

A Civil War City

Richmond, Its People and Its Story. By Mary Newton Stanard. J. B. Lippincott Company. \$3.

BETWEEN old and new Richmond, as interpreted by Mrs. Mary Newton Stanard, there is a narrower gulf than I had believed possible—in fact, hardly a gulf at all, only a gradual gentle progress along the original track marked out by William Byrd. This is reassuring to those who know Richmond, because the old city, for the most part burned in the war between the States, was, as American cities go, sufficiently picturesque. We are accustomed to regard the new city as a more or less mushroom growth, whose relationship with the old is vague—at times non-existent; a city whose picturesque qualities live chiefly in certain of its inhabitants.

Richmond's story, from its foundation by Colonel Byrd and his friends in 1753—it is a comparatively new city—to its return to the Union in 1870, moves easily. It is not generally known outside the State that Richmond has not been the most romantic part of Virginia, except during its four years as capital of the Confederacy. Aristocratic Virginia lived for the most part on its plantations, and Richmond was a center where laws were made and tobacco was bought and sold. As the successor to Williamsburg it became an important part of American history, and Mrs. Stanard has used this history to make an amazingly interesting story. Colonial Richmond, revolutionary Richmond, and the Richmond which witnessed the debate for and against the Constitution between the adherents of Washington and Jefferson shortly after the colonies became States, are recreated with color and grace.

Enlightening, too, is the tale of a Negro uprising which did not quite occur at the dawn of the nineteenth century. This is fresh information to many persons who believe that if Negroes had been allowed to remain black they would never have become a problem. The battle between Federalists and Republicans is presented quite without bias as are the personalities of Marshall, Mason, Henry, Randolph, Pendleton, Madison, Monroe, and others who pass through "the Court End of town." This "Court End of town," by the way, remains one of the few visible links between old Richmond and new. Some of it still stands, lazy and mellow, its white porticoes and iron balconies giving no threat of the lodging-house mustiness all too prevalent within.

Poe's intermittent residence in Richmond and his editorship of the *Southern Literary Messenger*, as well as the visits of Thackeray and Dickens, figure in the latter part of this history, and the subjects of Thackeray's lectures are so alluring that one compares them a bit wistfully with the subjects selected by the English lecturers of today; for example, "Steele and the Times of Queen Anne" and "The Georges of England; Court and Town Life During Their Reigns." He was "delighted," he wrote to a friend in New York, "with the comfortable, friendly, cheery little town—the picturesqueness" that he had "seen in America." The first part of the verdict is frequently echoed by novelists who visit Richmond today, but alas for the picturesqueness! George F. Babbitt is as prominent a citizen here today as in Zenith, but he has not pushed his way into Mrs. Stanard's enchanted town, even in her extremely well-done Epilogue.

The Civil War and Reconstruction, which form the core of Richmond's history, live in these pages with a distinguished freedom from bitterness and are the most essential part of the book. For Richmond is preeminently the city of the Civil War. At that period only she was to Virginia what Philadelphia has always been to Pennsylvania and Charleston to South Carolina. Her great traditions, social, military, and political, belong most utterly to that period, when Richmond held literally the nerve centers of America.

EMILY CLARK

Personality in Architecture

The Autobiography of an Idea. By Louis H. Sullivan. With a Foreword by Claude Bragdon. Press of the American Institute of Architects, Inc. \$3.

THIS unusual and revealing book is the spiritual confession of an American architect whose philosophy of life is imbedded in its pages as deeply as in his brick and stone. Louis H. Sullivan, whose life closed this spring in Chicago almost at the time of the publication of his book, belonged to a generation of architects who were strong personalities—Stanford White, John W. Root, Daniel H. Burnham, H. H. Richardson, Richard Hunt, and perhaps half a dozen more. They were most effective in the eighties and nineties, when they preached a message of beauty as well as utility—the *venustas* and *utilitas* of Vitruvius—and when, concretely, they met and solved the pivotal problems growing out of the coming of the skyscraper. The temptation to place Mr. Sullivan in the last century is not an error of chronology, for like a writer who exhausts his ideas before the end of his days the architect found his career ended soon after he reached middle age.

Mr. Sullivan has disclosed much in these pages about the evolution of building in America, but his principal concern is with his "idea." He conceives of man as a receptacle of power, who, through fear and tradition, has been hampered in the use of his imagination and his intellect; he celebrates him as a free, conscious agent, capable of becoming a creative dreamer with power of vision to harness the imagination and the intellect, to make science do his will and his emotions serve him. He argues that "man's spirit must be free that his powers may be free to accomplish in beneficence," that man, freed from dogma and fear, may be driven on by imagination, "the inscrutable dynamic power that energizes all other powers." Readers in philosophy may be pardoned if they see here and there a kinship to the doctrines of positive freedom of will, the free, self-conscious spirit, and the rational use of the intellect that have a Kantian ring. It is the story of Mr. Sullivan's progress that is much more important than the evolution of his philosophy, for there are passages here that recall the thorny path of Philip Carey in "Of Human Bondage."

There is plenty of proof that Mr. Sullivan applied his rationalism and his individualism to his buildings. He started with the conviction that "for centuries art had been belittled in superstitions called traditions"; that form followed function, in fact that "function created or organized its form," and that "a realistic architecture should be evolved based on well-defined utilitarian needs—that all practical demands of utility should be paramount as a basis of planning and design; that no architectural dictum, or tradition, or superstition, or habit should stand in the way." He found that the immediate problem was increased daylight in buildings. "This led him to use slender piers, tending toward a masonry and iron combination, the beginnings of a vertical system." He has told here how he built the Auditorium in Chicago—"with its immense mass of ten stories, its tower, weighing thirty million pounds, equivalent to twenty stories—a tower of solid masonry carried on a floating foundation; a great raft 67 by 100 feet." The story of these rafts, moored in Chicago's ooze and sand, is too detailed to be related here—the best account is to be found in "John Wellborn Root" by Harriet Monroe—but their evolution is a chapter in American building. A few years later came the tall, thin, structural iron shaft—the product of the imagination of sales managers of Eastern rolling-mills, who saw their first opportunity for using it in Chicago. The problem of foundation as related to height was solved.

Louis H. Sullivan has recorded here his deep, inward regret that the World's Fair of Chicago of 1893 took its architecture from classical antiquity instead of from the imagination of its builders. The beautiful palace of the arts, soon to be rebuilt in stone in Jackson Park, he terms "the most

impudently thievish." Even at this late day he calls the Fair "a naked exhibition of charlatanry in the higher feudal and domineering culture, conjoined with expert salesmanship of the materials of decay." His opportunity at that Fair consisted chiefly in planning and executing the great door of the Transportation Building. Perhaps it was in a spirit of defiance that he made it so magnificent—for many will remember that it blazed forth in gold amid the cold, dignified classicism. That American architecture can be better served in developing native ideas than by rebuilding the Parthenon on Western prairies I earnestly believe. But I cannot follow Mr. Sullivan in his conviction that the Fair, by its emphasis on the classic, wrought irreparable damage to the art spirit in America, any more than I can imagine the mastery of Greek and Latin working harm to the writer of a pure English prose.

HARRY HANSEN

An Old Master

Celestina, or The Tragicomedy of Calisto and Melibea. Translated from the Spanish by James Mabbe (anno 1631). Edited by H. Warner Allen. E. P. Dutton and Company. \$5.

FEW masterpieces have a greater claim than "Celestina" to a place in a collection "of the more robust and human examples of the classic and medieval literature" which the Broadway Translations purpose to be. For "Celestina" is a most profound record of life as understood by a race whose distinguishing feature, according to Havelock Ellis, is, above all, "its primitive and eternal attitude of heroic energy . . . directed toward the more fundamental facts of human existence." "Celestina" is so great an achievement, indeed, that if it ranks second to "Don Quixote" among the glories of Spain, it is not because Cervantes knew human character better than Rojas (whose claim to the authorship of this book is no longer disputed), nor because Rojas was an inferior artist. But rather, because the allegorical meaning we can read into "Don Quixote" gives it a more immediate significance to any age than "Celestina" could possibly possess. In fact, if we could rid ourselves of traditional prejudices we should readily come to see that Rojas's insight into the human soul was in every respect as deep as that of Cervantes, and that his artistry was, perhaps, superior. Mabbe's translation, in spite of the liberties he took with the text, is, in its effect, almost perfect. Professor Allen's introductory essay on the picaresque novel contains much keen criticism and historical information difficult to obtain in so succinct a manner. His arguments supporting Rojas's claim as author, however, are a mere rehashing of facts already well known.

ELISEO VIVAS

A French Realpolitiker

Lettres à un Ami: Souvenirs de ma vie politique. Par Alexandre Ribot. Paris; Editions Bossard. 12 francs.

ALEXANDRE RIBOT was one of that fateful generation whose youth was formed amid the scorching memories of French defeat in 1870 and whose old age found satisfaction in the World War and its intrigues. One wonders if the pan-German youth of today will be as proud of their *revanche* fifty years hence as Ribot was when he wrote these memories of his service in five war cabinets.

As Minister of Finance Ribot was responsible for the war policy of postponing taxation, which has left France with a franc worth less than a quarter of its pre-war par. France did not begin to increase her taxes until after three years of war; Ribot did not even raise a loan until after a year and a half; he lived on inflation. A third of his memoirs is a defense of this policy. In 1916 he began borrowing from American bankers, and his methods improved; it is a little disconcerting

to discover how thoroughly Morgan dominated the French fiscal policy even before America entered the war.

The offensive of April 16, 1917, the consequent mutinies, the Russian peace offers, the invasion of Greece all occurred under Ribot's premiership. Nivelle's offensive was not of his planning, but the brusque rejection of the Russian peace offers and the ousting of Constantine were his work, and he was proud of them to his death. He was not the father of the secret treaties, but he was their apologist.

What preoccupied the Ministry, and especially the President of the Republic [Poincaré], was the fact that we had no written proof of the Czar's promise to support our demand for Alsace and Lorraine and our project of an independent buffer state on the left bank of the Rhine.

It did indeed preoccupy them—so much so that Ribot, like Poincaré, was resolutely opposed to letting the French Socialists try their hand at peace-making in Stockholm in 1917.

If France had agreed not to demand Alsace-Lorraine and if Italy had given up her claim for Trieste, Germany would doubtless have made some concessions to France in Lorraine (not giving up Metz, however), and the Emperor of Austria would have ceded the Italian-speaking Trentino to Italy in return for some compensation in Africa or elsewhere.

Those to Ribot were impossible terms, but how much better than the "peace" we have!

The story of Constantine's abdication is amazingly frank. It was pure French *Realpolitik*.

The way to satisfy Admiral Jellicoe, justly fearful of inability to supply the troops at Salonica, because of the submarine war, was . . . to seize the railroad from Salonica to Athens via Larissa. That required a Government at Athens on which we could count.

So Constantine had to go. Ribot decided to land French troops and put him out. England objected. Kerensky's Russia objected. Ribot listened, agreed not to use force, and sent Jonnart to do the deed. Jonnart planned to use force; the English heard of it and protested violently to Ribot; Ribot failed to forward the protest but telegraphed Jonnart that he was "sole judge" of what to do—and the French troops, of course, were landed. It was the depth of duplicity as well as the height of bullying. Ribot, proud of it, died honored as one of France's great leaders.

He was, after all, typical of his generation—the post-war-of-1870 generation that made the pre-war-of-1914 and mid-war policies. Clemenceau was his contemporary; Poincaré spiritually belonged to his generation. Of these and of Millerand, Painlevé, Briand, Joffre, Foch, Lloyd George, and Venizelos he gives discriminating and not too friendly portraits. Of the men now coming to the fore in France he knew little; he never noted economic motivation; he thought exclusively in terms of national prestige. The war of 1870 had blighted him—as the war of 1914-18 seems to have blighted the rulers of tomorrow in Germany.

LEWIS S. GANNETT

Industrial Democracy

Representative Government in Industry. By James Meyers. George H. Doran Company. \$2.

THIS is an earnest and thoughtful book, but still a somewhat disappointing one. There are in American mills today no less than one thousand plans of employees' representation in actual operation. Mr. Meyers is connected with one of the most successful—the Dutchess Bleachery—and has had ample opportunity to study the technique at first hand. He does not draw heavily on this wealth of operating data, however, but tends rather to give us his philosophy in the historical process, evolution, the psychology of the worker, capitalism, the church, morality, education, and the distribution of income. Not that his philosophy is bad. On the contrary, it seems to me remark-