

alleged voyage to Europe in 1827. He declines to accept the theory that he was at some time addicted to the use of opium. He rejects by implication, if not explicitly, the theory now generally accepted in America as to the immediate cause of Poe's death. And he rejects outright Griswold's charges of ingratitude and arrogance, characterizing Griswold, as Baudelaire had done, as a monster among biographers.

That M. Fontainas, in his enthusiasm, overshoots the mark somewhat in his defence of the poet will scarcely be denied. He is quite right in holding that Poe was by no means so bad a man as Griswold and other early biographers tried to make him out. And he is obviously correct in insisting that Poe's character must not be judged apart from his writings: in his emphasis on this point is to be found one of the chief merits and the chief distinction of this book. But after all is said that may be said in explanation and extenuation of the poet's shortcomings, it would seem difficult to condone all the excesses of his closing years. It is impossible to forget his assaults upon Longfellow. It is not plain that his conduct was above reproach in the matter of his use of Captain Brown's "Conchology." And shall we dismiss his much fibbing about himself as mere innocent "mystification"?

Aside from his overstatement of the case for Poe, M. Fontainas falls into a number of minor inaccuracies. It was not in 1816, for instance, but in 1815, that the youthful Poe left America with the Allans for his trip to England; and it was not in 1821, but in 1820, that he returned to America. It was not in January, but in March, 1827, that Poe ran away from the Allan home in Richmond. It was not in 1842, but in 1844, that he left Philadelphia to make his home in New York. It is not quite accurate to say that contemporary American magazines were silent as to Poe's "Poems" of 1831: there were notices in both the New York *Mirror* and the Philadelphia *Casket*. And there is no evidence that Poe and Mrs. Osgood carried on a correspondence after their rupture in 1846. In certain other particulars M. Fontainas has not availed himself of the results of recently published investigations in his field. Thus he takes no account of the revelations made by Professor J. C. French in 1917 as to Poe's activities in Baltimore in 1833, nor of various bits of new information brought out somewhat earlier as to his life in Baltimore in 1831 and 1832 and as to his life as a boy in Richmond and London. But these omissions are explained in the preface as arising from the fact that the manuscript for the volume was ready for the press—indeed, passed into the hands of the printers—in May, 1914, publication being deferred only because of the war. It should be added that M. Fontainas makes no attempt to throw light on the obscure places in Poe's history, but contents himself with weighing and interpreting the evidence as brought out by other biographers.

KILLIS CAMPBELL

## Books in Brief

SEVERAL smaller volumes have already been published by Dr. Grenfell, giving some account of his work among the Labrador fishermen, but in "A Labrador Doctor, An Open-Air Autobiography" (Houghton Mifflin) the full story of his life and achievements is told for the first time. In one of those unconscious jokes sometimes perpetrated by errant type the publisher's announcement card names it "A Laboratory Doctor." Dr. Grenfell's daring and adventurous life, including thirty-two years spent with deep-sea fishermen, certainly has had little in common with that of the other kind of scientist who spends his days and nights with a microscope. This great medical missionary tells with straightforward simplicity his boyish escapades, weaving vivid threads of adventure and accomplishment into a very human background. Born on the English sea-coast, he tasted with his first breath the salt air and love of the sea. He and his brothers often slipped away as children to spend the day and night with fishermen

in their boats. He describes his years in a preparatory school, his decision to study medicine, and his hospital experience. Under the influence of Dwight L. Moody young Grenfell decided to become a missionary, though distressed to find "that the mere word 'missionary' aroused suspicion," and that people thought missionaries "unpractical if not hypocritical and mildly incompetent if not really vicious." Asked to cross the Atlantic in a small sailing vessel to investigate opportunities for service among the fishermen of the northwest Atlantic, he arrived on the Labrador coast on August 4, 1892. "The exhilarating memory of that day is one which will die only when we do. A glorious sun shone over an oily ocean of cerulean blue, over a hundred towering icebergs of every fantastic shape, and flashing all of the colors of the rainbow from their gleaming pinnacles as they rolled on the long and lazy swell. Birds familiar and strange left the dense shoals of rippling fish, over which the great flocks were hovering and quarrelling in noisy enjoyment, to wave us welcome as they swept in joyous circles overhead." The medical work among the neglected people of that land which began almost as soon as Dr. Grenfell's party landed has continued ever since. "Among the Eskimos I found a great deal of tuberculosis and much eye trouble. Nearly all had been taught to read and write in Eskimo, though there is no literature in that language to read, except such books as have been translated by the Moravian Brethren. At that time a strict policy of teaching no English had been adopted. In one of my lectures, on returning to England, I mentioned that as the Eskimos had never seen a lamb or a sheep either alive or in a picture, the Moravians, in order to offer them an intelligible and appealing simile, had most wisely substituted the kotik, or white seal, for the phrase 'the Lamb of God.' One old lady in my audience must have felt that the good Brethren were tampering unjustifiably with Holy Writ, for the following summer, from the barrels of clothing sent out to the Labrador, was extracted a dirty, distorted, and much-mangled and wholly sorry-looking woolly toy lamb. Its *raison d'être* was a mystery until we read the legend carefully pinned to one dislocated leg, 'Sent in order that the heathen may know better.'" Schools, hospitals, libraries, coöperative stores, machine shops, a saw-mill, a fox farm, and a children's home have been established. Dr. Grenfell and his associates have now a plan under consideration to dam the Straits of Belle Isle, thereby making the Gulf of St. Lawrence free from ice and open to navigation all winter, and also making the climate of Nova Scotia warmer.

MR. HERBERT ELLSWORTH CORY'S "The Intellectuals and the Wage Workers" (Sunwise Turn) is an attempt to present the terms upon which intellectuals and wage workers should unite in the task of social reconstruction. But Mr. Cory sees modern society, the labor movement, and the purpose of revolution in psychoanalytic terms. He states his purpose thus: "I have been trying to make some forecast of the processes by which intellectuals and wage workers will unite to break down rationally those institutions which are but hysterical symptoms, compromises, bad habit-formations from competitive random activities, morbid complexes and inertia." This quotation may suggest, however indefinitely, the abstruse manner in which Mr. Cory has chosen to present his thesis. His apparently easy references to the most diverse contributors in half a dozen fields of human knowledge, philosophy, psychology, education, the labor movement, economics, the physical sciences, are amazing. Yet a full integration seems to be lacking. It is evident that he has written for scholars rather than for students. The members of the proletariat, to whom, it is evident, he dedicates his volume, will be least likely to grasp Mr. Cory's message because it is so heavily weighted with scientific terms. Neither the radical proletariat (members of the American Federation of Labor seem to be tacitly excluded, in Mr. Cory's view, in that they lack class-consciousness) nor the intel-

lectuals to whom he appeals for leadership will be moved. The former, with a distrust of the intellectual that not even Mr. Cory is proof against, will not be able to understand him; and the latter are not sufficiently emancipated from their bourgeois habits of thought and feeling to accept leadership in the mission he suggests. Rarely has there appeared so erudite and so intensely radical a teacher. Probably Mr. Cory will fulfil himself not as a leader or teacher of the proletariat, but as a leader and teacher of other intellectuals whose minds are nearer to the level of the minds of the proletarians.

A BOOK written in France by a French scholar, finished in the last year of the war, touching upon some of the acutest problems of the struggle and yet completely free from hatred and political bias—all this can be said, and more, of Professor A. Meillet's "Les langues dans l'Europe nouvelle" (Paris: Payot). One's surprise at the discovery measures the war-time degradation of international culture. The book is a model textbook in every sense, very readable and non-technical, and yet distinctly above the level of the mere popular treatise. Starting from linguistic geography in the stricter sense, the grouping, origins, and correlation of languages, the author proceeds to an analysis of the relation of language and race, language and nationality, language and civilization, then to the tendencies in language development, extension, differentiation and integration, evolution of literary and scientific languages, and linguistic decay. His attitude to Latin is, as can be expected, highly sympathetic, but not blindly partisan; his assertion that not only a Frenchman and Italian, but an Englishman and even a German cannot penetrate to the spirit of his own language without some knowledge of Latin, can hardly be disputed. M. Meillet believes in the possibility of developing an international auxiliary idiom like Esperanto, or rather Ido, based on the "partly Hellenized Latin" which is the linguistic understructure of European civilization, and suggests that such an eclectic tongue might furnish an excellent approach to things European for the Japanese and Chinese. He is right in recognizing the anti-cultural implications of linguistic jingoism, such as is seen in the case of the Norwegian "landsmaal" movement or the puristic frenzy of Czech scholars, who eliminated universally used terms of Graeco-Latin origin chiefly because the Germans also employed them. M. Meillet repudiates the racial theory of nationality and language, and by tracing linguistic struggles to their economic roots puts the whole army of mystic nationalists to rout.

"ON Society" (Macmillan), by Frederic Harrison, is a clear and cogent exposition of Positivist ideas and ideals. Perhaps its greatest value for the reader of today is the proof it offers of the possibility of upholding liberal, and even radical, social and political ideas without succumbing to socialistic and communistic theories. The ideal of competition in industry Mr. Harrison calls a cynical and blighting sophism. Selfishness, he says, lies at the root of our industrial evils. But as he sees it, Socialism would inoculate all men with the same selfish poison. Positivism, on the other hand, teaches the doctrine of the true Republic, or government in the name and for the benefit of society as a permanent and organic whole. Starting from the dogma of Comte, *Vivre pour autrui*, here paraphrased Life belongs to Humanity, Mr. Harrison proceeds to develop the ethics of humanity. He expounds the conception of the family as the ultimate unit of society and examines the nature and limitations of governmental authority. The Positivist limits the duties of the State to the maintenance of order, the provision for public health, the promotion of industry, and the supply of a simple and scientific system of law. Education, like all moral and religious training, is, he holds, a matter wholly outside of the true sphere of governmental activity. The Positivist Utopia that he describes in the sixth lecture embraces many of the ideals of modern socialism, but the means by which he would attempt to realize this dream are not legisla-

tion, confiscation, and class warfare; but what he holds to be the only true religion, the religion of humanity. That humanity is to be saved by the worship of humanity appears to savor somewhat of paradox.

TO an unusual degree Mr. Caleb Guyer Kelly's "French Protestantism, 1559-1562" (Johns Hopkins Press) exemplifies the virtues and vices commonly associated with the doctor's thesis. Wishing to offer a *specimen eruditionis* that should exhibit his command of the facts in the most favorable light, the author has accumulated a vast store of data from a large number of books and has spread them lavishly upon the page of a monograph. But the little white slips on which he took his notes have snowed him under. From all sorts of books, good, bad, and indifferent, he has drawn statements without sifting or questioning their value. For one important assertion he relies on an historical romance of Prosper Mérimée; vast as is his reading he does not know some of the best authorities on the subject—in fact, when he cites but two of the ten volumes of letters by Catherine de' Medici he apparently omits the most important source of all for his period. He repeats the same fact or anecdote now drawn from one authority, now from another. Contradictions are frequent, as when he reckons the value of sixteenth-century money in one place as one-third and in another as one-fifteenth of what it is now. Neither the one calculation nor the other is his own; the contradiction is due to the fact that he had different authors before him when he copied from his notes. He prints names in different forms; occasionally he finds a simple French word untranslatable as when he classes "grenouilles" as a kind of fish. A considerable amount of useful material has been hurt by Mr. Kelly's failure to discern good authorities from bad ones and to reflect a little on his own conclusions.

THE reader who picks up Euphemia Macleod's "Seances with Carlyle" (Four Seas) will be either disappointed or delighted to find that the communications of the Scotch philosopher are avowedly imaginary. The guarantee that the introduction of a spirit is a mere literary artifice is not only the merciful parsimony in the use of "psychic" jargon, but the fact that the dead man for once talks something a little better than platitude. The most important truths that have as yet reached us from the beyond have revealed where the speaker's aunt mislaid her curling tongs, or the color of a friend's pajamas; whereas in this book Carlyle speaks, though in a somewhat oracular and flowery style, of the moral bearings of the universe. Having shed his earlier prejudices in favor of Germany and of the strong man, he now informs us that "a great nation has the mark of Cain on its brow," and that there is a good bit of difference between the German and the American eagle. He has his doubts about the latter until it "spreads its wings and shrieks defiance at the malefactor," but he later compliments "the royal-hearted people, led by a right royal eagle, and fashioned after its noblest pattern, a people generous and unafraid . . . who mount into the star-bespread blue in white purity of intention, barred with the blood-red stripes of their slain." If symbolism is the rage let us clash the cymbals loudly!

IF anyone wishes to read "a spiritual interpretation of the war" compounded of boasting of our own material and moral superiority and reviling of the fallen foe, he can be safely recommended to peruse Mr. Horatio W. Dresser's "On the Threshold of the Spiritual World" (Sully). Written without magnanimity, without discipline of thought or standards of style, it is concocted altogether of good intentions enough to pave a large block of a certain celebrated highway, and of that sort of sentimentality known, because of its excessive insipidity, as "mush." The child who said "salt is what makes things taste bad when it isn't in them" gave unconsciously a definition of culture as well. There is no more brilliant illustration of the epigram than that furnished by the present work.



## Notes and News

Houghton Mifflin Company announces for the early spring a study, by Mr. James I. Osborne, of Arthur Hugh Clough. This poet for nearly fifty years has in some way or other eluded biographers, though he had a decent fame in his own day and seems now better than almost any other minor writer to indicate the winds of doctrine which then prevailed.

The same house will shortly publish Miss Myra Reynolds's "The Learned Lady in England 1650-1760," a chapter in the history of civilization which reminds us of Hawthorne's sly remark about those village poetesses whose tragic fate it was to wear blue stockings which no one ever looked at.

Is Henry van Dyke a classic? His "Poems of Tennyson" and his "Studies in Tennyson" (formerly "The Poetry of Tennyson") are being reissued by the Scribners in editions as dainty as Tennyson himself at his daintiest. And the first two volumes of The Works of Henry van Dyke, Avalon Edition, have gone to join the royal rows of Scribner's Library of Modern Authors. The two are "Little Rivers" and "Fisherman's Luck," natural propædæutics for Americans who will later read "The Compleat Angler."

We guiterman a volume when,  
Though but one pen can rightly do it,  
We view it reasonably, then  
With ripe and rippling rhymes review it.

(How delicate *should* be the eye,  
How deft and definite the hand  
Of the audacious poet by  
Whom Guiterman is guitermanned!)

This Arthur with the nib of gold,  
The quaintest of the critic carpers  
Who sang *New York*, has sung the Old  
Manhattan now in ballads (Harpers).

The color of his music moves  
From Dobson's to our Yankee Doodle's;  
Assay his mixture, and it proves,  
However, Guiterman in oodles.

He sings the founders: "Kips, Van Dorns,  
Van Dams, Van Wycks, Van Dycks, Van Pelts,  
Van Tienhovens, Schermerhorns,  
And Onderdoncks and Roosevelts."

Of Tappan Zee, of Nepperhan,  
Of Hellegatt, of Spuyten Duyvil,  
Of 't Maagde Paetje, Guiterman  
Here rhymes in rings around each rival.

Adieu vers libre, adieu the news,  
Adieu the horrid shilling-shocker;  
We hail the marriage of the Muse  
To Mynheer Diedrich Knickerbocker.

The Yale University Press has already published in the Yale Series of Younger Poets, meant to encourage poets not yet recognized, Mr. Howard Buck's "The Tempering" and Mr. John C. Farrar's "Forgotten Shrines."

Mr. Ole Hanson's "Americanism versus Bolshevism," published by Doubleday, Page, has at last appeared and has begun its work. Mr. Hanson is the authentic, rough-hewn Calvin Coolidge of the Northwest.

## Drama

### Brieux and Barrymore

NO misgivings have ever clouded the bright and busy career of Eugène Brieux. He has avoided extremes and ultimates and applied himself to the correction of social details. The formula of the didactic play, which he has cultivated, is as completely exemplified in his first play as in his last. You show a defect in the social machinery, exhibit its consequences, proclaim its remedy. The technical weakness inseparable from this formula is clear at once. At a certain point in the play its dramatic energy dwindles and discussion sets in. Thus in "Le Berceau," for instance, Brieux presents one of the most poignant situations in the world and then forces the participants to engage in declamatory theorizing throughout the better part of two acts. For he insists in his own fashion, which is, of course, not the vulgar one, on a happy ending. He is an undeterred meliorist. There is no mystery at the heart of things, no contradictions that common sense and honesty cannot resolve. Everything can be improved, and it is the function of the didactic dramatist to point the way.

Such drama can never, it is plain enough, be tragic. The tragic problem begins where Brieux stops. Since he desires to instruct, he starts with definite and fixed assumptions. He never questions the established values, but strives merely to show how they fail of a right and full expression through the existing social machinery. He does not permit his mind to penetrate to the naked idea at all. Thus in "The Letter of the Law" (*La robe rouge*) he assumes that the judging of men by men and the infliction of punitive justice are both right and possible. He wants a more flexible legal machinery and officials of a more sensitive conscience. Well, so does everybody. Hence nothing has ever stood in the way of Brieux' fame, which is wider than that of men of twice his depth and talent. His works make for purer family life, cleaner politics, better citizenship. But he asks no troublesome questions, he disturbs no one's psychological comfort. The accused man in "The Letter of the Law" turns out to have been innocent. You must not convict on circumstantial evidence; you must not be eager to convict for the sake of official glory. Who could withhold his assent from sentiments so respectable?

Compare with this a tragic drama on the same theme—John Galsworthy's "Justice." Falder is guilty. Given the present social compacts his guilt is grave. Yet justice miscarries. But it does so not through its accidental defects but through its essential nature. The justice of man judging man cannot be just. The ultimate dilemma stands revealed in its bare, inmitigable tragedy. Had Etshpare been guilty Brieux would have sent him to penal servitude with unction or, had he perjured himself in his confusion and despair, to the solitary confinement with which Mouzon threatens him. Galsworthy lays bare the inhumanity of solitary confinement for any cause and under any circumstances. He asks final questions and rediscovers eternal words: Judge not that ye be not judged. Brieux is an upholder of law and order. He wants just law and good order according to his fixed notions of both. But so do the scribes and Pharisees.

Having defined the limitations of Brieux' talent, which are identical with those of his mind, it is but just to dwell briefly on his one strong and permanent gift. The characters in terms of which he states his problem in each play are wholly and sturdily human. As a creator of character he has not only power but range. He knows the peasantry of the North and the South of France, the laborers, the middle classes, the government officials. His people necessarily share his own limitations. When he sought to portray artists he produced caricatures. There is no human being with a vision in all his plays. For even Vagret in "The Letter of the Law" is no proclaimer of a new value, but merely an honest man. Hence it is natural that