

indisputable fact of cruel hardships suffered by Greeks and Armenians in Asia Minor before and during the Great War, has fastened upon the Turks what Mr. Clair Price appropriately calls a "sorry butcher-legend" and has exalted the Christian subjects of Turkey by "an equally artificial martyr-legend." Americanized Greeks and Armenians have exploited this prejudice; journalists and publicists hesitate to disturb it; the Turks have made no organized effort to counteract it. Thus Turkish atrocities are widely advertised, whereas the systematic vandalism and organized brutality of the Greek army in Anatolia from 1919 to 1922 have been passed over. Deportations of Greeks from Asia Minor are vehemently denounced, but little or nothing has been said about the deportation of some half million Turks from Thrace during and since the Balkan Wars. The idea of a compulsory interchange of populations between Greece and Turkey originated with Mr. Venizelos and was presented to the Lausanne Conference on behalf of the League of Nations by Dr. Fridtjof Nansen; nevertheless it has been cited by frenzied relief workers and uninformed editorial writers as further conclusive proof of the innate barbarity of the Turk.

It is the purpose of Miss Ellison to present the Turk in a more favorable light. But she has overstepped the bounds of common sense and good taste. She does not serve the cause of peace in the Near East to anathematize the Greek people and canonize the Anatolian peasant. Overestimating the capacities of the Turks or being excessively enthusiastic about their virtues may well prove to be boomerang rather than boon to the Angora government. Miss Ellison apparently would be an English feminine Pierre Loti, but she falls far short of the mark as a litterateur. The pages of her book contain more dashes and exclamation points per square inch than a freshman essay. Her prejudices are so transparent as to be whimsical: her favorite saint is Mustapha Kemal, her favorite demon Lloyd George, her favorite aversions Americans, Bolsheviki, and British Laborites. Miss Ellison was in Angora, but that fact in itself scarcely qualifies her to write authoritatively on the complicated problem of the Near East.

Mr. Price and Major Powell have undertaken with greater success the laudable task of challenging certain Western preconceptions regarding the Moslem world in general and Turkey in particular. Their accounts of the rise of the New Turkey and of the existing situation in Syria, Mesopotamia, and Persia are based upon their observations as free-lance journalists. What they have to say is on the whole accurate, though not altogether in perspective, colorful but not colored, at once informative and entertaining. Neither of these books is likely to be of permanent value in the historical literature of the Near East; both will serve useful purposes in the discussion of contemporary international problems.

Whatever may have been their opinions during the Great War, these authors are now thoroughly disillusioned regarding the beneficent influences of Western imperialism in the Near East. In his initial chapter *Behind the Veil of Propaganda*, Mr. Powell promises his readers that he will "discard all subterfuges and euphemisms and, when the narrative requires it, substitute 'petroleum' for 'self-determination,' 'political ambitions' for 'national obligations,' 'imperialism' for 'altruism'." His discussion of the Mesopotamian Muddle, the French mandate in Syria, and the attempted subjection of Persia constitutes a severe,

but on the whole merited, indictment of Entente diplomacy in its dealings with Moslem peoples. From the record presented one might ask whether certain eminent and respectable statesmen do not better merit the title of "unspeakable" than the Turk to whom it is gratuitously awarded.

Mr. Price is not impressed with the claims of Christianity to greater consideration than Moslemism as a social force in the Near East. "Americans at home," he writes, "have not yet learned that European governments have sometimes accepted Christianity 'in principle' rather than in fact, and that only when the Christians themselves, from British Foreign Secretaries down to the humblest Greek dive-keepers in Galata, have been converted to the practice of Christianity, will the missionaries gain the understanding and respect of Islam." One of the most inexcusable aspects of Christian conduct in Turkey is the too-readily-assumed superiority of Westerners over the Oriental. "Among imperialists," says Mr. Price, "one can understand the necessity of an inflexible attitude of superiority, but among Christians it corresponds neither to reality nor to the teachings of the First Christian." Major Powell goes this statement one better by asserting that this holier-than-thou manner is crass hypocrisy. He is impatient with those Americans who prate about Eastern polygamy—which is now rare in Turkey—the while overlooking the antics of "certain American bankers and railway magnates who maintain establishments which differ in little, save their illegality and secrecy, from Turkish harems."

In short, here are two books which, although of solely temporary importance, present in a readable and unconventional manner much material that is of real interest. They frankly present the Turkish and Moslem point of view, which, as has already been indicated, needs to be presented. It will be regrettable indeed, however, if Western historians and publicists do not speedily come to realize that innately the Turk is no better and no worse than other Near Eastern peoples, all of whom react to the same stimuli in much the same way. To treat the Turk as a Pariah is to invite him to exhibit all the unlovely characteristics of such. He has his national vanities, but so have his Christian neighbors. Peace in the Near East may be effectively promoted by more widespread realization that exaggerated political and cultural nationalism of the Balkan and Anatolian peoples, aggravated by the unregulated rivalries of the Great Powers, is the real enemy of Greek, Bulgar, Turk, and Armenian alike.

EDWARD MEAD EARLE.

Deirdre

Deirdre, by James Stephens. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.50.

THERE remain Bernard Shaw and James Joyce to write of Deirdre. First A. E. captured her pale ghost and let it flit through a twilight drama. Then Yeats gave her color and music and beauty without life. Then Synge found in the old story the greatest tragic theme in the world—the hard choice between swift and slow death—and made Deirdre unforgettable. Now comes James Stephens with the crooked mirror of his temperament and retells the ancient narrative in his own way.

It is a short book—less than half the usual novel length. It is by no means a novel. It is a series of dramatic scenes in two groups, with an interval of seven years be-

tween the events they portray. In Book I we read how Deirdre came to run away with the three young brothers; in Book II, how they were all lured back and how they fought in the Red Branch of the King's palace before they died.

Three good new notes has Stephens added to the music of the old story: youth, and laughter, and battle. Absurdly young in their gambling with life and death, the doomed giggle and shout with laughter in the shadow of the wing of death:

"The gods be praised," said Ardan piously, "we cannot run even if we have to!"

The band of young men shouted with laughter, and Deirdre chimed in as joyously as any of them.

In such a mood the air is clear and clean from all trace of the sentimentality that ruins so many modern versions of ancient tales. Deirdre herself is no pre-Raphaelite beauty but a primitive fighting woman: "Deirdre's arm swung viciously, and a wild yell told that the bolt had gone home." And in the last plunging fight when they all go down before the sorcery of Cathfa, she uses her spear so well that "some venturesome man dropped squealing."

Indeed, the whole fifty pages of battle left one tense and breathless. Realism? Not at all. Romance? Still less. A kind of imaginative impersonation of the primitive love of fighting as a means of distilling into a few hours all the glory of life! Of the great love of Naoise and Deirdre we have only faint hints, but of their great struggle with malign forces we have full realization. The book was worth writing if only for that.

But then . . . ? The trouble is, as Stephens says, "When we endeavor to tell of these things words cannot stand the trial." If he had but remembered this always and spared us the explanations that form almost one third of Book II! Sometimes he is trapped by the intricacies of his material which he knows will be unfamiliar to most readers. But again he is tempted by some mischievous spirit into such trite didacticism as this:

Still, they were young, and with young people impressions that come quickly go as fast. They have so much in common; their interest in the present is so quick; their faith in the future so fearless; their memory of tenderness is so recent, and their experience of treachery so small, that friendship comes easier to them than enmity does; and trust grows where suspicion withers; so in a little time they were again at ease, and when the food they had been preparing was eaten they knew one another and were friends.

This—when he might have been presenting with all his tenderness and his humor that first meeting of Deirdre and her men. Indeed, after an opening not less than magnificent in its impudent humor, fifty pages of analysis and explanation, distributed through the first chapters, come near to ruining the movement of the book. On most pages, however, it is saved by the almost inexhaustible freshness of the imagery and the phrasing. To recreate Deirdre as "a whirlwind of legs and laughter," to make us see Conachar by means of a "mighty leg draped in green silk, from which long tassels of gold swung gently," even to stir the imagination by a glimpse of a "mangy field"—these are but three out of many indubitable marks of genius.

But what shall we have next?

EDITH RICKERT.

Ulug Beg

Ulug Beg, by "Autolycus." New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50.

IT is hard to say what is most astonishing in *Ulug Beg*. Nine thousand lines or so of ottava rima "comic in intention" and consistently so in effect is surprising enough in our literary era. And when a breathless, racy and sanguinary tale gallops jubilantly along on the conventional number of feet, jolting the reader only when it stops to lash them out in wholly unnecessary self-defence or stumbles into deprecation, one is not only astonished but a bit exasperated to realize that a lusty and vigorous bard is cowering behind the pseudonym "Autolycus." The defensive attitude may be relaxation to the narrative muscles—and he does strike it comically—clever chap, whoever he is—saturated with the outpourings of the poets, and exuding a sort of Volapuk of effervescent borrowings.

The tale rushes by on a stream of frothy exuberance—strong, swift and dark in places—flashing a foam of flamboyant foolery when the black current of the tragic threatens to swamp us. Grim as death sometimes, and raw in realism as any of his unsavored "moderns," "Autolycus" yet resists the most popular selling-devices available to composers of oriental fantasies—"the muse's man-trap, when all's said and done"—and reveals himself Puritan enough to treat matter of sex as matter-of-fact. Fighting is at least as absorbing—and so are imperialistic intrigue, treachery and revolution. Kim is swept into the rapids when the current reaches British spheres of influence—as well as other beloved offspring of Rudyard Kipling, to whom the torrential volume is dedicated. But the sincere flattery of "Autolycus" should justify the abduction, and Kim, Stalky, and Co. seem not too distressingly adrift in an outlander's tumultuous tale.

It is an obstreperous epic, dashing from the extravagantly trivial to the starkly brutal,—but so fluent, vigorous and impulsive as to sweep away critical rigidity. We snatch feebly at our original straw of objection to anonymity and apology—and seizing it, thank God the judicial attitude has been maintained, although our last gasp, like our first, can be only: "Astonishing!"

D. B. WOOLSEY.

As They Might Be

As They Are. Anonymous. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50.

IT is a well-established practice, nowadays, for most of us to talk about French politics without knowing what they mean. France holds the key to peace. The struggle that will determine which way Europe goes, the next ten years, is being waged in Paris. The leaders of conflicting party groups—imperialists and friends of reconciliation—are men to whom the present deadlock gives importance. Yet how many of us on this side of the Atlantic know anything about those leaders? Poincaré, Clemenceau, Foch. Yes, we know those three. Viviani, Briand, Millerand, Tardieu, Painlevé and Caillaux. Well, we've heard of all of them—though it's a little difficult to remember which is which. Briand and Viviani, for example, have a way of getting mixed. As for the others—Berthelot, Jonnart, Chéron and the rest of them—for most of us