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By DAVID V. BUSH

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tragic events of his early youth when his brother was executed for taking part in a conspiracy against the Emperor Alexander III. He threw himself into subversive revolutionary activity while still at school, and as a result became subjected to constant persecution which drove him into exile and poverty. For years he lived thus, planning, hoping, and hating. He never had a profession or occupation aside from his revolutionary activities. Though he defied the Worker, he never did any manual labor; though he despised the intellectuals, he was an intellectual all his life. In this, Lenin was typical of the group that took over the reins of power in 1917. For the most part, the leaders of the Communist revolution were pamphleteers, reporters, and agitators. Curiously enough they undertook to lead the horny-handed proletariat to its Utopia.

Lenin's chief weapon was violence engendered by hatred. His strength lay in knowing how to arouse the needed hatred, first against the middle and upper classes, and then against the independent peasants. When, following the first reign of terror, the countryside refused to give up its grain to the rulers in the cities, Lenin devised the scheme of raising the poorer peasantry against the richer peasantry and bringing chaos into the villages. But while he secured the needed grain with which to feed the proletariat, he killed the last vestige of enterprise in agriculture. The result was a widespread famine and the failure of the "experiment." When the praetorian guard of the revolution—composed of sailors recruited from the villages—revolted in Kronstadt in 1921, Lenin had it crushed with the same ruthlessness with which he crushed the middle-class opposition. Victorious, he stood completely isolated of all support. It was the hour to abandon old policies and scuttle the sinking ship of "Communism" in order to raise the flag on the new bark, "State Socialism," which allowed breathing space to natural economic laws. The dramatic climax of Lenin's career was this unexpected pirouette which landed him in the camp of the opposition which he had successfully crushed. "The peasants," concludes the author, "had beaten Lenin under Lenin's own leadership." Perhaps this is as good an epitaph to an unsuccessful "experiment" as any.

## A British Statesman

MEMORIES AND REFLECTIONS, 1852-1927, by the Earl of Oxford and Asquith; 2 vols.; Little, Brown, \$10.00.

Reviewed by L. H. TITTERTON.

NOTES from the store of his memories, and some of the letters he had written to friends—so Lady Oxford describes the underlying idea of this last book, which the great Liberal leader was not destined to see in print. His two previous works, *Fifty Years of British Parliament*, and *The Genesis of the War*, very

naturally give evidence that Lord Oxford drew freely and fully upon the sources, official and personal, which were available to him, and covered adequately that aspect of his life which was bound up with public affairs. The intention of the present book, in the beginning, was manifestly to deal only with those intimate trivialities which compose so much of the fineness of life, to reveal the great man in his unofficial moments as a man in necessary contact with other men. And so the first volume tells of childhood and youth, Oxford and the bar, early parliamentary and cabinet experiences. It has chapters on minor literary lights, judges and counsel, speakers and whips, glances at platform, pulpit, and press, touches judiciously upon the Marconi incident, and slips off discursively into a description of two famous London clubs—"The Club" and "Grillion's." It is a pleasant, reminiscent book of no particular importance.

The second volume is concerned with Lord Oxford as a Cabinet Minister during the war, with the collapse of the Liberal party and with the last years of the author's life. Almost inevitably the emphasis changes. Lord Oxford was "in the habit of jotting down irregularly his impressions of noteworthy persons and incidents while they were still fresh in his memory." It is therefore to be expected that some new light will be shed upon the characters of such men as Winston Churchill, with his desire for personal military glory—an interesting foreshadowing of his bellicose attitude some years later during the general strike. Particularly instructive is the manner in which Lord Oxford looked upon the supersession of Sir John French and the episode of Sir Frederick Maurice. The political mind is shown to full advantage as a strange phenomenon with an honor peculiarly its own and not always entirely intelligible to the layman. The author very obviously avoids any real expression of his opinion of Mr. Lloyd George. The chapter on the break-up of the first coalition is contributed by the Marquis of Crewe, Lord Lansdowne, and Lord Robert Cecil in the form of almost contemporary memoranda. But the confidential and secret memorandum by Lord Oxford to his colleagues of the Liberal "Shadow Cabinet" is printed in full. Written in October, 1926, it announces the laying down on the part of Lord Oxford of the leadership of the Liberal party and is a severe indictment of the conduct of Mr. Lloyd George.

Party politics can be of the utmost national importance, and history has yet to judge between Lord Oxford and the man who drove him from Liberal leadership. The latter has much in his past that may cause him uneasiness. The former has passed on. The memories and reflections of the Earl of Oxford and Asquith breathe a spirit of honorable dealing and fair fighting, and they leave the distinct impression of a man who, in character at least, was greater than most of his contemporaries.

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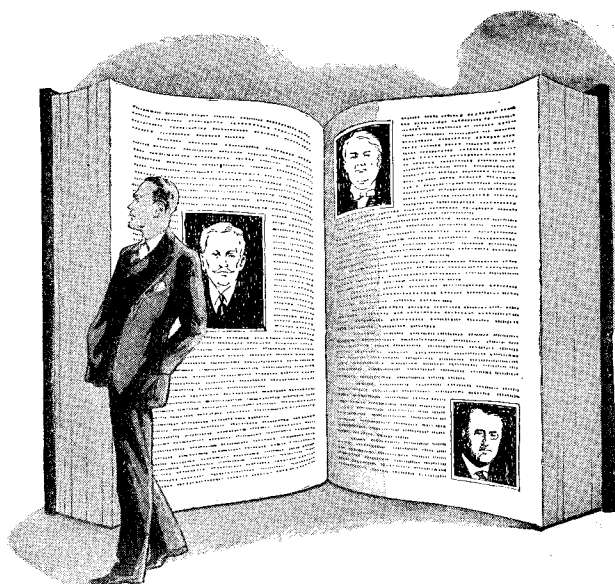
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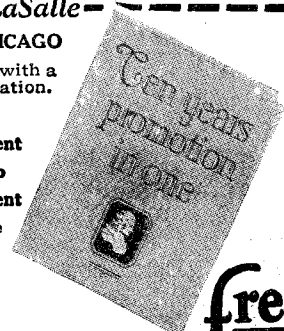
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