

period of her devotion to him. She herself, while in love with him, has become engaged to three men at a time—but this, she assures us, out of pure good nature and disinclination to give pain. Well, that is not impossible, to seventeen. There is something fine and sound about her, which has protected her even in her love for a skilled libertine; and we leave her at the moment of her escape, confident that she can take care of herself, even though her chosen asylum happens to be New York city.

PROBLEMS IN TRANSPORTATION.

The History and Economics of Transport. By Adam W. Kirkaldy and Alfred Dudley Evans. London: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons. 7s. 6d. net.

This book was written primarily to assist in the systematic study of transportation problems in the new commercial schools of Great Britain. It includes not only the history and problems of railway transportation, but those of canals and ocean transport as well, including a suggestive chapter on the economics of marine fuel. Frequent references are made to the situation in other countries, with the result that there are interesting comparisons, but in the main attention is concentrated on Great Britain. The authors avoid as a rule any emphatic expression of opinion on controverted questions, contenting themselves rather with a full statement of the conflicting points of view. They have produced a well-balanced and satisfactory treatment of the subject, which will find many interested readers outside the class for which it was prepared, because it makes available the latest developments in England in the problems of management and regulation. The book was written before the outbreak of the war and contains therefore no reference to England's newest experiment with state control beyond a note in the appendix. In this brief reference the authors reach the conclusion that as an example of state ownership the experience of the last few months has been of no value. "A Government system that could not do better than this would never be tolerated in this country."

Of most interest to American readers are the comments of the authors on questions of policy that touch our own problems. The business community of England appears not to be wholly content with its Railway and Canal Commission, not because of its lack of ability or fairness, but because of the cost of proceedings before it. Traders are compelled to employ high-priced counsel to contend against the eminence of the railway legal staff. As a result only large corporations bring their cases before the Commission. It is not surprising that there is some agitation for the abolition of this exclusive court.

Pools and working agreements are common in England and are frequently referred to by advocates of a similar policy in this country. While the authors, following their

settled policy, express no decided opinion, it becomes clear that pools are not working there with the smoothness that we commonly assume. From the point of view of the shipper, they possess few advantages and many disadvantages, and it is suggested that Parliament may have to step in if further development takes place along undesirable lines. There is a familiar ring in the contention that the railways of England have reached the point of "diminishing returns" in their earnings; that the companies have been investing more capital without obtaining a proportionately increased return, and that increases in rates to meet increased costs of operation, particularly in the matter of wages, have become necessary.

A chapter is devoted to the railways of the United States, which is in general accurate in its facts and sound in its conclusions. Yet a few inaccuracies occur. The word grange, improperly spelled "grainge," did not, as the authors assert, come into use because the meetings were held in "grainges or barns"; but simply because "grange" means farm, and the membership was confined to farmers. It is not true that the Interstate Commerce Commission has power to arbitrate labor disputes. Confusion was doubtless caused by the fact that the chairman of the Interstate Commerce Commission was at one time a Government mediator in labor controversies. Any one who attempts to compare rates in different countries must step warily to avoid the pitfalls in his attempt to thread the mazes of the problem. The authors have not been altogether successful. Lacking ton-mile figures, they have compared receipts per ton carried in the United Kingdom and the United States and have shown that the cost per ton in this country is approximately twice as great as that in Great Britain. They recognize that this is not due to a lower efficiency of American roads, but to the greater distance that goods are hauled in this country. But then comes this conclusion: "It follows, therefore, that notwithstanding the complaints of excessive rates, cost of transport is not here the burden that it is in America, because the goods transported do not have to travel so far." In other words, we buy a shoddier coat in England than you do in America; hence our clothing bill is less of a burden to us than it is to you. To have this argument possess validity, it would be essential that the same traffic should be hauled long distances in the United States and short distances in England. As a matter of fact, much of the more important English traffic has undergone a preliminary foreign rail journey and an ocean trip of many thousand miles.

But it will be a satisfaction to our railway executives to find this final summing up of the American railway situation: "Any one who has little more than a bowing acquaintance with its history, extent, and achievements will agree that from some points of view it is one of the most efficient, best organized, and cheapest systems in the world."

England's inland waterways, it is assert-

ed, are a comparatively neglected and insignificant means of transport. To follow the European procedure and subsidize them would mean a complete reversal of national policy; and even if subsidized, they could do no business unless the railways were forbidden to compete, and such an injunction would be impracticable without government ownership.

TRIBAL CUSTOMS OF AGRICULTURE.

Customary Acres and their Historical Importance. By Frederic Seebohm. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. \$4 net.

When he published "The English Village Community" in 1883 Seebohm opened a new and illuminating page in agrarian history. Violently opposed at first, his main contention, that the agricultural system of mediæval England is to be traced back beyond the Anglo-Saxon invasion to the Roman occupation, has steadily gained adherents. Though he turned aside to write on the tribal system in Wales, tribal custom in Anglo-Saxon law, and other subjects, he continued his studies in agricultural origins, and in his latest volume goes back to tribal customs of agriculture in Europe which must have antedated even the Roman conquest of Gaul. Though death overtook him two years ago at the age of seventy-eight before he had completed his inquiry, he was able, fortunately, to arrange such results as he had reached in a series of unfinished but valuable essays which are published by his son.

Customary acres in England vary in size all the way from the tiny Leicestershire acre of 2,308 square yards to the great Welsh acre of 12,960 square yards. These customary acres reach back into a dim past, ages before the establishment of the statute acre of 4,840 square yards. In France the arpent shows similar variations in size. What is the origin and significance of these variations which have persisted through the centuries? Starting with the famous linear table in the Welsh Venedotian code that there are

- 3 barleycorn lengths in the thumb,
- 3 thumbs in the palm,
- 3 palms in the foot,
- 3 feet in the pace,
- 3 paces in the leap, and
- 3 leaps in the land,

Seebohm reckoned that the "land" is the short end of the acre-strip in the open-field system of ploughing, the acre-strip being the amount of land which an eight-ox plough-team would plough in a day. By a series of ingenious calculations, based primarily on the length of the furrow and the shape of the acre-strip, he found remarkable underlying relations between the ancient land and linear measurements not only of the British Isles, but also of France, Spain, Italy, Greece, Rumania, and even ancient Egypt. The old British mile, for instance, is identical with the Gallic leuga of 1,500 paces; both are related to the furrow of a custom-

ary acre, and both were so firmly fixed in local custom that they were not displaced by the Roman mile of 1,000 paces.

Lack of space forbids any attempt to explain Seebohm's metrological discoveries, and it is too soon to say whether further researches will verify his seductive suggestions. Quite apart from the value which they may have in determining the meaning, according to the metric system, of a large number of words of measurement in the sources, Seebohm's suggestions are pregnant with meaning for the student of early tribal migrations and borrowings and of the gradual economic development of primitive communities. The customary acre was not primarily a unit of land measure; it was a unit of land cultivation; its size, therefore, was determined by the nature of the crop, the soil, the communal plough, and the prevailing tribal customs of co-aration. It contains within itself an epitome of the steps in agrarian development. When it is more fully understood, it may be that we can throw overboard the old reckoning of archaeologists, who talk of ages of stone, of bronze, and of iron, and adopt instead a more valuable institutional classification by modes of agriculture; when, for instance, we can reckon tribal development according to the use of barley, of spring wheat, and of winter wheat, or according to one-field, two-field, or three-field systems of planting.

Notes

Harpers issue to-day Sir Gilbert Parker's new novel, "The Money Master."

Scribners announce for immediate publication a new novel entitled "Felix O'Day," by F. Hopkinson Smith.

Among the new editions which the Revell Company announces for publication this autumn are: "The Birthday of Hope," by J. D. Jones; "The Law of the Tithe," by Arthur V. Babbs; "St. Cuthbert's," by Robert E. Knowles. The same house also announces "Studies in the New Testament," by Dr. A. T. Robertson.

The first edition in English of the Russian epic "The Armament of Igor" is about to be published by the Oxford University Press. The editor is Mr. L. A. Magnus, who has written a general introduction and gives a revised text, with translation, notes, and genealogical tables. The poem describes a disastrous foray by Igor Svyatoslavich in 1185.

Paul Elder & Co. announce for publication this month "The Architecture and Landscape Gardening of the Exposition," with an introduction by Louis Christian Mullgardt. The second volume of this work, entitled "The Sculpture and Mural Paintings of the Exposition," with an introduction by A. Stirling Calder, is also in preparation.

Books announced by Houghton Mifflin for publication September 18 are: "Letters on an Elk Hunt," by Elinore Pruitt Stewart; "Little Miss Grouch," a novel by Samuel Hopkins Adams; "The Children's Books of

Birds," by Olive Thorne Miller; "Nannette Goes to Visit Her Grandmother," by Josephine Scribner Gates; five volumes of The Riverside Uplift Series, including "The Cultivated Man," by Charles W. Eliot; "The Amateur Spirit," by Bliss Perry, and three books by George Herbert Palmer, "Self-Cultivation in English," "The Glory of the Imperfect," and "Trades and Professions." Three Hart, Schaffner & Marx prize essays in economics, which will also be ready, are "The Canadian Iron and Steel Industry," by W. J. A. Donald; "The Tin-Plate Industry," by Donald Earl Dunbar, and "Means and Methods of Agricultural Education," by Albert Leake. "The Song of the Lark," by Willa Sibert Cather, will be published in October.

The American-Scandinavian Foundation announces for publication two new volumes of the Scandinavian Classics for 1915, as follows: "Poems and Songs," by Björnsterne Björnson, translated from the Norwegian, in the original metres, with an introduction and notes, by Arthur Hubbell Palmer, and "Master Olof," by August Strindberg, translated from the Swedish, with an introduction, by Edwin Björkman.

"The Life, Diary, and Letters of Oscar Lovell Shafter," Associate Justice, Supreme Court of California, January 1, 1864, to December 31, 1868, has just been issued in a privately printed edition as a daughter's tribute to her father's memory, by Emma Shafter Howard.

To the publications of the Dramatic Museum of Columbia University will be added in October a second series on acting, viz.: "The Illusion of the First Time in Acting," by William Gillette, with an introduction by George Arliss; "Art and the Actor," by Constant Coquelin, translated by Abby Langdon Alger, with an introduction by Henry James; "Mrs. Siddons as Lady Macbeth and Queen Katherine," by H. C. Fleeming Jenkin, with an introduction by Brander Matthews; and "Reflexions on Acting," by Talma, with an introduction by Sir Henry Irving and a review by H. C. Fleeming Jenkin. A third series is in preparation to be issued in the autumn of 1916. It will contain the following four papers on play-making: "A Stage Play," by Sir William Schenck Gilbert, with an introduction by William Archer; "Discussions of the Drama," by Carlo Goldoni, selected, translated, and introduced by Hobart C. Chatfield-Taylor; "Theatrical Table-Talk," by J. W. von Goethe, selected, translated, and introduced by William W. Lawrence; "How Plays are Written," by Abraham Dreyfus, translated by H. H. Hughes, with an introduction by Brander Matthews.

Mr. Dunbar Rowland, director of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, is editing for publication the official letter-books of William C. C. Claiborne, as Governor of Mississippi Territory, as Commissioner of the United States to receive the Province of Louisiana from the French Government, as Governor-General of the Province of Louisiana, as Governor of the Territory of Orleans, and as Governor of the State of Louisiana, embracing the years 1801-1816.

Amid the roar of shells and bombs it is cheering to learn that certain studies "gang

their auld gait," namely, the Publications of the [London] Philological Society. Quite as if there were no war, the Society has issued two volumes of decided value for students of English: "A Fifteenth Century Courtesy Book," edited by R. W. Chambers, together with "Two Fifteenth Century Franciscan Rules," edited by W. W. Seton; and "Lowland Scotch as Spoken in the Lower Strathearn District of Perthshire," by Sir James Wilson, with Foreword by W. A. Craigie. The contents of these two volumes are too technical for appreciation in the *Nation*. But the accompanying Presidential Address, delivered by Prof. W. P. Ker on May 7, is abundantly suited to our columns. In ten brief pages Professor Ker, with light but sure touch, brings out anew the singular personality of Jacob Grimm. The founder of German philology was, first and foremost, a man whom we can all afford to love and venerate. Professor Ker is absolutely just in his remark: "Philology with Jacob Grimm was part of a study to which I think he gives no particular name. It was history, it was Germany, it was the Middle Ages, the Humanities, Nature, the Human Race." Again: "Modern scholars, who dabble in small patches of Grimm's garden, may often be horrified at the courage of their founder; where he cannot find information, he goes on without it." Was it not Grimm who said that in wrestling with some problems one must even have the courage to fail? Still again: "Grimm's large additions to positive science seem at times like the result of chance. They come as a precipitate from the most extraordinary vague vapor of ideas—a strange enthusiastic religion, the worship of an imaginary golden age." Yes, Grimm was a genius, no lover of "schools"; whereas too many of his followers, especially in these days, are mere schoolmen, prone *jurare in verba magistri*. The few passages of Grimm's German quoted in the Address move the present writer to a fervent ejaculation. Will no one lay bare to American students the wonderful vigor and charm of Grimm's style? It speaks, not from brain to brain, but rather from heart to heart. Professor Ker mentions Grimm's good fortune as librarian to King Jerome at Wilhelmshöhe (Cassel): "He had the lightest of duties and plenty of time for his own reading." Fifty years later another eminent scholar, Grein, who did so much for the editing of Anglo-Saxon texts, was also librarian in Cassel, for the restored Electorate, and enjoyed "the lightest of duties and plenty of time for his own" editing. To the present writer Grein lamented deeply, in 1872, his transfer by the Prussian Government to Marburg. Even Prussian "efficiency," we note, may not be truly efficient. Professor Ker's Address may be had separately for one shilling.

Mr. Frank Harris has patronized a number of the great men of the earth, and now, from the memory of these condescending moments, writes a volume of "Contemporary Portraits" (Mitchell Kennerley; \$3.50). Renan sits at his feet and craves his critical commendation; praise is doled out ironically to the silly Frenchman, and the report ends with these words: "But it was not worth while to try to correct his illimitable conceit." Whistler reserved his best witticisms for the ear of Mr. Harris; Oscar Wilde depended on him; Sir Richard Burton poured out to him the secrets of his heart; Matthew Arnold sought advice from him, and so on. But the most astonishing admission in the book is the fact that Browning snubbed