

the country drew them westward. Major Higginson was himself tempted into pioneer fields, became manager of an oil company in Ohio, and with two soldier friends, Channing Clapp and Charles F. Morse, bought a cotton plantation in Georgia. On both occasions he was the fortunate child of failure. He returned to Boston to become a member of his father's and his uncle's firm, Lee Higginson and Company, and like a burgher of Florence or Amsterdam, he made his ventures in distant parts and brought his wealth to the adornment of his native city.

In these years Major Higginson's services to the community centred about two institutions dear to his heart—Harvard University and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. With the former his early connection was, as we have noted, limited to a few months membership in the class of '55. By virtue of his many personal associations with Harvard, however, he always felt that he "belonged." In 1860 he was buying books in Vienna out of his own pocket for the Harvard Library, and one of his early letters to his father contains strong reprobation of a prominent citizen of Boston who died without leaving anything to "the college." He was a signer of the Articles of Association of the Society for the Collegiate Instruction of Women, which founded Radcliffe College. His name first appeared prominently as a benefactor of Harvard with his gift of the Soldiers' Field in 1890. His later gift of the Union, his service as member of the Corporation, and still more his appearance each year to greet the Freshmen and to preside at the Memorial Day exercises made his name and his face known and loved by all Harvard men. And not only to Harvard—to Harvard's friends, the Institute of Technology, Yale and Princeton his purse and his heart were open. The American colleges are lacking in many things that give richness and power to academic life. But with all their faults, their infamous architecture, their uninspired teaching, their narrow social outlook, their inchoate educational process, they are strong in the love of their sons. It is this which gives them dignity and authority, honorable place and venerable tradition. The greatest gift which Henry Higginson gave to Harvard was his love for her.

The Boston Symphony Orchestra was the child of his desire and his imagination, the realization of his youthful ambition and his dream. He founded it in 1881, and thereafter for thirty-seven years he bore the full responsibility for its conduct, financial and artistic. By no means a rich man, he met the yearly deficit out of his own pocket. On the one hand he was obliged to fashion his organization out of material to be found only in Europe, and on the other to build up a musical public in America worthy to appreciate his gift. As he put his heart into everything he did, it is not too much to say that he loved his orchestra: the players were his friends and so were the audience. Thus his genius for friendship contributed largely to the success of the enterprise, and in the end transcended even national and racial feeling, always so strong in him, and made him almost against his will an "internationalist."

When the World War broke out, and still more when America went in, Major Higginson was placed in a position of extreme difficulty. On the one hand he yielded to no man in his love of his country and belief in her cause; on the other he stood sponsor for a group of aliens, most of them from enemy countries, who had come to Boston at his invitation on a purely artistic mission, one which he rightly felt was apart from all political considerations and national hostilities. He recognized particularly his obligation to the conductor, Dr. Muck, who had, at his

solicitation, continued in office after the United States entered the war. He was firm against the outcry of men and women who would have made the orchestra and its members the object of their self-advertised patriotism. In the midst of an orgy of vulgar and stupid hatred, "he nothing common did or mean." He stood by Dr. Muck until his arrest, and his last quoted reference to him is a protest against the needless brutality of the agents of the Department of Justice who made it. Altogether Major Higginson's attitude throughout, as his biography reveals it, was exceptionally high-minded and honorable, and it was one of which his country should be proud.

It is a fact worth noting that Henry Higginson and Henry Adams were members of the same generation. In them the Puritan spirit had ripened and mellowed, taking in the one the form of enthusiastic generous action, and in the other of withdrawal and contemplation. To the one, *doing*, to the other, *being*, was the chief end of man. Higginson found his happiness in "acting and instituting." Adams was never free from the hampering necessity of knowing "how and what we ought to act and institute." Higginson was full of faith in life, a faith based on his trust in his friends. To him the inquiry into the rights of private capital was an attack on the Forbeses and Perkinses, on "Alex" Agassiz and "Quin" Shaw, and he sprang to their defence. Adams was critical and skeptical. He saw clearly the forces behind the campaign for the gold standard, but he acquiesced. In him the native hue of resolution never shows through the pale cast of thought. Higginson was the optimistic exponent of democracy according to the tradition of the fathers, his ancestors; Adams was the pessimist whose speculations led to the theory of the degradation of democratic dogma. Thus they remain, the contrasting types of the later Puritan spirit which the Puritan poet has made imperishable in *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Garbage and Gold

The Enormous Room, by E. E. Cummings. New York: Boni and Liveright. \$2.00.

I FEEL as if I had been rooting long, desperate hours in a junk heap, irritably but thoroughly pawing over all sorts of queer, nameless garbage, rotting tin cans, owl's skeletons, the poisonous fragments of human apparatus rusting into morbid greens, yellows, oranges, and yet as if after prodding about among these and other objects best touched only with a stick, I had come away at last with some lumps of curious, discolored but none the less precious metal.

Could any sensitive person be locked up in a small, filthy French prison with a riff-raff of suspected spies and write an honest book which did not give something of this effect? I doubt it. Mr. Cummings is honest. He is also sensitive, so sensitive that the lightest tremors of life make his tongue, like some cubistic seismograph, record them in a cryptic, half insane dance of words.

This sensitiveness has a tinge of self-pity, which the indignant letters of the introduction do nothing to diminish. Mr. Cummings was arrested while with a section of the Norton Harjes Ambulance Corps at the front, and shipped off to the prison for political suspects at La Ferté Macé, on charges none too clear, but apparently not more serious than that a friend of his had written home in a revolutionary vein disliked by the censor. He does not take this fate easily, of course, but too often his bitterness is venomous.

It also leads him into a rather unpersuasive account of his own ease and dignity. We find him replying "imaginatively," speaking "gently," "briefly and warmly," "deliberately," or "with perfect politeness"; he makes a verbal "sortie"; here he bids "a vivid adieu," there he "cares no whit." He imagines himself threatened with a firing squad, and, being asked "when he preferred to die," replying "Pardon me, you wish to ask when I prefer to become immortal?" With many other such touches he builds up, I cannot say how unconsciously, a not very flattering self-portrait.

Before leaving to the psychologist these clues toward a reconstruction of Mr. Cummings's mind, let me add to them a few of the words and phrases he particularly likes to use in describing the world that surrounds him. He is fond of "divine," "thrilling," "very," "insane," "infinite," "neat," "gentle." Things seem to have an enormous meaning for him when, using a short-hand of his own, he describes them as "neatly hopeless" or "utterly delightful," when he calls the darkness "gentle" or "very tremendous," or silence "violent and gentle and dark"; when a face seems to him "intensely sexual," when a "roar bulges," or a "racket bulges in the darkness." A "din" to him is "minutely crazy," or has a "minutely large quality." How many guesses as to Mr. Cummings's meaning are we allowed when he hears a voice that is "moldly moldering molish"? Is there anything to be said, by anyone not a symbolist, an expressionist, or other verbal cutter-across-lots, for "a sharp, black, mechanical cry in the spongy organism of gloom"; for "female" or "sonal" darkness?

Do such expressions mean that reality has tortured their author's nerves into a snarl? Can the other parent of such obvious children of disorder be any kind of light? Before you go on to the good things Mr. Cummings has done, read this bit carefully and roll it on your tongue.

... a lithe pausing poise, intensely intelligent, certainly sensitive, delivering dryly a series of sure and rapid hints that penetrate the fabric of stupidity accurately and whisperingly; dealing one after another brief and poignant instupidities, distinct and uncompromising, crisp and altogether arrowlike.

"If one gives one's imagination (in this case out of Nerves by Dictionary) a free rein, this sort of thing is not hard to do. Such a horse shies easily at reality, bolts into oxymoron and by way of self-expression bucks with hallucinating turgidity. It reminds one of sonal pools of insanity, bulging neatly but enormously with bat-winged words.

It is strange that Mr. Cummings does not go oftener into these tail-spins, since he has mastered their technique so thoroughly, and so much seems to enjoy them. He is also a master of conveying to you the essence of disagreeable smells, putrescences and vilenesses. I have nothing to say against anyone's describing a stinking French prison just as it is. But Mr. Cummings has a real flair and gusto for filth. Read his eager description of *Ça Pue*, beginning on page 27. Note how he happened upon "a smile which had something almost foetal about it." At such times one almost thinks he shares, with M. Le Directeur of the prison, to whom he imputes it, "an unobstreperous affinity for excrement."

But, upon laying down the book, one can almost say with him (page 173) that "the stink was actually sublime." Again and again he touches off a phrase boiling hot with life. While most of the strange human wrecks and vermin he sees in the prison pour forth, under his attempts to describe them, a writhing fog of words, here and there a few quick touches reincarnate some face or gesture intensely

felt or seen. For instance, of prisoners asleep: "on each paillasse . . . lay the headless body of a man smothered in his blanket, only the boots showing." Of the schoolmaster: "By some mistake he had three mustaches, two of them being eyebrows," or of Renée, a prostitute: "a perfectly toothless smile . . . ample and black . . . you saw through it into the back of her neck."

When Mr. Cummings untangles himself for a bit and stops shaking up his favorite words as if in a dice box, and rolling them out anyhow upon the page, he can build up original and vivid portraits. For two chapters his verbal fogs clear up long enough to let you see full length mountains, rugged and real. Such are the portraits of Surplice, Jean Le Nègre and The Wanderer, though the latter is clouded by such expressions as "his deeply softnesses eyes."

Surplice is not easily forgotten. No mere quotations can rebuild for you his ridiculous, friendly and pitiable figure, a figure so abject that, "being unspeakably lonely," he "enjoyed any and all insults for the simple reason that they constituted or at least implied a recognition of his existence." Jean Le Nègre is even better—Jean whose eyes filled with tears when sixty francs were stolen from him, who kept repeating like a child, "Planton voleur—steal Jean mune." Only if you read Jean's story will you realize how good Mr. Cummings is at his best.

As a sample of *The Enormous Room* at this seldom-found best, here is a sketch of a new arrival at the prison. It is a rare flower lost in the patch where Mr. Cummings has wilfully sowed hundreds of the wildest weeds:

An old man shabbily dressed in a shiny frock coat, upon whose peering and otherwise very aged face a pair of dirty spectacles rested. The first thing he did, upon securing a place, was to sit upon his mattress in a professorial manner, tremulously extract a journal from his left coat pocket, tremblingly produce a large magnifying glass from his upper right vest pocket, and forget everything. Subsequently, I discovered him promenading the room with an enormous expenditure of feeble energy, taking tiny steps flat-footedly and leaning in when he rounded a corner as if he were travelling at terrific speed.

Out of such pictures, no other quite so clear cut, and in spite of all his chasing after "mystic wrynesses," Mr. Cummings finally manages to fashion a picture of his prison which recalls not a little the morbid solidity of Piranesi. The book has few dead phrases in it—it lives, if somewhat with the horrible life of a centipede. It has fire, now smoldering, now for a bit blazing into unhealthy violet and mustard colored flame. There is precious metal in it, but Mr. Cummings has brought up from his agonized and subterranean digging along with some nuggets of character and description all manner of sweepings, cobwebs and twisted iron. I should however rather dig with him for his tarnished treasure than enjoy all the sane and competent enamel-ware which is the bulk of literature today.

Only for short spaces is the water clear. Mostly he is, with joy and a sort of agony, stirring up mud at the bottom which invades this clearness. He bears the scars—and loves to show them—of battle with the fiend, and has himself become "half serpent in the struggle."

A queer, strong, defeated book, all smeared and spattered with genius. A dark, bent tree, gnarled, hag ridden, gross and worm-bored, bearing few leaves, and whether it will outgrow its canker and live to be timber I cannot tell. But "there is no timber that has not strong roots among the clay and worms."

ROBERT LITTELL.

$$7 + 5 = 12$$

The Meeting of Extremes in Contemporary Philosophy,
by Bernard Bosanquet, Fellow of the British Academy.
New York: The Macmillan Co. \$2.60.

" $7 + 5 = 12$ " is the somewhat startling title of Dr. Bosanquet's fifth chapter, which gives the climax of his whole argument. In the correct analysis of such a simple proposition he finds the clue, not only to logic, but to the profoundest problems of metaphysics. On the view which we take of the function of thought in the making of such judgments will depend our attitude to the problems of time, of change, of novelty and necessity, of the relation of mind to its objects, of the relation of religion to morality. No bolder or more comprehensive claim could well be made for the fundamental soundness of the "old idealism," which Dr. Bosanquet here defends with delightful vigor and freshness against the "neo-idealism" of Croce and Gentile, on the one hand, and, on the other, the manifold "realisms," "new" or "critical," of Bertrand Russell, S. Alexander, E. B. Holt, R. B. Perry, J. B. Pratt, and many others. Whether we agree with his conclusions or not, we must all of us acknowledge, without stint, his mastery of his subject. There are few living students of philosophy who can rival his learning, whether on the historical side—Plato, Spinoza, Hegel furnish the background of his argument—or in his command of contemporary literature, from the Italians to Meinong and Husserl, from the English to the American realists. The keenness of his argument is as stimulating as its sympathy and fairness are conspicuous. He lets his opponents speak for themselves in quotations, and his freedom from bias appears in nothing so strikingly as in the fact that he finds much more to welcome in the work of the New Realists than in the work of the Italian Neo-Idealists.

But to begin at the beginning: Dr. Bosanquet takes his cue from a meeting of extremes in contemporary philosophy to which he is the first to have drawn attention, and which, once pointed out, is certainly a most remarkable phenomenon. In formula, nothing could be more opposed than the theses of Realism and Idealism. For the Neo-Idealist, "thought, self-creative and all-producing, is the ultimate principle and even the ultimate type and form of reality." For the Neo-Realist, the real world is self-existent and independent of mind. It is not created by thought but discovered by it, and mind is but one empirical fact among others. Yet the opponents meet each other and Bergson in regarding the whole universe as engaged in a process of creative evolution. Thus time and change and progress are fundamental characters of the universe. A universe capable of changing, or, as the Italians say, of "becoming," is a universe capable of being bettered, and at this point the cosmic theory is linked up with the characteristically modern faith in the perfectibility of man, and of man's world, by the power over nature which knowledge brings. Thence it is but a step to that vigorously moral outlook for which the progressive conquest over evil is the great hope and the destined achievement of the human race upon earth, and which culminates in the "religion of humanity." Alexander's universe evolving towards "Deity" as the next higher level of perfection; Bergson's élan vital creating novelties in inexhaustible profusion; R. B. Perry's declaration that "the good is to be won by the race and for the race; it lies in the future;" Croce's identification of history as the creative unfolding of the world-spirit—all these are but varia-

tions on the central motif that time is real and that the aim of life is progress.

In this consensus the modern tendencies are, of course, sharply opposed to Dr. Bosanquet's own "old idealism," and consequently he reckons such consensus as evidence not of their truth, but of their common shortcoming. But if the modern tendencies are wrong where they agree with each other in differing from the "old idealism," they are right where they meet the old idealism and differ from one another. Thus Dr. Bosanquet has a cordial welcome for the "new" realists because their very desire to rescue all objects whatsoever from dependence on the mind which apprehends them, leads them to people their universe not only with the objects of sense-perception which we ordinarily call physical or material, but also with the objects of dreams and hallucinations, and again with the entities of mathematics, and with the universals and propositions of logic. The resulting universe is certainly miscellaneous and eccentric, but at least it includes within itself the unreal as well as the real, the imaginary as well as the actual, the false as well as the true. It is thus co-extensive with all that we in any sense experience and with all the distinctions which our thought is compelled to recognize. That neo-realism should have cast its net so widely is, for Dr. Bosanquet, the most valuable and promising contribution which it has made to what, by way of avoiding misleading -isms, he likes to call "speculative philosophy." On the other hand, Dr. Bosanquet sides with the "critical" against the "new" realists, in so far as the former agree with himself against the latter in rejecting the doctrine of the independence and self-existence of the object on the ground that every object depends, for its existence and character, on a context of conditions among which the presence of percipients cannot be omitted.

Thus the lines of contemporary thought cross and recross in bewildering fashion. Thinkers allied upon one topic oppose each other on the next. Labels become misleading, old associations are belied. Idealism, which ever since Berkeley has been identified with the cause of religion and with the defence of God and immortality, now under Croce's leadership throws religion overboard and leaves a realist like S. Alexander to provide it with a safe, if unorthodox, refuge. To disentangle these perplexingly interlaced threads which link opposing schools of thought by hidden affinities, is a marvellous feat of analytic skill on Dr. Bosanquet's part. And the best of it is his optimistic conclusion that in this meeting of extremes, this blurring of ancient boundary-lines, we have a splendid promise of a new philosophical synthesis which, leaving old catch-words and labels behind, will frankly face the universe of our experience in all its concrete diversity and richness.

Of course, Dr. Bosanquet believes that this synthesis will reaffirm in substance the philosophical outlook of Plato, of Hegel, of F. H. Bradley. This is the lesson which he seeks to drive home, with a special point against Gentile and Croce, in his analysis of " $7 + 5 = 12$." The two sides of the equation, like the subject and predicate in an ordinary proposition, are different, yet they are also seen and declared to be identical by an act of thought which, whenever it is genuinely performed, is always an "eternal novelty." We cannot treat the judgment, once made, as fixed and dead—a static object distinguishable from the living act of thinking, as Gentile proposes. "To know it, we must connect it with the whole and to connect it with the whole, in principle and ultimately, we must revivify the whole in its connection with the living present of