

tures, and the woof an unpretentious intimacy with the past. He has the good taste to presume no great classical knowledge on the part of his reader. He translates his Latin as often as not, and the only instance of a rather lumpy and ill-digested section is the informative chapter on Cassiodorus, plainly the utilization of a bit of material worked up in advance. The visualized Italy is not too much with him, but it is always present, and his feelings about it are active. The imprisoning poverty of southern Italy is acutely realized, and he has his say about the brutal misgovernment of the Italian people. Take the *dazio*, the wringing "of wretched soldi from toilsome hands"—there is something of the whole history of yeoman England in his indignation at this harassing levy. "The whole *dazio* business is ludicrous and contemptible; I scarce know a baser spectacle than that of uniformed officials groping in the poor little bundles of starved peasant women, mauling a handful of onions, or prodding with long irons a cartload of straw. Did any one ever compare the expenses with the results?" The concluding sentence is even more English than the outburst of feeling.

Ready as was Gissing to admit his feelings, he never berated the southern Italian with what he himself calls "tourist vulgarity," and one may well end a report of this beautiful book with his *amende* to the Italian of to-day. "All the faults of the Italian people are whelmed in forgiveness as soon as their music sounds under the Italian sky. One remembers all they have suffered, all they have achieved in spite of wrong. Brute races have flung themselves, one after another, upon this sweet and glorious land; conquest and slavery, from age to age, have been the people's lot. Tread where one will, the soil has been drenched with blood. An immemorial woe sounds even through the lilting notes of Italian gaiety. . . . Moved by these voices singing over the dust of Croton, I asked pardon for all my foolish irritation, my impertinent fault-finding. Why had I come hither, if it was not that I loved land and people? And had I not richly known the recompense of my love?"

"Legitimately enough one may condemn the rulers of Italy, those who take upon themselves to shape her political life, and recklessly load her with burdens insupportable. But among the simple on Italian soil a wandering stranger has no right to nurse national superiorities, to indulge a contemptuous impatience. It is the touch of tourist vulgarity. Listen to a Calabrian peasant singing as he follows his oxen along the furrow, or as he shakes the branches of his olive tree. That wailing voice amid the ancient silence, that long lament solacing ill-rewarded toil, comes from the heart of Italy herself, and wakes the memory of mankind."

To claim greatness for Gissing on account of this volume would be to exaggerate its values. Very few books are great books, even among those that are ambered in style. But *By the Ionian Sea* is the kind of book which every one who loves the real thing may accept and enjoy. To know Italy, judging by my own experience of the book, is not necessary, although the man who knows Italy will of course appreciate through his knowledge of it the subtler idiosyncrasies of the author. It is necessary to come to the book free of any suspicion that its scholarship is tedious or its personality insistent or its enthusiasm remote. It is one of those precious human expressions which, whatever the subject, enrich life and its durable memories. Gissing was an unhappy man in his earlier years, baulked and exacerbated, but in these quietly distinguished pages there is a self-possession which is reassuring. This ramble

took place when he had the security of his legacy. It has not the strained tone of his novels or their underlying resentment of the acrid and the rancid incidence of poverty. It is a book frankly possessed of the ancient world, of the eternal beauty of nature, of the scarcely less enduring attainment of man. But for all its devotedness and circumspection it has the generous quality that makes literature, the honest communication of human spirit.

F. H.

Uneducated Americans

Negro Education: A Study of the Private and Higher Schools for Colored People in the United States. Prepared by the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education, in coöperation with the Phelps-Stokes Fund under the direction of Thomas Jesse Jones, Specialist in the Education of Racial Groups, Bureau of Education. Washington: Government Printing Office.

FOR a half century the Negro school in the Southland has had an appeal to which the North has responded more generously than even most givers in this field are aware. First, emancipation stirred Northerners with a missionary zeal, but those who went South fifty years ago to devote their lives to teaching the Negro are mostly dead now and with them has died the appeal to which they responded. Then came the message of Dr. Booker T. Washington, inspired in its delivery and fitting in with the practical spirit of the times. He, too, has gone and his inspiration now is second-hand at best. In such circumstances, probably the last place an American would look for a quickening of the pulse would be a government report; yet it is to just such a document that the cause of Negro education in the South looks to retain its remarkable hold upon the interest of the nation.

Just about the time the war started in Europe, Dr. Thomas Jesse Jones, specialist in the education of racial groups, undertook for the United States Bureau of Education in coöperation with the Phelps-Stokes Fund, of New York, an intensive survey of the private facilities and public secondary schools for the education of colored people. Naturally, his field lay almost entirely in the South, and inasmuch as public lack of interest and private enterprise have had pretty much their own way for half a century, his task proved to be huge. After three years spent in collecting information at first hand and setting it forth with his conclusions, his report is now complete at a time when the rights of small peoples, the production of food, and the mobilization of democracy against autocracy are the breath of life in two hemispheres.

And these are the main factors in the Negro problem, too. A race of 10,000,000 persons within a nation of 100,000,000 have rights no less than Serbia or Belgium. The South, more than three-fourths rural, is by no means feeding itself, let alone producing a surplus for the Allies, and the colored people make up one-third of the South's population and are the backbone of her labor supply. Unorganized migration, resulting in a dislocation of production in the South and an East St. Louis in the North, shows one way not to mobilize democracy. Throughout the 1,200 pages of the Jones report the call is not to the charity of humanitarians but to democracy quickened in all its activities by the war. To the American, the basic means and end to democracy is education in its broadest sense. A section of the country which is content to starve 8,500,000 of its 30,000,000 people educationally on one-fourth their

just quota of the school fund, finds itself being starved in turn through emigration of its raw labor and import of living necessities at war prices. The responsibility lies directly with the southern whites who get their proportion of the school fund on the basis of total population—white and black—in their respective counties and then apportion it between the two races as they see fit. The result is that in counties with populations more than 75 per cent colored, \$22.22 is the average per capita outlay in teachers' salaries for the white children of school age, as against \$1.78 for the colored. It quite naturally follows that the colored school term averages less than six months a year and that more than half of the 30,000 Negro teachers provided for some 2,000,000 children have had as preparation for their work less education than is demanded of New York school boys before working papers will be issued to them. The nature and quality of the teaching in the colored schools may be surmised. In public provision for secondary education Dr. Jones shows that most of the money comes from federal appropriations for the land-grant schools and that the state authorities whose duty it is to supervise these schools are generally indifferent to questions of adaptation of curriculum to the pupils' needs, as well as to teaching standards.

To meet at least in part the public deficit in appropriations and interest there has grown up a group of private institutions maintained in large part by northern philanthropy and in the balance by the sacrifices of the Negroes themselves. Dr. Jones found 625 of these schools, representing an investment in plant and endowment of nearly \$30,000,000 and an annual outlay for current expenses of more than \$3,000,000. Of this amount the North supplies about \$1,000,000 directly from individuals and roughly \$1,500,000 through the churches; the Negroes make up the rest in the support of their 153 denominational schools and further give a considerable sum to lengthen the terms of the public schools, besides paying their full quota of the taxes. Of the total of 625 institutions, Dr. Jones rates 266 as essential parts of the educational system; but he discusses them all in detail. It is, however, his conclusions that are of general interest and that visualize for the first time in the half century of emancipation what has been done and what ought now to be done in the education of the Negro.

Dr. Jones recognizes the basic importance of the practical in all education irrespective of race, but he is no stickler for any one policy; his basic contention is that the southern Negro needs, as every human being needs, an education that will fit him to meet the economic, religious, and civic responsibilities of the modern democracy. Anything that really imparts this discipline and character-building is good; for in a people numbering ten millions there is room for every kind of education that will produce the advertised results. Holding this position, he finds many tendencies in the private schools to criticize. For instance, the pioneer institutions were created to teach literary and cultural subjects, vocational training not then being a phrase to conjure with; but the hard-headed New England missionary teachers added a good measure of gumption which filled the bill admirably. In this the second generation, however, fewer men and women have gone down from the North with the result that the vacancies are being filled by colored teachers who, lacking the background of a New England training, have emphasized Latin and Greek and have failed to season it with gumption.

Again, the Hampton idea and Dr. Washington's message of the dignity of labor intelligently and conscientiously done

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have produced some notable successes in agricultural and industrial institutions; but many of their imitators have been imitators in title only, shrewdly capitalizing the Hampton idea in naming their schools but in practice keeping close to the printed page and the classics as the true emancipators of the race.

Dr. Jones would inject into the whole situation an enthusiastic advocacy of gardening as an A-B-C for every colored child, whatever his ambitions are. Thoroughly and intelligently taught, it is invaluable for those who will remain on the farms (eighty per cent of the southern Negroes are classed as rural); it will prove a source of supplemental income for those who become business or professional men in small towns; and it is at least a good character-builder for those who ultimately will land in some urban occupation. The beauty of gardening is that it is a fundamental study, needs no expensive equipment and but little land, and can be taught intelligently even by a rural school teacher with the minimum of training. With gardening would go a general but still simple training in painting and repairing things around the home, whether it be on the farm or in the home; in short, New England gumption again. It is not the mission of every school for Negroes to teach a number of highly specialized trades as part of a general education; leave that to such institutions as Hampton and Tuskegee which have the faculty, plant, and student body to do the work thoroughly.

Here immediately arises the fact that some schools must sacrifice their personal pretensions and ambitions for the good of the whole educational system. The report points out that, after all, the public schools should be responsible for at least the lower grades of education in a democracy,

and that the mission of the private schools is to do everything in their power to stimulate the growth of the public schools through coöperation and example. The task is a large one but it will be accomplished successfully in time if the North will continue its generous support, concentrating henceforth on the schools which are proving their worth.

Although Dr. Jones gives as much detailed consideration to the colleges for Negroes as he does to the primary and secondary schools, the problems in the collegiate field are caused in large measure by the same forces at work in the lower grades, and Dr. Jones approaches them in the same temperate and discriminating spirit. With the single exception of Howard University, which gets the major share of its income from federal sources, the colleges for Negroes in the South are provided by private philanthropy. A system which recognizes as far as practicable the need for geographical distribution is outlined for the pruning of this college and the forcing of that into a well balanced whole for the adequate provision of higher education for the race.

In suggesting his program for the further development of Negro education, Dr. Jones places justifiable confidence in a growing spirit of fair play and an increasing broad-mindedness on the part of the South. The Negro problem is a problem of the democracy and it cannot be solved without the coöperation of the South, the Negro and the North, inspired with "an abiding faith in one another."

W. H. B., 3RD.

An Informal Scientist

The Life of the Grasshopper, by J. Henri Fabre.
Translated by Alexander Teixeira de Mattos, New York:
Dodd, Mead & Co. \$1.50.

IN one of those vivid autobiographical chapters of his works from which, taken together with his many personal digressions, one can piece together almost the whole story of his life, Fabre has drawn a picture of the awakening of the spirit of observation in a small boy on an upland farm in the south of France:

"There I stand, one day, a pensive urchin, with my hands behind my back and my face turned to the sun. The dazzling splendor fascinates me. I am the moth, attracted by the light of the lamp. With what am I enjoying the glorious radiance; with my mouth or my eyes? That is the question put by my budding scientific curiosity. . . . I open my mouth wide and close my eyes; the glory disappears. I open my eyes and shut my mouth; the glory reappears. I repeat the performance with the same result. The question is solved; I have learned by deduction that I see the sun with my eyes."

This method, the deductive and observational method, is the one that Fabre always pursued. The child that could not take even the sun for granted and soon began "to go to the flower, to the insect, even as the Large White Butterfly goes to the cabbage or the Red Admiral to the thistle," became the boy who mused over seed vessels and wing cases under stealthy cover of his book; the determined primary teacher who won a university degree and a higher teaching position by a fierce unaided struggle with the principles of mathematics and physics; and at last the self-taught naturalist who could accept nothing save on the evidence of his own eyes.

The life-history of an insect, as Fabre is always telling

us, is built up of trifles gathered with much time and patience; to-day this detail, tomorrow a second, suggesting new points of view, till gradually the tiny snowball rolls into a mountain of fact. It was not possible for Fabre, as it is for his English translator, who has just published a seventh volume of essays gathered from the *Souvenirs Entomologiques*, to group all his studies of the spider in one volume, of bees in another, of grasshoppers in another; such studies occupied a long period of years—forty years it was in the case of the scarab. The ten volumes of the *Souvenirs Entomologiques* appeared one at a time, and each volume contained the fruit of several years' observations of a number of different insects. As, further, Fabre's literary method is that of the racy fireside story teller who often speaks of insects and animals as peasants do—in human terms—the *Souvenirs* are among the most informal works that genuine science has produced.

The *Life of the Grasshopper*, which "exhausts the number of the orthopterous and homopterous insects" discussed by Fabre, is, as its translator admits, a somewhat loose title for the studies of the Cicada and Empusa, the Locust, the Cricket, and so on, here collected. But the lay reader, who indeed thinks of all these summer chirpers as "grasshoppers," will not quarrel with him. How the Foamy Cicadella blows her sheltering veil of froth; how the Cigale makes her sharp music; how the Mantis, who looks the nun and is the ogress of the peaceful entomological tribes, devours her lovers; how the White-faced Decticus makes her marriage vows—all this one reads with the same sort of interest which absorbed one in Walter Scott before the age of thirteen. And yet the book has a great deal—more than some of the other volumes—of exact technical and structural description. Fabre cannot be dry even when he is technical. Take for instance the description of the "frightfulness" of the Praying Mantis, who with her "slender figure, her elegant bust, her pale green coloring, her lacy gauze wings," has considerable feminine beauty before she goes a-hunting:

"At the sight of the Gray Locust who has heedlessly approached along the trellis work . . . the Mantis gives a convulsive shiver and suddenly adopts a terrifying posture. An electric shock would not produce a more rapid effect. . . . You see before you most unexpectedly a sort of bogey-man or Jack-in-the-Box. The wing covers open and are turned back on either side, slantingly; the wings spread to their full extent and stand erect like parallel sails, or like a huge heraldic crest towering over the back; the tip of the abdomen curls upwards like a crozier, rises and falls, relaxing with short jerks and a sort of sough, a whoof! whoof! like that of the turkey cock spreading his tail. . . . Planted defiantly on its four hind legs, the insect holds its long bust almost upright. The murderous legs, originally folded and pressed together upon the chest, open wide, forming a cross with the body and revealing the arm-pits decorated with rows of beads and a black spot with a white dot in the centre. . . . Motionless in her strange posture the Mantis watches the Locust with her eyes fixed in his direction and her head turning as on a pivot whenever the other changes his place. . . . Under the shiny head of the Decticus, behind the long face of the Locust, who can tell what passes? No sign of excitement betrays itself to our eyes on those impassive masks. Nevertheless, he sees standing before him a spectre, with uplifted claws, ready to fall upon him. He who excels in leaping and could so easily hop out of reach of those talons, he, the big-thighed jumper, remains stupidly where he is or even draws nearer with leisurely step."