

play, that the channels of trade be kept open, that she receive needed imports and cut down unnecessary ones, that stocks of goods should not be depleted by exporting or by re-exporting imported goods to make profits for certain individuals, and that her business men should not send her commodities either unknowingly, through carelessness, or wilfully, to the enemy. On all these counts individualism in business fell down.

In spite of these failings Sir Leo is very charitable with business and government. It was the natural thing to expect from the system. The nation had to be driven to organization. Memoranda presented by those appreciating the needs of the day and foreseeing the demands of the future were only slowly heeded. It was fortunate for England that she had a Chancellor of the Exchequer "with no particular bias against national effort." Others in the government like Mr. Runciman, President of the Board of Trade, stated in Parliament, "We have been driven bit by bit, against our will, to suspend the easy flow of purely voluntary action." In the opinion of Sir Leo "the value of national organization could have no stronger tribute. Here was a Government composed of statesmen, who, in common with the majority of men of their time, strongly disbelieved either in State trading or in State interference with trade. They exhausted every expedient to avoid State trading or State interference. And yet they were driven through the failure of their cherished beliefs, to take action forced upon them by the danger into which the country was brought by 'the easy flow of purely voluntary action.'"

About one third of the book is devoted to showing how the "national synthesis" was worked out. It includes some remarkable instances of the easy flow of purely voluntary action. A coordinating power was needed over and above "voluntary action" if the immediate need for munitions was to be met. Mere requisitioning of factories would not suffice but many had to be built. It was stated by Lloyd George on August 18, 1919, that by their increased productivity and lowered costs they had saved the nation about \$2,200,000,000.

Shipping for England was "the Heel of Achilles." "But in no department of the national economy had doctrinaire individualism worked greater harm." The high freights, large profits and inflated values may be regarded as insignificant when compared to the danger to the nation due to lack of supplies. It was not until sufficient control had been given the Ministry of Shipping to mobilize the profit makers engaged as carriers in remote parts of the earth that the British Merchant Marine served its real purpose. Then they were in a position to cooperate with the United States and concentrate shipping in the Atlantic. This with the convoy system won the fight against the submarine.

The story is similar for the food and clothes supply, coal, and railways.

The real power of commercialism and the gain spirit was shown at the close of the war with "the Resumption of Disorder." To Sir Leo it was "Destruction in the name of Reconstruction." The absurdity of resorting to the old system of waste, extravagance, and exploitation in the name of progress is well demonstrated. Blind determination to protect special positions of control was well illustrated by an action of the National Union of Manufacturers. While the issue of the war was still in doubt in July, 1918, they sent a deputation to wait upon the Prime Minister to be assured of the restoration of commercialism. "Every vestige of organization for national production was de-

stroyed at the earliest possible moment. . . . The private controllers of the nation's supplies and industry, who failed the nation so bitterly in the early days of the war, demanded the restoration of their ancient privileges and the Government hastened to obey."

There are chapters which deal with "some things not sold," and which compare the officials under private and public enterprise. In connection with "First things First" the author shows the importance of power, transportation, housing, credits, and public health. While thoroughly appreciative of the great contribution of international co-operation and organization, he is sceptical about any great development there until adequate national organization has been made a "condition precedent." Perhaps the most significant contribution in the book is to be found in the last chapter which deals with "the Gifts of Organization, — Opportunity, Power, Freedom." To those who were involved during the war in the conduct of affairs, national in scope, a new vista must have been opened of the possibilities of using organization to bring a new coordination in our whole economic life. The application of principles common in large scale production was easily extended to larger fields. New records of production were established which show what we really could do if we wished to use our productive capacity to its fullest extent. These exhibits demonstrate that there is no excuse for the persistence of poverty. The chaos introduced by the gain motive and the failure to use organization to obtain coordination, full production, and equitable distribution are the obstacles which hinder the abolition of poverty and a progressively better standard of living for all.

ARTHUR E. SUFFERN.

The Brimming Cup, by Dorothy Canfield. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co.

THE author of *The Brimming Cup* is so intent on solving the problem she has set for herself that she fails to give her characters any possibility of existence outside their artificial niches in the story. As a result, she, of course, fails to add any new emphasis to her theory of life. Marise Crittenden, the matronly Pollyanna who is made a central figure, is very busy spreading gladness and old-world culture in a mountain village in Vermont. The ardent wish of Marise is that her domestic happiness shall endure, a desire common and laudable enough, but in this novel it colors and distorts everything else. The alleged forces of opposition are such obvious dummies that knocking them over is no game at all. And yet the sense of effort is always present.

Marise's three children are pulled about with relentless intent. You can fairly hear them creak. The husband plays a strong and silent role. The black-haired villain is quite the old-fashioned melodrama type. Miss Canfield has added a modern note in leaving the heroine free to repulse him herself. That she will repulse him when he has done his worst you are not allowed for one moment to doubt. The happiness of the Crittendens is silhouetted against the disastrous triangle of 'Gene Powers, his wife and her lover, all brought to death by the lack of that stability and insight which Marise and her husband are made to possess. Some of the minor characters are more skilfully drawn and the background of nature and rural life is occasionally effective. The style is never distinguished and is often crude.

R. H.

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