

tell her dogmatically the why and wherefore of the depression. *A Guide Through World Chaos* will please such a person. It will be popular because it is easy to follow, because it explains without qualifying its statements, because it demolishes the present order when everyone is dissatisfied and wants a change, because it is pink and pleasant, in the sense that it does not trouble the reader with even one percent of the difficulties which the New Era is bound to involve.

Whether it is sound, is another question. Every phenomenon in the field of economics is the result of a number of factors. It is the task of the economist not only to show their causal relation, but after careful research and with a judicial temperament to fix the relative importance of one factor to another. It is hard enough to do this when one is writing about a depression in the midst of one; it is impossible if one approaches the problems with a political and social philosophy as definite as Mr. Cole's, though that philosophy be of the G. O. P. protectionist, the MacDonald Liberal, or the Russian Bolshevik theorist.

PAUL R. REYNOLDS, JR.

THE PERSONAL MEMOIRS OF
JOFFRE *translated by Colonel T. Bentley Mott* (HARPERS. 2 vols. \$6.00)

PERSONAL memories of military leaders in the World War have just about come to an end with Marshal Joffre's two imposing volumes, which are perhaps the key to the controversy which has raged almost since the day the War ended. For the Joffre who in 1914 was the beloved saviour of France, "Papa Joffre", has been shorn considerably by historians of the legend with which circumstances gilded him. The question has been, "Was Joffre a military genius, or a dullard?" Evidence—

legendary and factual—has indicated that he was both, with a sad preponderance of the latter. Now, for the first time, Joffre himself has spoken and we are informed, as no one else could tell us, of the problems which beset him and of his decisions in face of them.

Joffre deals at length with the early stages of the War, in a simple manner befitting his character. Unmistakably his own words point to the belief that he was no genius. But it is impossible not to sympathize with the man and his problems, or not to repeat with him the words, "Pauvre Joffre!", which he uttered when things went wrong. In those perilous August days of 1914 when Joffre concentrated his main efforts in the south and the Germans, in accordance with the Schlieffen plan, were advancing through Belgium from the north, we learn some of the reasons for Joffre's apparent blindness. As early as 1911 General Michel had predicted the course of the main German manoeuvre in case of war. His prediction was rejected, and at the opening of hostilities in 1914 we find Joffre hesitating, wondering, puzzling: Where will the main German blow fall? He records General Lanrezac's fear that the enemy would make a wide out-flanking movement north of the Meuse and his own reply, "that on this date, August 14th, the information we had received did not justify, for the moment, a belief in such a manoeuvre". Yet on the 15th, after receiving news from Belgium of enemy forces north of Liège, he says he wrote Lanrezac that "in my opinion nothing but good could come of his making preliminary arrangements for the move toward the north. . . ." The movement was not to take place, however, except by his own order, an order not directly forthcoming.

Joffre's refutation of Lanrezac's later state-

ment that it was impossible not to perceive that the German manoeuvre would develop north of the Meuse leads one to believe that as time passed he became increasingly unwilling to predict, or to allow others to predict, the course of enemy invasion. He seems to have been out for facts, not wholly realizing that when they appeared it might be too late. But in face of all the contradictory information he received regarding the enemy, who can blame him? For instance, the town of Liège, with its antiquated, German-constructed forts, fell on August 9th. Yet on the 20th Joffre wonders if the forts are still capable of resistance!

For the Victory of the Marne, Joffre appears to take full credit. Generosity might have led him to share it with General Gallieni. And there are obvious contradictions and discrepancies in Joffre's records elsewhere in the book. But nevertheless it is an effort to present a true document and there is no conscious misrepresentation. Picking at it is something for military experts and War-time historians.

B. D. CUTLER

SEX IN THE ARTS: A SYMPOSIUM
edited by John Francis McDermott and Kendall B. Taft (HARPERS. \$3.50)

SEX is a word too often profaned, according to the majority of the seventeen writers in this symposium. It has become a salacious word, a loose expression that is rarely without its *double entendre*. Its use ought to be restricted, says Struthers Burt, for instance, in his essay on the movies, to its biologic significance. In its place he would employ some such circumlocution as the-relationships-between-men-and-women.

Viewed with this circumlocution in mind, sex is of artistic value only in the sense that

the arts involve attempts to organize the chaos of life into emotionally satisfying harmonies. Where those relationships are happy, there is little scope for the artist. Where they are productive of shame or regret or unhappiness, it is the function of the artist to make beauty out of pain, as Keats made beauty out of poverty, disease, and death.

Coming to sex in its biologic sense, the majority vote in this symposium is that sex has little place in the arts. Life, says this jury, is franker and freer in this matter than any of the arts would ever aspire to be. One notable dissident from this verdict is V. F. Calverton. Writing on *The Literary Arts* he claims that the love-motif of the nineteenth century has given way to the sex-motif of the twentieth. Release rather than renunciation seems to him to be the technical formula for the modern *littérateur*, and he hails our current literature as embodying a new philosophy of life. Ernest Boyd, in the essay on modern biography, implicitly rejects this. Boyd says that we have been indulging in a post-War Freudian frolic. He believes that sex in biography, as in life itself, is simultaneously essential and unimportant, save when nothing else of importance is afoot. In other words, our literary folk have become hysterical over what is merely incidental in common life.

With varying degrees of candour a similar charge of hysteria is made against the painters by C. J. Bulliet, against the journalists by H. F. Pringle, against the advertising men by Silas Bent. On the other hand, Elmer Rice deplores the conservatism of the theatre. He says that the modern drama in its treatment and discussion of sex is timid, squeamish, superficial, and conventional. Struthers Burt has quite the opposite complaint against the moving-pictures. He regrets that the movie magnates are capitalizing on the fact that lubricity is almost entirely a matter of sug-