

explain why Hamilton held the political philosophy which he did hold, and less concerned with whether this political philosophy was a true or a false philosophy. This, however, is only a personal preference, and in no way detracts from the substantial merit of the work.

CARL BECKER

## Conservation

*The United States Forest Policy.* By John Ise. Yale University Press.

*Water Resources: Present and Future Uses.* By Frederick Haynes Newell. Yale University Press.

PROFESSOR ISE'S volume is mainly an historical review of Federal forest policies. In accordance with the logic of events it falls into four parts. The first covers the period previous to 1891—the year of the forest reserve act which definitely provided for national ownership. The second deals with that act, the supplementary law of 1897, and the steps taken by succeeding Presidents to develop our national forests and to foster a systematic policy of conservation. A third part summarizes the rise and growth of the intense opposition to national forests and conservation. A fourth part discusses results and the future. The historical sections present minute accounts of the important acts of Congress—the origin, progress, and congressional discussion of each bill being treated on the basis of original sources. "A rather depressing story it is," confesses the author, "a story of reckless and wasteful destruction of magnificent forests, and of flagrant and notorious theft of valuable lands—a story that Americans will follow with little pride." However, given a growing nation composed of indomitable and acquisitive individuals engaged in the relentless pursuit of private fortunes and a government that reflected their spirit, nothing else was to be expected. There was no "state" or set of opposing interests of such a character as to afford even a rallying point of opposition. Nor can it be said that we are entirely out of the primitive period of our history. As Mr. Ise points out, three-fourths of our standing timber has gravitated into the hands of a relatively few holders; there is a certain element of monopoly in the lumber business; lumbering is a precarious enterprise; and we are still without a reasoned and accepted policy of conservation.

Nevertheless, there have been in the conservation legislation of the past decade many signs of progress. The classification of public lands urged by Mr. Ise has gone forward rapidly. The policy of permanent national ownership coupled with development under lease had been recognized in several important acts—legislative and administrative—since 1910. When one considers the character of the powerful interests aligned against such collectivism, it is really surprising that Congress has been able to make any headway against the current. Books like this by Mr. Ise will contribute to the growth of public sentiment. Perhaps it is not too much to expect that professional historians may sometimes hear about it and include instruction in this phase of our economic history along with carpet-bag scandals and operations on President Cleveland's throat.

It is really too bad from the point of view of the plain citizen that Professor Newell's book which disposes of legal and legislative problems in a few pages, does not go fully into the history and public policies of irrigation and water storage. He knows so much about the inside and outside of water politics that he should be compelled by a statute or writ of mandamus to tell his story; but, of course, it is wrong to quarrel with him. He has seen fit to limit himself to the economic and technical side of water storage, management, and uses. His volume will be gratefully received by those legislative and administrative authorities that are seeking a broad view of the subject as well as by young engineers who may have occasion to wrestle with the larger aspects of water problems. Those citizens who have long known their obligation to Mr. Newell for his devoted public services

will feel their debt doubled as they read this remarkable survey of our water resources and uses. One would like to think of this book among the required readings in a course on economics. That would be one way of encouraging laymen to support the efforts of the scientific men who desire to see the utilization of "the natural resources of the country for the common welfare"—a hope expressed by Mr. Newell in his introduction.

CHARLES A. BEARD

## The Evolution of Religion

*The Social Evolution of Religion.* By George Willis Cooke. The Stratford Company.

THE author tells us that this book contains fifty years' study of religion, but there is not the slightest suspicion in it of an old man's conservatism. Few books about religion are more radical, more fearless, more resolutely faced toward the future than this one designed to set forth the doctrine that religion is a social product and that its end lies in the same plane as its source. Consequently, in its historical survey it minimizes the individual. Jesus, Confucius, and Zoroaster come in for only brief mention, and Buddha and Mahomet fare but little better. Paul is twice cavalierly mentioned, Luther and Francis are utterly ignored. The Hebrew prophets are alluded to but in mass.

The treatment of Christianity is variously typical. We hear at the outset the suggestive remark that no other religion has been less influenced by its founder. He is then introduced thus: "We may accept it as probable, perhaps as certain, that there appeared in Palestine at about the time of the origin of Christianity a prophet or reformer who claimed to answer to the Jewish conception of the Messiah. More than one such reformer and claimant appeared in Jewish history, and that a certain Jesus or Joshua made such claim is by no means incredible or that he should be an artisan. As we have seen, this was a time in which the artisan world was awakening." Save for a sentence which recounts the fact of his appeal to the poor, Jesus then disappears. "The center of gravity," we are assured, "has been transferred from a personality to the great social forces operating in wide regions." It is they which have produced the doctrines of the Incarnation, Atonement, Communion with God, and the Resurrection. After the mythical character of these doctrines has been established, the author excuses his "negative" treatment of Christianity because of the necessity of emphasizing its syncretist nature. And just as we are prepared to protest against this utter blindness to the value of a great human personality, we read this unexpected sentence: "Stripped of his legendary and miraculous settings, the Christ may be regarded as the purest, loftiest, and most human figure in the history of religion. His moral teaching, his human sympathy, his fellowship with the poorest and meanest, his boundless compassion, his fidelity to his own convictions even to the bearing of the cross, give him a character above that of any of the gods of the ancient world." Then, as though he had been sufficiently magnanimous, the author pursues his social quest. Equally unexpected is it to read in a book which insists that "religion is inevitably social in origin and development" and that "what we have need of is not great men but great institutions," that "were it not for the fanatic, the man of an intensely egotistical thought, there would be no religion, at least in the earliest ages of civilization."

The main contention of the book may be briefly stated. The best part of human experience is not congenitally but socially transmitted. All early religions are expressions of the central life of a group. The great sacred writings owe their sublimity and authority to their communal authorship. Magic passes into religion only through a communal ritual. Feudal religion emphasizes sovereignty and personality. Animism yields to anthropomorphism. Matriarchal relations suggest female deities, which, however, soon wane in importance. Authority and com-

mandments for individuals and the dread of eternal punishment emerge. On the formation of nations, national religions with their trend toward monotheism appear. Monotheism fails to arise in Greece and India because of the diversity of life and the weakness of national spirit. Migration and assimilation portend international religions. The syncretist process on the Mediterranean culminates in Christianity. Universal religion is yet to come; the nearest approach to it is patriotism, which should be superseded by unification of the nations. The new tendency of thought, save for an ebullition of occultism, is away from the supernatural toward the human. Belief in God and immortality is declining. Religion has but three possibilities, to die, to take refuge in sublimated nature-worship, or to become consciously a religion of collective humanity. Materialism is no more selfish than idealism. Under either philosophy there may be, must be, an inner world of man's own creation. All humanity has made it what it is. It has so real an existence that many feel it to be the only world that has true meaning. It is being constantly refurbished and made worthier of human habitation. Heretofore man has been an unconscious creator of religions. Now that he realizes his power, he will create a religion far nobler than these which now are passing away.

A. W. VERNON

## The Making of a Vers-Libriste

*Development.* By W. Bryher. With a Preface by Amy Lowell. The Macmillan Company.

THIS brief and beautifully written book is the first installment of an artist's autobiography. It gives us access to a literary psychology which, in this special form, is both new and important. The visible world has existed for other periods and other men. But it was, even to Theophile Gautier, a dimensional world, a world of bodies and shadows, a world never quite empty—did not Gautier write "Coquetterie Posthume?"—of the concrete fates of men and so of passion and its rhythms. To the consciousness analyzed in "Development" the earth and its fulness contracts to a jeweler's shop-window. The moonstones are delicately pale, the rubies glow, and the jade lies richly quiet. "Her whole vocabulary became a palette of colors, luminous gold, a flushed red, tones neither sapphire nor violet." She saw in Sicily "a herd of brown and shaggy goats under a geranium hedge." They do not really move, these goats, and they evoke nothing. They are not fed or milked. They remain a static image. Miss Lowell quotes with admiration in her preface: "Sunset carved the eastern islands out of grape-blue darkness with a gold knife." It is striking, but is it not a mere conceit? Has it anything to do with the creative imagination? There is a seeing eye. But what it saw has been rearranged into a cold bit of decorative scheming and the word "grape" is immensely calculated. "Picture after picture," we are told, shaped in the mind of our vers-libriste, Nancy; "she was shaken by a craving for color"—not for rock or ruin, tree or star, fur or flesh with their characteristic hues, but for color. By her own confession, indeed, she found color in words rather than in things. "She sought for vivid and original expression of a color as another might have hunted for a moth or a rare shell"—not, be it observed, as another might have sought ecstasy or liberation or even pain. The pure imagist is far more like a collector than like a poet. Instead of communicating a rhythmic interpretation of experience, he hands you a box of transfixed butterflies with beautiful, dead wings.

Nancy was quite companionless, but she was never lonely. People irked her, as they irk most sensitive souls. But she had no need of them because the beauty that she sought had nothing to do with flesh and blood. She liked the Duchess of Malfi as one likes somber tones in an old painting. She thought that Keats was "too weak to satisfy her"; perhaps he was too strong. She could glide contentedly along the endless stream of images in Morris's "Earthly Paradise." She saw Italy and

Egypt, Spain and Sicily and Algeria, and played vaguely in her earliest years with the gestures of dead heroes. But later her world is utterly dispeopled. She is eighteen when we leave her and enormously precocious on the side of her special art; she has not prayed or loved or wept or thought. Neither passion nor mystery have touched her. She is alone with her palette of colors.

She finds her medium of expression by way of a curious and widespread misconception. She reads the great French vers-libristes and proceeds to write like H. D. and Miss Amy Lowell. "Rhyme had already begun to grate harshly on an ear that daily grew more sensitive to curve of rhythm and subtlety of phrase." What has that to do with the stormy but elaborate harmonies of Verhaeren or the suave, round melodies of R  gnier? Both poets are among the most heavily rhymed in the world; neither, except R  gnier in his "Odelettes," dreamed of discarding rhyme. Verhaeren's "L'Arbre" or R  gnier's "Le Vase" are no more free verse in the English sense than Dryden's "Ode on the Death of Mrs. Anne Killigrew" or Wordsworth's "Intimations of Immortality." Their verse was called free in France because they did not confine themselves to the traditional stanzaic forms and did not always alternate masculine and feminine rhyme. Nancy writes no more like the author of "Les Villes tentaculaires" than Carl Sandburg like the poet of the "Ode Written in a Time of Hesitation." Her "sensitiveness to curve of rhythm" makes her reduce that curve as far as possible to the condition of a straight line. It is much more to the point when she quotes, for its rhythmic quality, a sentence from "Salamambo"; it is revealing that she delights in the prose of Lodge and Lyly. Is not a good deal of verse in unrhymed cadences a new and infinitely rarified sort of Euphuism?

Whenever the pulses beat or the mind confronts the dreadful universe, man sings and does not only speak. Rhyme is non-essential, as we see in the ancients; rhythm is as integral to expression as it is to the ebb and flow of the sea, the systole and diastole of the blood. To tell us that "a poppy sail burned on an umber ship," you can reduce your rhythms to the hush of prose. But poetry, as Milton knew, is passionate and its voice rises above such level murmuring. Perhaps in "Adventure," the promised continuation of "Development," Nancy will meet the passions of life and find rhythm and thus pass from imagism to poetry.

## Books in Brief

HISTORIANS of early twentieth-century British and American verse will be glad that the anthologists of this generation were numerous and busy. Hardly a month goes by during which a collection of more or less important poems fails to appear. "An Anthology of Recent Poetry: Compiled by L. D'O. Walters: With an Introduction by Harold Monro" (Dodd, Mead), incidentally issued also by Brentano's in elaborate holiday form, with illustrations by Harry Clarke, contains British poems selected for their simplicity, their innocence, and the absence from them of anything which would "disturb." The result is a golden treasury for the naive, something between "A Child's Garden of Verses" and "Georgian Poetry." Thomas Hardy is represented, but not, of course, by a characteristic poem. "Contemporary Verse Anthology: Favorite Poems Selected from the Magazine 'Contemporary Verse,' 1916-1920: With an Introduction by Charles Wharton Stork" (Dutton) is aimed at a literary audience that is neither radical nor conservative, but appreciative of "normal and intelligible" young American poets. It has a little that is very good, more that is very bad, and very much that is mediocre. "American and British Verse from the Yale Review: With a Foreword by John Gould Fletcher" (Yale University Press) is remarkable for three good poems by John Gould Fletcher, Maxwell Bodenheim, and Henry Adams. The last, called Buddha and Brahma, is an interesting exposition of the contemplative soul, and a valuable relic of its author's brain.