

if we have mere detached illumination like this. Perhaps if Mr. George comes anonymously the next time, evades hospitality, stays at the Mills hotel, refuses to stop his mouth with "the bread of Bostonians," and talks with some of the fourteen million working-women who are not sub-debs, he may justify the statement that he is radical. In the meantime we owe him certain excellent unsentimental random impressions and his glimpse of the possibilities of mass production.

F. H.

More than Clear

A Bill of Divorcement, by Clemence Dane. New York: The Macmillan Co.

NOTHING is more gratifying than a thing that suddenly and happily presents the epitome of some quality or line of thinking, without malice and by no means by a caricature, the very perfection of the thing in mind. For example, the old ladies in tram cars who wear these little bonnets like inverted shovels with a spatter of beads and wire in front, the exact originals of the bonnets in comic illustrations and on the stage. I am grateful in the same way to some incident or saying in history that seems to hit off a whole chain of ideas or a complete atmosphere. Clemence Dane's *A Bill of Divorcement* comes happily by way of being an epitome of the word fictional, as contrasted with anything deeper or more biting.

You may take it or leave it, as you like, but the fictional is a world to itself. It is a world that is fluent rather than true. Things chatter along, wind up, tangle and neatly untangle; they are never at a loss, their motives and explanations work. And, moreover, this play of Miss Dane's, like certain novels, has that special fictional quality that makes one wish, perhaps maliciously, that there were in English the word *noveliste*; for gender is needed here to indicate the particular flow of the artist's craft.

We are to imagine, as the cover suggests, a woman divorced from a man supposed to be insane, who is just about to marry again when this husband reappears, sane and deeply in love with his wife. No small factor in this situation is the daughter, entirely of the new generation, amusing, lovable, heroic, sane, and, incidentally, a modern myth, quite as much a myth as was her almond-eyed greatgrandmother leaning on her forefinger at a window where a dove alights, in the illustration to Tom Moore. However, this new young lady smashes through the weak, sentimental prejudices of her parents; and at the very end, clear-eyed, devotes herself to eugenics, very much as her ancestress, almond-eyed, devoted herself romantically to duty. And then there is Kit, the rector's son, one of those right and clean—which is always mentioned—kind of young fellows dear to English fiction. And Gray, tall, dark and quiet, with an answering laugh, the man Margaret is to marry. And everything gets itself said swimmingly, revealing words arise at will, even to Margaret, who is able to observe to her husband when he cries out at the injustice of her forgetting him while he was insane: "All the days of your life to stand at the window, Hilary, and watch the sun shining on the other side of the road—it's hard, it's hard on a woman." A perfect example of what English teachers used to mean when they said, "She writes well." One thinks of Chekhov's poor, human souls with their confusion and terrible shadows; they are never able to score like this heroine with her splendid sense of discourse.

A Bill of Divorcement is one of those modern problem plays that is sure to invite discussion in almost any circle. About its tragic logic there is a something that purrs and waits to be stroked. There are the modern doctor's views, the rector's, the aunt's, the young new generation's. There is the whole question without any doubt as to the nature of the case. A woman whose husband has been insane for sixteen years, whom she married under the excitement of war and never loved really, has divorced him now after fifteen years, waited a year, and is now to marry the man she loves. They have saved it all up for New Year's, when sorrow is more affecting. The doctor says yes, the rector and the aunt say no. Science and theology clash, and modern thought is brought into play. It is as good a question as the old favorite about Ibsen's *Nora*, whether she should have left home and developed herself or developed herself and then left home.

It is the sort of thing that must be fought if there is to be any hope for any real drama in English. The kind of adequacy it exhibits, this smooth-sliding mincing crowned with vocal reeds, harms the cause of reality in drama far more than any poor technique of crude force can do, or any barbaric yawp or any over-seriousness without horizon; these may at least evince human faults in the author but human poignancy as well. But the Bill of Divorcement has no such raw error. As a matter of fact it is done with no little skill, with the tact and refinement of an accomplished lady novelist. The movement and the interest of it are handled with genuine technical facility; even though it is the kind of technique that can be put on and off, and can be fully explained by lecturers and professors. This is one of those trim pieces of work that may be said to have almost everything except the blur, the undercurrent, the accident, the shudder, the mystery, of the human spirit; everything, as Hamlet said, "except my life, except my life"; though with such facility one may scarcely notice it.

STARK YOUNG.

Must We Fight Japan?

Must We Fight Japan?, by Walter B. Pitkin. New York: The Century Co. The Press and Politics in Japan, by Kisaburo Kawabe. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

WAR between America and Japan must be reckoned with as a serious possibility of the future. The material factors affecting the relations between the two countries promise an increasing measure of friction and misunderstanding. If an armed conflict is ultimately to be avoided, it will only be through the exercise of a much higher degree of intelligence, forethought and moderation than nations are apt to display in shaping their foreign policies.

Professor Pitkin has performed a valuable service to the cause of peace between America and Japan by making a frank, exhaustive and scientific analysis of present and future sources of international controversy. The two chief present causes of disagreement, Japan's resentment at the determination of the Californians to prevent Japanese settlers from acquiring land, and America's resentment at Japan's evident intention to play an imperialistic rôle on the Asiatic continent, will in all probability become intensified during the next few years. The condition of overpopulation, which is driving the Japanese to emigrate in large numbers, is steadily becoming more acute.

And America's rather platonic indignation at the seizure of Korea and Shantung and Yap will be notably quickened when American business men find access to the rich Chinese and Siberian markets obstructed by their oriental competitors.

The author analyzes these two chief danger symptoms, together with many subsidiary grievances and prejudices which exist on both sides of the Pacific. He finds in Japan a strong current of bitter anti-American feeling, while the average American is said to cherish a no less dangerous feeling of complacent contempt for Japan. Professor Pitkin believes that the danger of armed conflict is further accentuated by the great power of the military caste in the semi-feudal Japanese state. He discusses the probable course of a war between the two nations and, arrives at the conclusion that, in a military sense, the conflict would almost certainly result in a stalemate. The experience of the British at Gallipoli suggests that an invading army cannot operate effectively when it is compelled to depend upon the sea as a means of communication with its base of supplies. So, even if the American fleet were decisively defeated, a successful Japanese landing on the California coast is scarcely within the range of possibility. On the other hand, Japan, fringed about with little islands which constitute admirable submarine bases, is probably equally impregnable against foreign invasion. And it would apparently be an easier military operation for the Japanese to capture the Philippine Islands than for the Americans to hold them.

The author is sympathetic with the Californians in their aversion to an influx of Japanese farmers. He does not feel that their attitude is inspired by narrow race prejudice and selfishness. He describes the vast difference in temperament between the native Californian and the Japanese; and expresses the view that the only way to preserve American standards of living in rural districts is to exclude not only Japanese, but also other foreign farm laborers who are willing to work long hours for little pay.

The Japanese situation calls for a constructive solution; and Professor Pitkin is ready to supply it. He suggests the adoption of the following measures in order to avert the menace of an international conflict: the immediate liberation of the Philippines on condition that the new island nation join the League of Nations; a drastic disarmament agreement between Japan, Great Britain, and America; the diversion of Japan's surplus population to Mexico, South America and Siberia; and the establishment of an international consortium, including the United States, Australia, New Zealand, China, Japan, the Philippines, Mexico, Chile and Canada for the development of trade and industry and the regulation of immigration throughout the whole Pacific area.

The author is sometimes tempted to stray beyond the narrow limits of his subject. He is seriously concerned over the drift from farm to city in America and recommends the expenditure of large sums of money for the material and spiritual improvement of rural communities. He is also a convinced neo-Malthusian. He feels that the war may be ascribed in large measure to the pressure of expanding populations; and he speaks warningly of a time when the world's food supplies may be exhausted. He favors the exclusion of future immigration from the United States.

The influence of the press upon the political develop-

ment of Japan during the last fifty years is described by Mr. Kawabe. He shows how the successive stages in the modernization of the island empire have been accompanied by a steady growth in the size and influence of the newspapers. Before the overthrow of the Shogunate there was practically no journalism in Japan. Political criticism was occasionally voiced in novels, satirical poems and other literary forms of expression.

After the downfall of the feudal regime newspapers began to spring up. At first they were apt to be personal and party organs; but most of them now follow the policy of subordinating partisanship to the gathering of news. Mr. Kawabe traces the intimate connection between the press and politics in modern Japan, and points out numerous instances in which frank journalistic criticism has modified the rigid bureaucratic tendencies of the government.

W. H. C.

Selected Current Books

The American Novel, by Carl Van Doren. Macmillan.

"A record of the national imagination as exhibited in the progress of native fiction," from the beginnings to Sinclair Lewis.

An African Adventure, by Isaac F. Marcossou. Lane.

Mr. Marcossou travels in Africa, where he interviews Smuts and African development. "After these late years of blood and battle America and Europe seemed tame."

Courage in Politics, and other essays, by Coventry Patmore. Oxford.

Diverse criticisms and essays, 1885-1896, now first collected.

Will-Power and Work, by Jules Payot. Funk & Wagnalls.

Another handbook on the education of the will.

War Costs and their Financing, by Ernest L. Bogart. Appleton.

"A complete survey of direct and indirect war expenditures, followed by a sketch of the financing of wars in the past which serves as a background for the detailed financial history of the world war." The policy and the experience of the United States and the relation of the United States to the financial rehabilitation of Europe is given special discussion.

Contributors

CLARENCE DAY, JR., is the author of *This Simian World* and *From the Crow's Nest*.

E. PRESTON DARGAN is a professor in the Romance Department of the University of Chicago and an occasional contributor to the literary magazines.

SIGNE K. TOKSVIG, formerly Assistant Editor of the *New Republic*, has contributed frequent articles to the magazines.

ROBERT W. BRUÈRE is a member of the Bureau of Industrial Research, New York City.

H. N. BRAILSFORD is the author of *Russian Impressions* and *Across the Blockade*.