.
Italy and Facismo. By Luigi Sturzo. Harcourt, Brace and Company.
Fascism. By Giuseppe Prezzolini. E. P. Dutton and Company.

SEEING AMERICA WHOLE

By Herschel Brickell

AMERICANS do not have to depend upon foreign sources for their contemporary literature of self examination. The number of critics of present day civilization and culture in the United States is impressive; we suffer from no lack of professional viewers with alarm, even though they be far outnumbered by and far less popular than the equally professional painters with pride.

But the domestic variety of such criticism is likely to lack calmness and perspective. The size of the country demands that it and its multifarious problems be observed from a height and a distance if the observer is to see it whole. This last a Frenchman has done, a Frenchman who is by profession a teacher of economics in Paris, but who knows America from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

André Siegfried has made an invaluable contribution to the study of our civilization, amazing in its clarity, its sense of proportion, its exactness of detail, and its interest. But for the fact that his fine book includes no study of American cultural achievements, it is completely comprehensive, a fair, balanced study of our ethnic situation, our religion, our politics, our prevailing prosperity, and our foreign relations.

Another foreigner who knows his America at first hand has contributed a volume of importance to thinking people, but in a much narrower sense. Norman Angell's book is a study of the public mind, chiefly in England and the United States, half of which is devoted to the imbecility of nations in wartime, which is too obvious to need all this weight of evidence.

Mr. Angell has suffered for his intelligence; has felt the stupidity of the masses as a personal matter both here and in his own country, and this fact appears to throw him off balance. He is at too great pains to prove that the voice of the people is the voice of Satan—in wartime. This is self evident, except that the people are not alone. Their leaders, poets, politicians, publicists, with pathetically few exceptions run with the pack.

These are the steps in his reasoning: First, that the public mind, or intelligence, is for all practical purposes non-existent. Second, that there is no durable substitute for democracy. Third, that careful training of the public conscience—not mere education in the habitual sense—will better conditions in the *faute de mieux* governmental system.

This last is a recognizable variation of the older theory that universal education would serve as a panacea for all the ills of rule by the people, a theory to which Americans cling, although its worthlessness has become painfully obvious. It was based at the outset upon the false premise that all men are created equal in mental and ethical capacity, and only need training to become perfect units in a perfect polity.

M. Siegfried portrays a grown up America as a collection of more or less inimical racial units; by no means fused as yet into a nation—this situ-

ation complicated by a fissure between country and city; a grown up America still dominated by Calvinist principles; still parochial in its grasp of international relations; and committed today heart and soul to the worship of a new god called Prosperity, whose High Priest is Mass Production.

What the future holds for our country, this canny Frenchman is too wise to say, although he leaves ample opportunity for reading between the lines. For one thing, he sees our destiny turning toward the Pacific, where we are to champion the cause of the white race in the East, a portentous prophecy.

This portrait is painted by a Frenchman, an individualist and an enemy of Puritanism. One should keep the fact in mind, as he would wish it kept in mind; beyond that, it is without bias, painfully accurate, and, it needs to be said again, astonishingly correct in its observations.

M. Siegfried's book is of permanent value; it contains many good charts and carefully compiled statistics which the ordinary reader may skip without losing the thread of the narrative, although they are not put in merely to give the volume an appearance of authority.

Mr. Angell's horrible examples of the imbecilities of democracies in wartime are depressing beyond words, but unnecessarily repetitive. His general conclusion is one that is forced upon even the most casual student of contemporary civilization: That man's dominance of the material world has far outrun his mastery of self; of mind and spirit.

To restore this dangerous situation to a balance is the great task of modern philosophy, which thus far has made pathetically little progress. Mr. Angell's thinking about the matter has

resulted in constructive suggestions which are worth investigating.

America Comes of Age. By André Siegfried. Translated by H. H. Hemming and Doris Hemming. Harcourt, Brace and Company.
The Public Mind. By Norman Angell. E. P. Dutton and Company.

MANY VOICES

By Margery Swett Mansfield

SET aside the extremely radical poets, the writers of newspaper verse, your own personal favorites, and the half dozen or so outstanding figures who represent to you the largest talents of our day — such as, perhaps, Sandburg, Frost, Masefield, Robinson, Millay — and you still have left an incredible number of technically competent poets who would be sufficiently individual, and in many cases sufficiently subtle and thoughtful to win marked attention, did they not all live at the same time. They drown out each other's voices. The books here considered make a fairly representative cross section of contemporary verse after you have removed its extreme figures. Although the inexplicable magic phrase — the peculiar gift of the poetic genius — is all too scarce, the work is, nevertheless surprisingly able and imaginative.

I make quick exception of "Street Lamps" by Morris Abel Beer. His work is weak and inconsequential, though possibly its publication is excusable for the sake of those still old fashioned people who like to read pretty thoughts about their home town, even if it happens to be New York. He is too self conscious, or too conscious of being a poet, and often too bitter, to be a popular poet, and too unintellectual to please sophisticated