

Man," which is viewed in Italy as his masterpiece. The secret is simply this: he is fustian-tongued, full of brag and bluster as a counterpoise to his innate human warmth and kindness. He has curving horns, perhaps, but they are the horns of a satyr, for he is, after all, no devil's child.

Papini's most characteristic weapon is vitriolic assault, though he can be finely surgical. In the three books mentioned above, from which Ernest Hatch Wilkins has condensed the present volume, he has launched vehement attacks on Spencer, Hegel, Croce, Calderon, and even Shakespeare. His unmasking of Maeterlinck is not only a jolly performance well worth the money, but a masterly piece of critical writing. He likens Maeterlinck to a solemn man with a black cat in a dark room who rubs the cat's fur the wrong way, "singing a nonsense song *sotto voce*." In his chapter on Benedetto Croce and that on Hegel he takes the offensive against "pure concept" and mordantly harries the foremost Italian thinker of the day. In the present selection one finds Papini often subacid but far from the scurrilous as in several of the papers in "Stronature," especially the one on Bergson and Croce, written in bad French. He reproaches both for being causeurs, for having a too-ready audience for their writings, for betraying a pretty, fetching literary talent. "Croce," he says, "ressemble à un de ces avocats napolitains grassouilleux et souriants qu'on rencontre toujours dans les cafés de Rome." This is, obviously, not criticism but a piece of bad taste.

The flaw in Papini's gravamen against Croce's philosophy lies in his mistaking a method for a system. He laughs at the string of identities in Croce's aesthetics because, he says, they are merely a quest for pseudonyms for the word "art" and render nugatory all thinking, for "thinking lies in diversity." The latter part of this statement may be granted. But Papini misses the point that in his "History" and Aesthetics" Croce had first to do what Remy de Gourmont did, namely, to force a wedge between falsely-paired ideas inhabiting tradition-bound thought and speech. Like Gourmont and Nietzsche, Croce is at bottom a philologist, and his identities (such as, for example, that history and philosophy are one—history being but a re-thinking of the past) were arrived at by the process of dissociation. Naturally, Papini being in essence an *intuitif* and Croce a methodologist, the two men fail to understand each other.

Withal, Papini looms as a figure that must be reckoned with. He cannot be summarily dismissed as a charlatan. He capers a bit, to be sure; he slashes, often wildly; his mercurial inconstancy may nettle or jar or merely baffle us; but he is a salty leaven, much needed in modern life and letters.

PIERRE LOVING

Lord Bryce and Economics

International Relations. By James Bryce. The Macmillan Company. \$2.50.

Russia's Foreign Relations During the Last Half Century. By Sergius A. Korff. The Macmillan Company. \$2.25.

Near Eastern Affairs and Conditions. By Stephen Panaretoff. The Macmillan Company. \$2.25.

LORD BRYCE'S collection of lectures upon "International Relations" delivered at Williams College have the sorrowful significance of a last political will and testament. He could have bequeathed no more serviceable legacy to the survivors of his generation than this luminous and variously informed survey of the dangerous situation in which the Bad Peace has left our world. It contains in plain language and in small compass a diagnosis of the various diseases in the larger body politic and a commentary upon the proposed remedies. Perhaps the most crucial chapter is that treating The Causes of War, though here we have what many readers will hold to be the chief defect of Lord Bryce's politics, his failure to give sufficient importance to the economic factor in the causation and direction of interna-

tional relations. It is true that we have an interesting chapter upon The Influence of Commerce, ending on the note that the less governments interfere the better. But in a characteristic inventory of the chief causes of modern wars the territorial lust of imperialism comes first, and commercial or financial interests rank fourth, with the explanation: "These do not so often directly cause a resort to arms, but they create ill feeling and distrust which make any passing incident sufficient to evoke complaints or threats." Now this appears to me to misrepresent the dominant part played by economic, and particularly financial, pressures in the conduct of foreign policy. While lust for territory (*kilométritis*), religious hates, and private injuries and insults figure so largely as material for popular indignation, and often yield the largest volume of war feeling, the stimulation and utilization of these passions are as a rule in the hands of small groups of business men who know what they want and how to get it. The statecraft and the wide political experience in which Lord Bryce was immersed during his long and arduous career were always controlled by the Gladstonian liberal tradition, in which disinterested politics and formal internationalism occupied the foreground and economic forces were treated as secondary and incidental. Lord Bryce's practical experience and his reflective mind were, of course, continually bringing him face to face with plain instances of the economic factor. He clearly recognizes, for instance, the sharp distinctions between lending and borrowing countries in its reaction upon policy. Nevertheless, from his full and in most respects convincing picture of the terrible mess in which the peace-makers of Paris plunged Europe, he omits all consideration of the crucial factors of the German indemnity and the inter-allied indebtedness.

In tracing the specific causes of the Great War he gives a prominence, perhaps excessive, to the element of fear, France's fear of Germany, Germany's fear of Russia. This fear, however real and strong, is usually a defensive cover for aggression and revenge. The defense of the Franco-Russian alliance, on the ground that France "after the war-scare of 1875 found herself alone in the world and exposed to possible attack from a more numerous and more strongly armed neighbor nation," does not satisfy us, in view of recent disclosures from official archives of France's real intentions. Just as little does the German alarm of Russia convince us of the innocence of the German aggressionist parties.

The complete breakdown of international law, the terrible records of political depravity in high places, the new revelations of poisonous propaganda through the press, and other related war phenomena evidently shook the faith of Lord Bryce in the possibilities of a sane international order. Those who still think that the war, in spite of all, was a victory for right had better ponder over the following account of the fruits of the war. "So far from raising, it seems rather to have depressed the tone of public life and lowered the standards of private conduct. Even the solemn warning which it gave against the passions from which wars spring has not been taken. We expected that it would produce everywhere an ardent desire for peace and a resolve that the causes whence spring these calamities should be eliminated. But this has not been done. Not to speak of the angry class struggle within the nations, we see that national hatreds and rivalries and ambitions are hotter than ever and threaten to bring fresh strife upon us." Though these evils are traceable in part to the deliberate betrayal of their boasted principles by the Paris peace-makers (whose iniquity Lord Bryce denounces in the most unsparing language) they are largely attributable to the unscrupulous nationalism which the war fed and inflamed.

How this nationalism is the marked enemy of civilization appears from the two points of view taken in the other volumes already published in the valuable series issued by the Institute of Politics: "Russia's Foreign Relations During the Last Half Century," by Baron Sergius A. Korff, and Stephen Panaretoff's "Near Eastern Affairs and Conditions." The former shows us the corroding influence of the Franco-Russian alliance upon the

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confidence of Europe, and how France, refusing a merely "defensive alliance" with Russia as inadequate to the fulfilment of her designs, ultimately "forced the [full] alliance upon Russia and . . . employed financial means to exact such pressure." An excellently informed account of Russia's relations with her European and Asiatic neighbors during the past generation throws a flood of light upon the causation of the war. The simpleton doctrine that Germany alone willed and engineered the war finds no support from Baron Korff. It is, however, strange that he should shirk, as he does, the heavy responsibility which history will certainly place upon Russia for the critical act of mobilization which was the known and pre-concerted signal for the conflagration. Equally unsatisfactory is his feeble lament over the penetration of Russia by Germany, only to be averted by "a common policy among the other nations" of which he finds little hope.

Mr. Panaretoff's picture of the Near East is somewhat bewildering. That is not the author's fault, but rather that of history, and of the too easy way in which even educated people have brushed aside the Balkans as incomprehensible. This obliges Mr. Panaretoff to expend too much of his limited space in trying to make clear certain important facts of which readers better trained in world history might be supposed already to possess a competent knowledge. The devastating incompetence of Western statecraft in handling the Turkish Empire is, however, traceable not so much to ignorance as to the selfishness and malice of the Powers, playing in with, and upon, the vain and quarrelsome nationalism of these newly liberated little states. The writer, frankly Bulgarian in his point of issue, gives an entirely convincing explanation of the motives which brought his country into the war on the German side, and his strictures upon the unprincipled policy of the peace treaty in robbing Bulgaria of her proper territory are well deserved.

The Institute of Politics performs a fine educational service in publishing this series. J. A. HOBSON

Verse

- A Critical Fable*. . . . *A Sequel to the "Fable for Critics."*
 . . . By A Poker of Fun, Witt D., O.S., A. 1. Houghton,
 Mifflin and Company. \$1.
American Poetry: 1922. A Miscellany. Harcourt, Brace and
 Company. \$1.75.
Down the River. By Roscoe W. Brink. Henry Holt and Com-
 pany. \$1.90.
Verse. Adelaide Crapsey. Alfred A. Knopf. \$1.50.
Lute and Furrow. By Olive Tilford Dargan. Charles Scribner's
 Sons. \$1.75.
Songs of Youth. Mary Dixon Thayer. Alfred A. Knopf. \$1.50.
The Garden of the West. By Louise Driscoll. The Macmillan
 Company. \$1.
The Shepherd and Other Poems of Peace and War. By Edmund
 Blunden. Alfred A. Knopf. \$1.75.

WE have so many poets now whose characters are definite and recognized that a Pope or a Byron or a Lowell has only to rise with his lampooning gun; at the first shot, if it is a hot one, birds by the dozen will flutter at his feet. The author of "A Critical Fable" has risen with the identical "rusty looking sort of a blunderbuss barrel" whose execution under Lowell delighted Holmes almost seventy-five years ago. The explosion is loud, but the execution is slight. Not only is the gun rusty and out of date; it obviously fails of being, as Holmes said it was in its prime, "crammed full and rammed down hard—powder (lots of it)—shot slugs—bullets—very little wadding." There is too much wadding here. Twenty pages must be turned before Frost is aimed at, and then a harmless discharge patters over five pages. So on to Robinson, Amy Lowell, and eighteen others. There are good lines, and current notions about our poets are neatly recorded—the "Fable" is a document—but the impression generally is of mere white paper.

"American Poetry: 1922" is the second volume in a biennial series which promises to be really important—certainly as much so as its English model, "Georgian Poetry," and perhaps more so in that it will represent the entire poetic output of its country. Here, for those who like them, are Alfred Kreyenborg, James Oppenheim, and Conrad Aiken. Here is Vachel Lindsay gone to seed—and he should indeed have been shown so. Here is Sara Teasdale, still tuneful but no longer intense. Here, without any apparent reason, is Jean Starr Untermeyer. Here are poems by Robert Frost, "H. D.," and Edna St. Vincent Millay. The prize, perhaps, would have to be divided between Mr. Frost and Miss Millay; Mr. Robinson, unfortunately, had nothing on hand to enter. Mr. Frost writes wholly in character and still is fresh. Miss Millay's eight sonnets, beautiful and light and strong, will have to be considered in any anthology of the future. Miss Lowell, Mr. Sandburg, and Mr. Fletcher are not at their best, though good. Mr. Untermeyer is happy and smart, but as far from immortality as ever.

Mr. Brink's interesting poem loses as a novel by being in free verse and as free verse by being a novel. Through a series of fluent monologues, much in the imagist mode, a supposedly inarticulate country woman registers her discontent with the meaningless city whither she has married and gone. The reality of the poem suffers from the "poetry;" the poetry suffers from its mixture with a diluted and prosaic realism. All that aside, however, "Down the River" is a highly creditable experiment, and the rendering of the woman's pathetic mind is only a little short of triumphant. She is not an individual, increasingly alive like Esther Waters; but she thinks and speaks for millions of her kind. It is to be hoped that Mr. Brink will try somebody like her again.

Among American poetesses Adelaide Crapsey, whose posthumous volume of 1915 is here reprinted, will stand perhaps best for those who have achieved a frail perfection in technique but had little to say. Miss Crapsey was a lifelong student of metrics, and the conduct of her rhythms is an endless delight. She was a rare and a brave personality; she wrote about Death from a cool, fine passion; that is all. Olive Tilford Dargan, except in the title-poem of her newest volume, never comes quite up to "The Cycle's Rim," thus far her best performance. In *Lute and Furrow*, which is excellent, she represents herself as alternating between a desire to write poetry and a desire to work her garden. The miscellaneous pieces which follow are engaging, but the reader keeps his mind on the garden. Mrs. Dargan is a superior poet who can hardly afford to be miscellaneous. Mary Dixon Thayer, on the other hand, is too much of a piece. There is something monotonous about a hundred and forty pages of maiden blitheness; the one thin note of silver is all but lost in a certain breathiness of voice. Louise Driscoll, likewise, wants variety and strength. Her purity and sweetness make her an acceptable magazine poet; her book will wait in vain to be seriously read.

Edmund Blunden's second book from England is not the book "The Waggoner" was. One suspects that Mr. Blunden railroaded in a quantity of youthful verse and hoped his reputation would carry it. It does not. There are affectations here—loaded lines, Wordsworthian breathings, labored ruralisms. The third volume will be better if Mr. Blunden, a genuinely gifted writer, resists the temptation to become the virtuoso rather than the poet of stream and meadow and homing bird. Much is to be looked for from one who feels so carefully and writes so richly—if he only will not go in too much for richness. D. M.

Wisconsin: A Voice from the Middle Border, by Zona Gale, author of "Miss Lulu Bett," etc., is the next number in the series These United States. It will appear in next week's issue of *The Nation*.