

Richard the Lion-Harding

With the Allies, by Richard Harding Davis. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$1.00 net.

FROM the outset of his career, when he was writing stories curiously accomplished for so young a man, it has been Mr. Richard Harding Davis's misfortune to excite in many of his many readers a slight prejudice against him. The years have not weakened this prejudice, although they should have. When a writer is fifty, or thereabouts, and has published many self-revealing volumes, you may or may not like him, but prejudice ought long ago to have disappeared.

In Mr. Davis's case the operation of prejudice is easily described. Toward the end of one of his books you come across a passage which may be taken, let us suppose, in either of two senses. You promptly take it in the sense less favorable to Mr. Davis. Prejudice inclines you to this less favorable interpretation, and it is the author himself, in earlier passages, who has unwittingly prepared you to understand the later passage as he never meant it to be understood.

It is easy to find examples of this in "With the Allies." Mr. Davis is praising the work done by certain Americans in Paris: "At the residence of Mr. Herrick, in the rue François Premier, there was an impromptu staff composed chiefly of young American bankers, lawyers and business men. They were men who inherited, or who earned, incomes of from twenty thousand to fifty thousand a year, and all day and every day, without pay, and certainly without thanks, they assisted their bewildered, penniless and homesick fellow countrymen." Mr. Davis does not intend to imply that the nobleness of such conduct varies with the size of the income. He does not intend to imply that the nobleness is the same whether the income be dependent upon the young banker's exertions or inherited and continuous. Yet an unsympathetic reader is, by the time he reaches this passage, prepared to seek and find both implications.

Mr. Davis is a genuine admirer of courage, chivalry toward women and undemonstrativeness. He has an unaffected natural talent for praising them in words which inspire one with a passing distaste for these good things. Have you never, although you may be rather chivalrous yourself, in a modest way, risen from the perusal of Mr. Davis on chivalry with a determination never again, no matter how infirm the woman standing in front of you might be, or how heavy-laden, to rise from your seat in the car for her sake? And instead of thanking him for releasing you from the bondage of chivalry, haven't you sometimes been rather annoyed with him for cheapening chivalry by his praise?

Fortunately for chivalry, there is next to nothing about it in "With the Allies." There is, however, and unavoidably, much about courage. Mr. Davis describes with vividness the undemonstrative curt courage of British officers, and somehow you get a picture not only of this courage, but also of Mr. Davis himself, sitting opposite each curtly courageous British officer, filling himself with an admiration which will overflow by and by, in romantic eulogy of courage so undemonstrative.

Of Mr. Davis's own courage, which is the real thing, which has been proved over and over again all over the world, there is in "With the Allies," as in all his other books, neither romantic eulogy, nor any eulogy whatever. Something deeper than prejudice against Mr. Davis, some meanness in one's own grain, is the real cause of this.

a brave man. In no way can a war correspondent whose heart is in his work avoid imparting this kind of information.

There is nevertheless, in Mr. Davis's attitude toward his own courage, something subtly self-contradictory. One gets, along with a conviction that he is brave, and a conviction that he sincerely wishes never to boast of this fact, a hint here and there of a hardly conscious wish to let us know that if the hour struck for him he too would die like an English gentleman, without pose, laconically, sans phrase, as part of the day's work, as a matter of course. One suspects him, in his own case, of wanting us to value at its true worth a courage which he is too good an English gentleman to value so highly. He really possesses many of the fine qualities he praises in other men, and he seems dimly uneasy under the yoke of a code which does not permit him to praise these qualities wherever they are found.

As for this code, so special and so highly esteemed, one infers that it does not preclude an occasional reference to the war correspondent's own predicament: "Maxim's, which now reminds one only of the last act of 'The Merry Widow,' was the meeting-place for the French and English officers from the front; the American military attachés from our embassy, among whom were soldiers, sailors, aviators, marines; the doctors and volunteer nurses from the American ambulance, and the correspondents who by night dined in Paris and by day dodged arrest and other things on the firing-line, or as near it as they could motor without going to jail."

Maxim's, and the life there in war time, make Mr. Davis almost reflective. "When the English officers are granted leave of absence," he writes, "they . . . motor into Paris for a bath and lunch. At eight they leave the trenches along the Aisne and by noon arrive at Maxim's, Voisin's or Larue's. Seldom does war present a sharper contrast. From a breakfast of 'bully' beef, eaten from a tin plate, within their nostrils the smell of campfires, dead horses and unwashed bodies, they find themselves seated on red velvet cushions, surrounded by mirrors and walls of white and gold, and spread before them the most immaculate silver, linen and glass. And the odors that assail them are those of truffles, white wine and 'artichaut sauce mousseline.'" Mr. Davis finds the contrast not only sharp. He finds it more significant, subtly sweeter and dearer, than some of us can find it, no matter how hard we try. In his eyes, one imagines, it's a contrast of which the British privates could give only an inferior intimation if they should leave the trenches at eight, travel third class to Paris, lunch amid the complicated odors of an *établissement Duval*, or drink, at one of the *prix fixe* places, *vin compris*.

Cleanly bred English gentlemen, well educated, finely trained, who know how to risk their lives quietly, without phrases or fuss, and how to order a meal—we read a good deal about them in "With the Allies," and as we read we trace our slight prejudice against Mr. Davis to its source, to our suspicion that in his eyes physical courage is not very much more important than good form in courage, that he overrates the code which defines correctness on the battlefield for the members of a laconic polo-playing class.

A perfect day, for Mr. Davis, would consist of a morning's danger, taken as a matter of course; in the afternoon a little chivalry, equally a matter-of-course to a well-bred man; then a motor dash from hardship to some great city, a bath, a perfect dinner nobly planned. Shrapnel, chivalry, *sauce mousseline*, and so to work the next morning on an article which praised in others virtues his code compels him

The Paradox

Modern Industry, in Relation to the Family, Health, Education, Morality, by Florence Kelley. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. \$1.00 net.

FORTUNATELY there are people in the world who cannot keep still. Neglect does not shut them off and abuse merely stimulates them. If they are advised by cautious elderly persons that their agitation is pernicious, they reply that they cannot help it. "To be told," said Lowell, and his words were echoed by all the abolitionists, "that we ought not to agitate the question of slavery, when it is that which is forever agitating us, is like telling a man with the fever and ague on him to stop shaking and he will be cured."

One cannot read Mrs. Kelley's book without feeling that "the fever and ague" is on her. It is no objective and iced presentation of the evils of our modern industry with careful qualifying clauses, but warm with an emotion only half revealed. Mrs. Kelley shows us the actual wage-earners who suffer from the disease which we call industrial life. We see the men and women struggling under the burden of an impossibly low wage; the migratory workers, living from hand to mouth by casual jobs, sleeping in dirty freight cars and vermin-filled bunk-houses, and condemned by the very nature of their occupations to a not too fastidious celibacy. We see the men killed "in the ordinary course of their employment," the daughters and even the wives drafted into industry, the deterioration of the workman's home, the persistence of the sweatshop, the spread of industrial disease, that grim "by-product" of the factory, the wholesale and merciless exploitation of young children. We are taken into a mill where a white-haired man, a native American, able to read and write, stands ten hours a day, "watching an endless procession of cans to which the lids would later be attached. This work called for no quality of mind, but sustained attention to a horrible monotony. The man watched perpetually for dents in tin cans, and when a can was dented he removed it, using one hand at long intervals. He needed good sight in order never to miss a dent. Thirteen years he had sat there, day after day, looking at cans."

Throughout the book one feels this amazed horror of the author at the meaningless tragedy of it all. Modern industry is the paradox. It provides food, shelter, clothing, the bases of life, health and education, but destroys them all in their making. The men who manufacture clothes go ragged; the men who build houses bunk in wretched shanties; the men who construct the railroads walk downcast along the ties, seeking precarious and ill-paid jobs. Wealth increases, but it is not to the many, and it is not the wealth that is life.

The indictment no doubt is overdrawn, and the remedies suggested not quite satisfying. Yet though here and there the author is evidently ignoring or at least under-emphasizing developments which are not consistent with her argument, the value of such a presentation as this of Mrs. Kelley's is unquestioned. We are all too prone to take industrial progress for granted, to measure that progress by standards which bear no consistent relation to the welfare of the many, to apply a purely mechanistic interpretation to our ever growing, ever expanding economic system. We forget that statistics of production are not everything, and that some of the human factors in industry escape all measurement. To emphasize these

What Might Be In Education

What Is and What Might Be; In Defence of What Might Be, by Edmond Holmes. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company. \$1.25 net each.

THE idea of what education might do for the child enlists an ever deepening share of the wistfulness of the present generation. They turn again and again the pages of the men and women who have written these latter years out of the fulness of their idealism and experimentation—Tolstoy in Russia, Ferrer in Spain, Ellen Key in Sweden, Mme. Montessori in Italy, and our own Professor Dewey, whose influence has gone in a thousand indirect ways to fertilize and liberate our American thought. No one has written, however, with a more exasperated sense than the English Mr. Holmes of that old, mad, bad world from which we are trying to escape. Himself an inspector of elementary public schools for many years, his philosophy of education has evolved under the directest observation of a system which seems to have been contrived with almost diabolical ingenuity to thwart the realization of the purpose for which it was instituted.

The American educational system, with its disciplinary methods, its fine schoolhouses and hygienic desks and ventilating systems, its text-books and charts and marks and promotions and hierarchical organization of teaching function, has certainly achieved a triumph of mechanism. The perfection of the machine is in such contrast to the flimsiness of the product that we can only conclude that there must have been some misconception as to the nature of the raw material. Whatever may have been the cause in England, it is easy to see in America the effects of an utterly inadequate psychology. Whatever may be the lip-service that teachers pay to the theories of Dewey and Montessori, however much the educational world may pretend to agree with Mr. Holmes that "the function of education is to foster growth," the world still acts exactly as if it believed that the child was nothing more than an isolated animal with a mind, into which ideas were to be ladled by the teacher. The discipline of the classroom is a device to keep the children receptive while this process is going on. Examination and recitation are devices to test the success of the ladling. Marks and promotions are partly convenient pigeon-holes for classification, and partly appeals to the emulative instincts of children to familiarize themselves with facts about which they care nothing.

There is a deal of talk in the teaching world about "making children think for themselves," but no teacher suggests the need of examining the conditions of successful thinking. Children are put together in a classroom, rigidly isolated from each other. Their spontaneous expression is checked, their curiosity formalized, the presence of others harasses and disturbs instead of stimulating. No wonder that when school is out, they shake off the harness like a colt and go galloping into the real world. Mr. Holmes, in a passage which should be read for the sheer glow of the "what might be," describes "Egeria's" school in an English village, where, in an atmosphere of perfect freedom the children were so absorbed in their work that some of the class of fifty read silently to themselves while the others were playing a dramatic game in another part of the same room. It is not money, or numbers, or the personality of our teachers that is at fault with us. It is a careless and mechanical philosophy of life. And if this philosophy is one with "the spirit of Western civilization," then those who wish to assert freedom and life against