

natural magic as when Jennifer sings the Lament for Flodden in the palace of the Grand Mogul at Delhi, "standing in the exact centre of the miraculous pavilion of white marble and lifting her mournful little voice to cry, 'I've heard them liltin' at our ewe-milkin' . . . The flowers of the forest are all wede away.'" The atmosphere never stifles nor does the luxury pall, nor the machinery obtrude itself. The story moves with a justness of proportion and measure, swiftly and easily to its perfect close, completing as if at one full sweep the circle, round as the O of Apelles.

In these matters Miss Wylie is superior as an artist to Mr. James Branch Cabell, with whom it is natural to compare her. She gives us a real world imaginatively possessed, not a mythical world fancifully conceived. She directs her action so firmly within the limits of the plausible that when it is necessary she can indulge in a miracle or two. She observes an artistic economy in her use of material in the face of all temptation to arbitrary lavishness. Above all, she is adroit in her purpose. She never bears on too heavily. Her style is rich in overtones and second intentions, but she never permits overtones to become dominant, nor, by any chance, her second intentions to become her first. With her irony is a flavor, not a food mechanically prepared and put up in sealed packages. Thus she avoids the fault which her Gallic compeers stigmatize by the phrase *trop voulu*. She meets them with a challenge as gay and ringing and a swordsmanship as deft and keen as their own.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

The Real Sarah Bernhardt

The Real Sarah Bernhardt, by Mme. Pierre Berton and Basil Woon. New York: Boni and Liveright. \$3.50.

THE appetite for the "real" seems to continue: real Lucrezia Borgias, real Queen Elizabeths, real Maintenons and Cleopatras; and now a real Sarah Bernhardt. The need, in this last case, might appear to be less urgent: Sarah was a contemporary; *réclame* worked for her like a pile-driver through half a century; and she frisked over the world, displaying—well within the memory of man—her licenses and eccentricities in half its capitals. Yet a faithful friend and survivor has been found to unveil the Sarah "whom her audiences never knew," and to do so with the full authorization of the actress herself.

Sometimes the tone and atmosphere of a book may be found expressed in a single paragraph. "It has often been commented upon that Sarah Bernhardt never had an American lover," declares page 275. "I heard her speak of this one day with regret," adds her biographer. So odd a lapse is immediately accounted for: "This absence of Americans in Sarah's sentimental life is best explained by the short duration of each of her tours of America and the distance covered during them. Many towns in America saw Sarah only for twenty-four hours, and the whole period was a ceaseless whirl of arriving, rehearsing, playing and departing." One might rather easily deduce from all this the sex of the writer, her nationality, and the milieu in which she spent her life. Mme. Berton, in fact, accompanied Bernhardt on one or two of her American tours as a young girl under eighteen; and, oddly enough, she came to marry that star actor of the Odéon who was among the earliest and most helpful of the many "lovers."

Thus her facilities were exceptional, and her sanctions seem complete. She is quite at her ease in presenting a complicated and assertive hybrid in an environment of Bohemian promiscuity. She is vivid and sparkling, with full possession of the Gallic manner and touch. Her every page is readable, even if not always highly edifying.

The later three-quarters of Sarah Bernhardt's career possess their full measure of definite "actuality." Perhaps the biographer is at her most serviceable in clearing up the blurred and muddled beginnings. The various apocryphal tales of her heroine's parentage are superseded, finally, by what appears to be the authentic account. The father's name really was Bernhardt; he was a law-student who came to Paris from Havre, and who spent most of the years subsequent to early parenthood in remote travels. The mother was a German Jewess from Berlin; in Paris she was taken up by the Duc de Morny (a relative of Napoleon III) and became a showy figure in the dubious society of the day. Like the father, she concerned herself little about her child. Meanwhile, Sarah remained on a farm in Brittany, or among concierges in Paris. She longed to be a nun and rebelled when, at fifteen, she was forced to attend a play at the Opéra Comique. But that attendance determined her career. The rest, with some embellishments "lacking in any other biography . . . and deliberately omitted from her own autobiography," follows in due and natural course.

This is a book that easily falls to the level of gossip, and lower. It is difficult to disengage any general ideas. One may pause for a moment on "the moral code of 1870" as it affected actresses. It can be asserted, declares this new biographer stoutly, that Sarah Bernhardt "never formed a liaison for the sake of the protection and wealth it could give her," and that when she gave herself it was always "to someone who could assist her in the materialization of her lofty and ambitious dreams."

One may pause, further, on the matter of modern advertising. Bernhardt is here presented as the first actress who really understood the value of publicity. All this publicity, if she had been a lesser woman, might have overwhelmed and ruined her. However, her talent for self-advertisement (which caused a rival actress to write of her as Sarah Barnum) was really backed up by genius and by a genuine passion for hard work. Sarah was in fact one of France's modern explorers. Just as Balzac discovered—after the Napoleonic era of "gloire"—that the real protagonist of French society was the five-franc piece, so Sarah, amidst the tinsel and humbug of another Napoleonic era, discovered that publicity is the very backbone and breath of a modern career.

A little later on, we find Bernhardt put forward, naturally enough, as one who, more than anybody else, popularized the theatre in France. Though the theatre has always been, indeed, a cult in that highly homogeneous and highly socialized land, yet in the sixties and seventies of the last century, this cult was practiced only by the few devotees who possessed the education requisite for understanding the difficult verse, the delightful satire, and the delicate irony of the poets whose works then made up so very large a proportion of the repertory. Sarah Bernhardt transformed the theatre from the "superior intellectual toy of the cultured few to the amusement and recreation of the many." Sardou and Réclame aided the transition. Such is the composition of the glorious trinity to which America owes Fedora, Gismonda and the rest.

The book as a whole presents professional Paris active

at home through some seventy years, and also active as a propagandist in such diverse and alien environments as London, St. Petersburg and New York. It has value too as the testimony of a loyal friend and follower—one who can indulge a slight grimace when occasion seems to call for it, even if she can perceive no essential blemish or lack, and who has the pen to turn everything, however varied in nature and quality, to good and entertaining account in her magnification of that art in which the French remain preëminent and of that art's chief exemplar in a day just past.

HENRY B. FULLER.

Four Books of History

Leitfaden zur Kriegsschuldfrage, by Graf Max Montgelas. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter and Company.

AT the close of the war Count Montgelas coöperated with Karl Kautsky in publishing with scholarly precision and detail all the German diplomatic correspondence relating to the outbreak of the war. Since then he has written innumerable articles and pamphlets illuminating difficult problems such as what really took place in July, 1914. As an indication of the vastness of his information and of the clarity with which he holds it in his mind is the fact that last spring he was able, within a few weeks, and with citation of documents for every statement, to dictate this little "Guide to the Question of War Responsibility." It is the sanest, best-informed, and most readable volume on the vexed question, which has come out of Germany. By seizing the "leading threads" for his narrative, and by relegating to an appendix controversial detail, he has given a clear account of an extremely complicated subject. In the first quarter of the book he sketches the conflict of alliances from 1907 to 1914; he nowhere repeats the common German accusation against England of "encirclement;" but he does show how France, under M. Poincaré, changed to a closer and more aggressive support of Russia after the Balkan victories over Turkey in 1912-13. In dealing with the diplomatic crisis of 1914 he does not hesitate to criticise Germany at many points; but at the same time he seeks to defend her against untenable charges which have been made against her, and to show that it is by no means on her shoulders alone that the burden of responsibility rests. He closes with seventeen propositions which we suspect it would be difficult for M. Poincaré completely to controvert in the judgment of any unprejudiced person of intelligence who studies the question carefully.

S. B. F.

Actividades de la Liga de las Naciones, por Cosme de la Torriente. Havana: Rambla, Bouza and Company.

SPANISH is the national language of one third of the states of the world, remarks Sr. de Bustamente in the preface to this work, yet until now no adequate exposition of the organization and activities of the League of Nations has appeared in that tongue. It would be hard to find a man better qualified to fill the gap than Cosme de la Torriente. He was chosen to head the Cuban delegation to the Third Assembly (1922) and by that Assembly as President of its Third Commission, dealing with the reduction

of armaments. Four of his works have already appeared in English, including an able discourse on the relations of Cuba, the United States and the League, which was translated for "International Conciliation."

Ninety-four pages of the present book are devoted to a compact, readable and on the whole non-polemic general account of the organization and functions of the League. The body of the work is a detailed statement of the labors of the Third Assembly, with ample references to the previous two. Nine appendices furnish an elaborate documentation, together with other matter. The last of these contains a very interesting Cuban project for a league of nations, published in a book by Jose Calixto Bernal y Soto in 1857.

Sr. Torriente has relied almost entirely upon exposition, the acts, plans and problems of the League being allowed to do their own arguing. If he is either illuisioned or disillusioned about his subject, his pages are singularly free from evidence of the fact.

Cuba's contributions to the work of the League are particularly surprising, considering her small size and her intimate relationship to the United States. Sr. de Bustamente, who writes the preface to this book, is one of the judges of the Permanent Court. The Spanish-speaking world is to be congratulated upon the possession of a very able treatise on a subject of considerable interest.

M. M. K.

Die Ausbreitungspolitik der Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika, by Emil Kimpfen. Berlin and Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt.

THIS thorough monograph not only possesses the virtue of scholarly detachment, but is also the most adequate history of American expansionist policy and achievements which has yet been brought within the compass of a single volume. It richly deserves translation into English.

H. E. B.

A History of Assyria, by A. T. Olmstead. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. \$7.00.

INTENSIVE scholarship, unflagging industry, complete mastery of the sources of information, a progressive and synthetic attitude towards history, and an all-absorbing enthusiasm for the subject in hand are rarely combined in an author, but when they do coexist a notable product is likely to emerge. This was conspicuously the case in the previous volume in this series, Professor Breasted's famous History of Egypt. No higher praise could be bestowed upon Professor Olmstead's volume than to say that it does not suffer seriously by comparison with Breasted's magnum opus. Professor Olmstead has long been known as an enterprising and productive Assyriologist, not only by his monographs on Sargon, and Assyrian historiography, but also by many suggestive and penetrating articles on varied phases of the history of Babylonia and Assyria. Those on Assyria, with much revision and new material, are now presented in this volume. Every phase of the history is amply covered, there being plenty of space assigned to social, economic, cultural and intellectual history. The most important contribution of the book to the intelligent lay reader will unquestionably be a salutary corrective of the conventional view of the Assyrian empire as a purely