

story of a child must be sweet. Sweet children, for instance, never have any trouble keeping their underwear dry. So several real tragedies in Ditte's young life are quietly suppressed. But the worst of the prettification in this book is that it isn't content to be negative. It adds pink ribbons. It translates a word which means "toddler," or "tot" as the awful "girlie" and revels in it, and brings in "dearie" where the Danish has some roughly affectionate word. And, perhaps worst of all, it strives for quaintness by the copious use of words warranted quaint, such as "be-like," "seems like," "'tis," "'tis naught," "ay, ay," and "nay, nay," and constructions such as, "If you but had a father."

Far more heinous than prettification, however, is laziness,—using a stale, commonplace, handy word, where the original has a troublesome fresh one which demands a hunt for the English equivalent. For instance, in the Danish original there occurs a phrase which in rough literal translation would be something like, "her arms were regular doll's stuff, and she had no bite in her." This is rendered by our translator poetically thus, "her limbs were fragile, and strength in her there was none." Or, literally, "She certainly would be careful not to step on his tail again," and rendered "—not to come up against him again." Or, literally, "There was snow everywhere, the bushes reached thick white cat-paws out in all directions—," and rendered, "There was snow everywhere, the bushes were weighted down with it—." Examples could be heaped up endlessly, there is hardly a line that doesn't violate Nexö's imaginative style.

Sometimes, of course, it is difficult to distinguish between laziness and ignorance, the fourth and most easily forgiven sin of a translator. When, in Ditte, the Danish word which means "to hit gently" is translated as "to chat," it is plainly ignorance, but what is it when the word which means "fawning" is given as "considerate"?—Under ignorance one must classify poor English, as "he could hardly tolerate to listen of this tale." Here one comes close to the heart of the translation problem. This version of Ditte shows that the translator is insensitive to words, whether Danish or English, in short that he, or she, is not a writer. Writers can't be expected to do translations; the work is so scandalously underpaid that they couldn't afford to devote the time necessary to it. Therefore publishers hire hacks. But, in common honesty, Henry Holt & Co. should put on the title page of Ditte: *Girl Alive*, "Mutilated from the Danish," and omit the name of the innocent author.

SIGNE TOKSVIG.

The Recent War

A Brief History of the Great War, by Carlton J. H. Hayes. New York: The Macmillan Co.

NO American professor is better qualified to write an American account of the Great War than Professor Carlton J. H. Hayes, of Columbia University. Before 1914 he had given many years to the study of the social and economic forces that were driving the world into a cataclysm, as his published works attest. Shortly after America declared war, he laid aside his books to enter the Military Intelligence Service of the War Department where he supplemented his researches by first hand contact with the inward spirit and purposes of our government. All the time he kept up a continuous analysis of the docu-

ments and papers that streamed from the press—or rather such books and papers as the benevolent powers made accessible to scholars.

The fruits of his recent labors are embodied in this volume. In the main it is a record of military endeavor, as the chapter titles indicate. There are an introduction on the causes of the war and a concluding chapter on the "new era" opened by the settlement at Paris. The thirteen intervening chapters deal with the German invasion of Belgium and France, the failure of Russia to overwhelm Germany, Britain's mastery of the sea, the Allied failure in the Near East, the Russian retreat, German triumphs in the Near East, the military failures of 1916, the intervention of the United States, the Russian revolt and the treaty of Brest-Litovsk, the last great drives and counterdrives. The style is vivid, the narrative moving, and the descriptions full of color.

As to the causes of the war, Professor Hayes is in accord with the overwhelming majority of American scholars and editors whose views will hardly be changed by *Die Deutschen Dokumente zum Kriegsausbruch* or the Austrian *Diplomatische Aktenstücke zur Vorgeschichte des Krieges* or Hoeniger's *Russlands Vorbereitung zum Weltkrieg*. Professor Hayes thinks that the underlying cause was "international anarchy," which is a very convenient and summary way of saying "all that had happened in Europe since the day of Caesar and beyond." The immediate cause, however, was Germany. "It was Germany which precipitated the war." Still the encirclement theory so tenaciously held by the Germans is not dismissed as a piece of mythology. Anyhow, the war began. That is a fact which will not be downed even by the painstaking and illuminating researches of Professor Sidney B. Fay, published in the *American Historical Review* for July and October, 1920.

Only on one point does there seem to be some confusion in Professor Hayes's narrative, and perhaps that is apparent rather than real. He tells us [page 270] that "with the Russian autocracy gone, their cause [that of the Allies] was now unquestionably the cause of democracy and civilization." On the same page he adds: "Less and less throughout the year 1917 did the purpose of the Allies appear to be merely the chastisement of Germany and the parcelling out of conquered territories; more and more it became the fashioning of a league of free nations which should preserve a peace of justice." On page 357, he relates that the Allies were ready to make peace on President Wilson's terms subject to certain reservations. On page 364, he states: "It was the business of the Allies to refashion the map of Europe and dictate the peace settlement in their own interests. 'To the victors belonged the spoils' and the Allies were the victors." On page 399 he suggests that "imperialistic gains seemed to be the stakes of most of the Great Powers" [except, of course, the United States].

On the Bolsheviks, Professor Hayes has decided views. In his eyes they were a mischievous and short-sighted lot of brutes and criminal fanatics [pages 260, 336, 342] and they leaned more and more toward Germany [page 341]. It was the spectacular exploits of the Czecho-Slovaks and the increasing interdependence of the Germans and the Bolsheviks that finally led to Allied intervention and prevented Russia from becoming a German supply station [pages 338, 342]. No other historian of the war has made a more effective statement of the argument for Allied intervention in Russian affairs.

In a clear and ringing summary, Professor Hayes pre-

sents the results of the war: the growth of nationalism, the triumph of imperialism, more republicanism and democracy, a habit of resorting to force to adjust disputes, marked tendencies toward social control if not socialism, an immense impetus to science, and the enhanced prestige of the Catholic Church which "was ably guided during the Great War and remained true to its high ideals" [page 410]. Moreover Professor Hayes is convinced that a "body blow" has been dealt at the doctrines of materialism and determinism, while "spiritualism" has come to the fore. The present reviewer not being versed in theology feels unable to enter this domain, but he was not aware that the Ouija board had made any serious inroads upon excess profits since the war broke out. Neither is he able to see just how Professor Hays can record, almost on the same page, the grand triumph of economic imperialism and the grand triumph of those who look to the Sermon on the Mount for their inspiration and strength. Still, the present reviewer is in a humble and contrite spirit and welcomes assurance from any quarter. Since Professor Hayes's book appeared, he has noticed that the French government, long famous for its almost passionate devotion to the Vatican, has insisted on its ancient right and duty to protect Christians in the Near East. There is undoubtedly something unctuous in this.

CHARLES A. BEARD.

Social Scandinavia in the Viking Age, by Mary Wilhelmine Williams. New York: The Macmillan Co.

A "good report," a posthumous reputation for prowess and courage, was the goal of the Viking's ambition. What fate gave him, however, was about as evil a report as ever fell to the lot of man. Like the Huns, the Moors and the Turks, the Vikings failed to leave to posterity accounts of their intentions and achievements sufficiently explicit to offset the atrocities propaganda of their enemies. Therefore their name remained accursed, until the modern nationalistic movement set the scholars of the north European states to delving into sagas and folksong, rubbish heaps and graves, for evidence of an original stock with something to its credit besides piracy and murder. They discovered enough evidence to compose a voluminous literature, out of which Dr. Williams has managed to extract a remarkably coherent and intelligible account of social and economic life in Scandinavia in the period from the eighth to the middle of the eleventh century.

The book bears all the marks of a painstaking scientific technique, yet it misses that quality of wholesome dreariness that most studies in social origins exhibit. Dr. Williams evidently liked her subject very much, and is in command of a literary art that compels her readers to like it too. The book is not only agreeable reading, but decidedly profitable reading for any one who needs to free himself from the illusion that the course of European historical development was adequately charted by the representatives of the Roman tradition who wrote the books of mediaeval and early modern times.

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