

## The Game of Politics

*Private Diaries of Sir Algernon West, edited by Horace G. Hutchinson. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company. \$7.00.*

*The Diary of a Journalist: Later Entries, by Sir Henry Lucy. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company. \$6.00.*

THE English invented the game of parliamentary government. They elaborated it by limiting the sovereign in movement to a single square like the king in chess, and increasing the area of authority of the prime minister, like the queen. During the eighteenth century the game was a secluded one played behind closed doors. The effect of the Reform Bill of 1832 was to invite the public in as spectators, since which time parliamentary government has shared with horse racing the distinction of being the premier sport of the English. It will be remembered that to Lord Rosebery fell the intolerable distinction of winning the premiership and the Derby in the same year.

It is the period just before this double triumph to which Sir Algernon West devotes most of his volume of reminiscences. In the years 1892-94 the game was complicated by the fact that Mr. Gladstone, over eighty, with failing sight and hearing, was still the leader of the Liberal party and necessarily became for the fourth time premier on the accession of that party to power in 1892. In these circumstances his old friend, Sir Algernon West, recently retired from the chairmanship of the Internal Revenue Board, became his private secretary, undertaking to act as a shock absorber in the rude contacts between the aged chief and his party followers. The Cabinet faced the necessity of passing the Irish Home Rule Bill with a rather thin majority in the House of Commons and the certainty of a struggle with the House of Lords. Meanwhile age and infirmity accumulated upon the head of their leader, until his retirement became only a question of time and the succession almost one of accident. These facts gave to the web of personal interest, vanity and intrigue within the Cabinet a very special importance. Sir Algernon West with his conscientious record of all the threads which were spun and woven has written a most enlightening book on the secret practice of higher politics. Only once he ventured abroad as far as the House of Commons, to hear Gladstone make his speech introducing the Home Rule Bill. Even then the technique of the performance is what interests him: "Mr. Gladstone rose amid cheers. . . . A quarter of an hour very fine, in an impressive but not loud voice. Two hours' explanation nearly, and a quarter of an hour's peroration—fine and his voice good, though low throughout. What an effort for a man of 83!!!" But Sir Algernon was essentially an inside man dealing with the considerations which determined each move.

At the outset there was the uncomfortable fact that the Queen loathed Mr. Gladstone. Coming from her presence he compared the interview to that between Marie Antoinette and her executioner. Then there was the filling of Cabinet and other positions, the setting of the men on the board. Sir Algernon was in his element. "Ripon came later and we made Cabinets all the evening," he records with gusto. We learn that "Walter of the Times was pressing hard for a Peerage." Lord Acton was most persistent in advice, and took up a good deal of Sir Algernon's time first and last, before the latter had to tell him that there was no room for him in the boat. The Mistressship of the Robes was a question which Sir Algernon had to consider, but which evidently bored him, as he tells

us candidly that he thought his wife was recommending the Dowager Duchess of Bedford when she really meant the Dowager Duchess of Wellington. A pathetic entry occurs on October 26, 1892. "Lord Ashburnham, after all the trouble Mr. Gladstone has had to convince Her Majesty that he is not in favor of a Stuart restoration, etc., refuses to be Lord-in-Waiting." The poet laureateship was discussed with extraordinary penetration. "Lewis Morris of the 'Epic of Hades' was spoken of; also William Morris, 'The Earthly Paradise'. The latter was probably the better poet but he was supposed to have socialistic and Nihilist proclivities." This after Morris had been a member of the London Socialist Society for ten years, and spoken innumerable times in Hyde Park.

After the Cabinet was built and launched Sir Algernon continued to wrestle with similar problems of state. Lord Rosebery's vacillation was a constant worry. The tension between Sir William Harcourt and John Morley grew. Morley tells Sir Algernon on November 1st that "he would no longer attend a Cabinet in which Harcourt sat; his invariable insolence was too dreadful," and six months later, "Harcourt came in a fright of a crisis with John Morley; said he would not discuss anything with him, he was so irritable." We sympathize with Sir Algernon when he exclaims: "What a funny thing Government is!" In the midst of it all Mr. Gladstone stood like King Lear, his white locks blowing in the storm. One of the enthusiastic spectators of the game was Margot Tennant, and her comments Sir Algernon sets down with great respect. In view of the fact that there was no mystery about the fate of the Home Rule Bill the two great questions of the Cabinet were: When and whom will Margot Tennant marry? and When will Mr. Gladstone retire? Both events fell within the year 1894.

Sir Henry Lucy was properly an outside man. As a journalist, the Toby, M. P. of Punch, he takes a more objective and less responsible view of politics. He sketches in quick vivid strokes the external personalities whose temperaments Sir Algernon explored with such pain. This of Lord Salisbury is admirable: "I noticed that when making his statement on the Anglo-French agreement he had not a single note in his hand. Rising from his seat in a perfectly casual way and lounging towards the table, he began to talk in a conversational but clear tone, setting forth a perfectly pellucid statement, pleasantly tinged with cynicism." Cynicism is a mild quality which seasons Sir Henry's hedonism. He enjoys the game of politics thoroughly as a spectator who has developed an extraordinary acuteness for the finer points of the game. He is indefatigable as a collector of impressions and anecdotes. In the end he leaves us the same feeling as does Sir Algernon, of the abounding futility and triviality of the whole performance. Sir Henry Lucy enjoyed other games, and their players nearly as much as politics—for instance the London theatre. In the perspective of his pages, Coquelin, Sir Henry Irving and Ellen Terry seem as important as Balfour, C.-B., Asquith and Morley—and far more interesting.

Altogether these two books have a delightful English quality of absorption and detachment. They illustrate how little politics may have to do with life. They seem happily to bring to mind the song which Odette Dulac used to sing so charmingly at the Boîte à Fursy:

Il y a toujours une moitié du monde,  
Qui se fiche de l'autre moitié.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

## Industrial Peace by Legislative Action

*The Industrial Code, by W. Jett Lauck and Claude S. Watts. New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company. \$4.00.*

**M**ESSRS. Lauck and Watts are among our ablest industrial consultants. Their minds are an economic bureau, full of charts, graphs, facts and figures, which they usually employ with fine relevancy and effect. Their professional ethics is conspicuously high, for they never render service to those whose economics they deem anti-social or impossible. And their book brings out these solid virtues. It is a good reference on the vexed common-places of the eight-hour day, the living wage, women in industry and the rights of capital and labor to collective bargaining on wages and conditions. On all these problems they are more or less orthodoxly A. F. of L., and so anxious to give no radical offence that they quote even ex-Chancellor James R. Day of Syracuse University for the living wage and Chief Justice Taft in favor of collective bargaining. Especially valuable is the appendix, which contains the most essential documentary and other such material on American labor since the creation of the National War Labor Board. And were it only possible to delete the panacea of the book, it would be a very helpful manual in industrial economics.

But unfortunately the authors have an *idée fixe*. They have "a proposal looking to permanent industrial peace," a somewhat drastically simple cure-all for the industrial indisposition. Like all such panaceas this one is the conclusion of a rather fatuous syllogism. Major premise: American industry is in disorder; minor premise: order comes from legislation; conclusion: hence we need an Industrial Code, to be administered by a National Labor Board with Boards of Adjustment for the basic industries. While we had the National War Labor Board "there was not a single strike involving an entire industry . . . Within less than three months after the Board went out of existence the country found itself in the throes of two great strikes, steel and coal." Apparently it never occurred to the authors that labor may have waited for the war rather than the Labor Board to end.

They slight the tragic-comic Kansas Court of Industrial Relations as too simple-mindedly conceived. But all arguments for an immediate industrial code must of necessity be as naïve as Governor Allen's. They are all based on the triune stereotype of capital, labor and the public, all three of which are manifested in the one sovereign state, whose duty it is to protect the innocent and helpless public from the catch-as-catch-can fights of the other two. Thus the authors quote most approvingly from President Harding:

[We need] the construction of a code and a charter of elemental rights, dealing with the relations of employer and employee. This foundation in the law, dealing with the modern conditions of social and economic life, would hasten the building of a temple of peace in industry which a rejoicing nation would acclaim.

Of course!—a code must be based on a Bill of Rights.

To promote and to preserve industrial peace, to insure equal and exact justice to both elements in industry and to safeguard the public interest as well, there should be established an industrial code wherein there shall be defined and promulgated the fundamental principles which shall govern the relations of capital and labor.

Here is the Magna Carta: the right of employers and employees to organize and then to bargain collectively; the right of labor to a living wage and of capital to a fair return; the right of labor to a voice in the control of industry; fair hours; the rights of women in industry; the sanctity of contract between capital and labor; and the rights of the public. This is practically the Magna Carta of the Transportation Act, against whose reactionary tendencies Mr. Lauck has spent the better part of the last two years in an able but unavailing struggle.

This is not the place to go into the metaphysics of such images as government, capital, labor and the public. Who are they? What are they? Where are they? What are the personal and social forces back of each and all? How and when do they overlap? Suffice it to illustrate the difficulty of delimiting and answering these questions by the mere fact that a distinguished professor of social science, while President of the United States, appointed to the public group of an industrial board Judge Elbert H. Gary, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Charles Edward Russell and Bert M. Jewell, against whose latter organization his successor is now mobilizing troops. To the employers' group he appointed more salaried executives than industrial owners, and to the labor group such men as T. A. Rickert of the United Garment Workers and W. G. Lee of the Railroad Trainmen, both of whom have been repudiated by large sections of their membership in runaway strikes and still more runaway language.

Our defective industrial metabolism has impaired the whole social system far too seriously to cure it with a patent medicine. Industry can hope to function properly only after the entire modern environment has undergone a long and arduous treatment of heroic goodwill and educated judgment. And whatever Fabian or drastic measures industry and business may at any time require, unless these measures be conceived in this long view, our civilization is likewise to become chronically invalidated.

BENJAMIN STOLBERG.

## Gauguin's Unconscious Painting

*The Letters of Paul Gauguin to Georges Daniel de Monfreid, translated by Ruth Pielkovo. Foreword by Frederick O'Brien. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company. \$3.00.*

**S**EVERAL views of Paul Gauguin, more or less fanciful, are already available in English. In two of them the hand of the painter himself is obviously at work. And now with *The Letters of Paul Gauguin to Georges Daniel de Monfreid* we have a third self-portrait, supremely valuable to lovers of Gauguin because it is unconscious. Noa Noa, that poetical book of Tahitian memories, it must be remembered is as much the work of Charles Morice as it is of Gauguin, and it is necessarily true that a somewhat conscious idealization of the subject is to be discovered. In the *Intimate Journals of Paul Gauguin*, issued in a limited private edition a season or so ago, we have an admittedly valuable portrait of the mind of the man, but a portrait that is drawn always with the knowledge that sooner or later it will be public property. While the sincerity of Gauguin is never to be doubted, in this book it is perceptible that he takes a savage delight in shocking the bourgeoisie. But in the *Letters* we have a mass of