

refuse the temptation of sceptical irony or religious emotion, both dangerous and fatal to this or any subject of inquiry. Leckie in a standard work, which Mr. Summers finds it convenient to dismiss as "inefficient," dealt a rationalistic blow more severe than the adherents of superstition could sustain. But he suffered from impatience! He simply could not credit the abyss of human credulity. Just as Michelet in "La Sorciere" (1862) gave to this old wives' tale a reality as glowing and passionate as "The Martyrdom of Man," so also he failed because the astounding delusion of Satan which produced the mediæval witch became too full of imagery in his hands.

The only recent contribution which is firmly established upon the historical method is "The Witch-Cult in Western Europe," by Miss M. A. Murray (1921). It is a model of restraint, lucidity and originality. It stands in pathetic isolation amongst the appalling rubbish-heap of the contributions to the subject of witchcraft.

Mr. Montague Summers, in the latest appeal for the supernatural explanation of necromancy, is at any rate energetic. He jeers at historians with both reputation and credentials, and plunges straightway into a prolonged appeal for a reaction to the mediæval faith in Satan. I hope that Professor Coulton will not miss this book. It will give him food for much quiet reflection.

"Only the trained theologian," remarks Mr. Summers, "can adequately treat the subject," and it is from what he calls the "orthodox" standpoint that he brackets witchcraft with heresy and the Sabbath with the actual presence of Anti-Christ. To him the witch was—and is—"An evil liver, a social pest and parasite, the devotee of a loathly and obscene creed; a member of a powerful secret organisation inimical to Church and State," and so on.

Let me emphasise the limits of Mr. Summers's historical credulity:

"In connection with the close correlation between witchcraft and heresy there is a very remarkable fact, the significance of which has—so far as I am aware—never been noted. The full fury of persecution burst over England during the first half of the seventeenth century, that is to say, shortly after the era of a great religious upheaval, when the work of rehabilitation and recovery so nobly initiated by Queen Mary I had been wrecked owing to the pride, lust and baseness of her sister."

That is pretty rich, but it is nothing to Mr. Summers's attitude towards the legends of witchcraft. He believes in rematerialisation of the dead in the form of ectoplasm—a simple solution of many nightmares of the Sabbats. He believes that Satan was actually present in person in the bewildering comment: "But in many instances it is certain—and orthodoxy forbids us to doubt the possibility—that the Principle of Evil, incarnate, was present for the hideous adoration of his besotted worshippers"! And adds: "Metaphysically it is possible; historically it is indisputable."

How is it possible to regard Mr. Summers seriously? If it is orthodox according to theology to believe in the actual presence of Satan, tail and all—at what point can the historian intrude? But how much farther away—cowering in the outer darkness—is the miserable reviewer whose meagre hair is rising at every new evidence of the renaissance of the hobgoblins he has relegated to infancy?

FREDERICK WATSON.

THE ROMANCE OF MODERN LIFE.*

The first on my list¹ is a very pleasant story of three very pleasant people. It is a modern novel in the sense that the characters as well as the setting are modern, but the "Three People" who give the book its title are as fresh and wholesome as the air they breathe, and are a pleasant change from many people we have met lately in fiction.

*1 "Three People." By Mabel Barnes-Grundy. 7s. 6d. (Hodder & Stoughton.)—2 "The White in the Black." By Maria E. Albanesi. 7s. 6d. (Collins.)—3 "First Fiddle." By Jean Greig. 7s. 6d. (Collins.)—4 "Mareeya." By E. Tait-Reid. 6s. (Heffer.)

Gyp and her brother Ronnie had brought themselves (or each other) up, because Aunt Titia, quite an amiable and agreeable aunt, could not be bothered to do it. On the whole they succeeded. Gyp at twenty-six, slim and tall with short-cut hair, is modern only in appearance. She wears jumper suits and (although that is not mentioned) no doubt the skirt in which she climbed the mountains was to her knees, but under her modern clothes she was as romantic as her mother and, for a young lady of twenty-six who had resisted many lovers, she fell in love almost too easily. Perhaps that was the Swiss air and the atmosphere of Leysin, which is very well described. Gyp loves the mountains and the snow and the clear fresh air and all growing things, and Max Grey loves these things too. Ronnie, the brother to whom Gyp is so devoted (and the third of Three People), is a little less real a character perhaps than the others. And would he, being a soldier, have had quite such a hatred for the Germans? However we forgive Ronnie many things as his sister did, and we are sorry to say good-bye to them all.

Madame Albanesi can be relied upon for a good story well told, and with again plenty of romance in a modern setting. Some people may scoff at these stories, calling them old-fashioned, but both Gyp and Una in "The White in the Black"² are far more real pictures of the girl of 1926 than is the exaggerated modern girl who is so popular in fiction. I doubt indeed if that young lady exists at all except in fiction. Una Corderan is as natural, as feminine, as Gyp, and like Gyp she has courage and has need of that courage. She sets out to earn her living as a governess and fails, although she makes the children love her, and someone else besides the children. We knew from the very first chapter that Sir Nicholas Mynter, Lady Mynter's stepson, is the Prince, and that although at first Una turns a cold face to him, all will come well between them. So this is an old-fashioned tale after all, for Una is no successful business woman or professional woman with the world at her feet, but only a girl who goes out to work from an unhappy home, and fails as a worker although she succeeds as a woman. Una's father, Julius Corderan, is one of the most interesting characters in the book—"courtly, handsome," successful, and entirely selfish and irresponsible. We are not sure that we are as patient with him as Una was. And is the artistic gift an excuse or a reason for general unsatisfactoriness in a husband? If one is to judge by the artist and musician in fiction, no young woman should marry a man who is either of these things.

Irene in "First Fiddle,"³ by Jean Greig, seems the last woman who should have married a musician who lived only for his music; yet it seemed at first that George Lucas's second marriage was going to disprove that. We have a feeling that our sympathy is not meant to be with Irene, but she has it all the same, although we never came really to like her.

There is a freshness that suggests wide spaces, great winds and clear air about Alix who tells the story in "Mareeya."⁴ Alix comes from New Zealand to one of the women's colleges at Cambridge, and her description of life there is one of the best things in the book. With all Mareeya's attractiveness, we can sympathise with Alix's mother and feel sometimes that her children were hardly fair to her. But Alix as a sister and a friend was loyal to the end, and we are glad that for her the story ended happily.

PAMELA HINKSON.

CABINETS AND FIELDS.*

In "Governments and War" Sir Frederick Maurice's task is to endeavour to assess the co-ordination which should exist between policy and strategy, or in other words to define the ideal relations between statesman and soldier. He has gone back to the American Civil War from which

* "Governments and War." By Major-General Sir Frederick Maurice, K.C.M.G., C.B. (Heinemann.)—"British Battles of Destiny." By Boyd Cable. (Nelson.)

to deduce lessons for the future, both because he believes that we are too close to the Great War to be clear of the fogs of controversy, and also because of a certain similarity in the broad lines of the problems of the Civil War and of the late struggle. We must frankly state that in our opinion such alleged similarity seems to be unduly stressed. The parallel lines do exist, but they are few and short; the divergent ones are many in number and of infinite length. To take but one instance of the latter, although in the American Civil War the area of the theatre of war ran into millions of square miles, the capitals of North and South were little more than a hundred miles apart, and one of them was most awkwardly situated almost on the frontier. The possession of Washington and Richmond was constantly sought by the armies of the South and North respectively. This fact exerted an influence upon the policy of the Civil War which for many months at least reacted upon, if indeed it did not dominate, the strategy of either opponent. No real comparison is here to be found with the Great War.

General Maurice freely admits that the Power which on entering war strikes first and strikes quickly obtains great military advantages. He qualifies this by saying that if these advantages are purchased at the price of political dissension at home they may, they probably will, be found to have cost too much. From this he proceeds to the curious statement:

"I am unable to see that if the British Expeditionary Force had appeared at Mons three days earlier than it did, the military situation would have been materially altered in our favour. . . . It is indeed not impossible that, if an earlier arrival had caused us to advance farther into Belgium, it might have made our situation more perilous than in fact it was."

We cannot agree to the inference that if England had mobilised simultaneously with France, i.e. on August 1st, "political dissension" at home would have ensued. On the contrary we share the opinion of a very large number of people that, if England had shown her hand a few days earlier than she did, the violation of Belgium might never have taken place at all. And as regards the danger which General Maurice considers might have been caused by a further advance into Belgium, we must point out that he omits the most important point, namely that the British Expeditionary Force at Mons consisted of but four instead of the six divisions actually available. Policy here so interfered with strategy as to diminish the striking force by thirty per cent; and so clogged efficiency that when the first of the two missing divisions took the field, just in time for Le Cateau, it was so lacking in essentials as to be shorn of much of its value.

The author is quite correct in his assertion that Lincoln learnt from experience, and that this enabled the President to establish relations with Grant which approached very near the ideal which should exist between the statesman and soldier. This leads him to an examination of the question whether such satisfactory relations cannot be worked out in peace instead of being improvised at a comparatively late stage during a war. The pressing need is a Great Headquarters for the Empire. General Maurice pleads that just as the plans of mobilisation of fleets and armies are worked out in peace, so the plans for the creation of a Great Headquarters, which is to control policy and strategy, should be prepared beforehand. Sir Frederick looks askance however at a Ministry of Defence, and is inclined to favour the ultimate co-ordination and control by the Prime Minister, a workable arrangement of course if every Prime Minister were a Lincoln and every commander-in-chief were a Grant. Whether we agree with General Maurice's arguments or not, we are at any rate grateful for a book which confirms his reputation as the leading military writer of to-day.

Mr. Boyd Cable is one of those fortunate writers who



Lionel told about Pirates.

From "Memoirs of a Child," by Basil Macdonald Hastings (Philpot).

Recently reviewed in THE BOOKMAN.

combine the power of facile narrative with the ability to insert all necessary and technical details in such a manner as in no way to interfere with the story. He has now given us a book of British battles, describing not only the engagements themselves, but showing the causes which led up to them and the issues which depended on them. His selection is well made and is limited to a dozen, those which he shares with Creasy being Hastings, the Spanish Armada, Blenheim and Waterloo. We could wish however that Mr. Cable had "thought imperially" to a greater extent, for we almost owe him a grudge for omitting Quebec and Plassey, two battles which were certainly "of destiny"; and there is no writer who could make more of them than Mr. Cable. *Damme, 1213*, is an unexpected find, but the author makes out a good cause for its inclusion, although we cannot agree that it was this battle which began our policy of sea-power—namely making our navy our first line of defence. The sailors will say with Captain Corcoran, "Why, damme, it's too bad," and point, and justly so, to Alfred the Great. This is an excellent book, and both books reviewed in this page are distinctly books to buy.

F. E. WHITTON (Lieut.-Col.).

A JOURNALIST'S MEMORIES.*

The recent death of Harold Spender at a comparatively early age was a great loss not only to a host of personal friends in England and America, but to sober and honest journalism; and his passing is the more to be regretted because, as Mr. F. S. Marvin tells us in a foreword to the volume before us, he was "still quite young, though he humorously craved the privileges of old age for sixty. He had still within him the founts of many priceless things which we associate with youth—the passion to right the wrongs of

* "The Fire of Life: A Book of Memories." By Harold Spender. 15s. (Hodder & Stoughton.)