

But these conceptions are nevertheless naive and simple. They may in time represent a combination of ignorance, and instinct and energy from which new beginnings may come. In them living may hit bottom and start again. From the simplification, the generality of outline and the naiveté of these people there may in time spring the new myth, and this myth be a source of art.

At present before this Duccio of the Descent from the Cross, with its beauty and labor and tragic soul, this young lady is like an active, slightly hard, well dressed and not unpleasant child.

STARK YOUNG.

CORRESPONDENCE

Is the League Illogical?

SIR: Senator Borah seems to have gathered at least one promising fig of peace from that nettle, the League of Nations.

He finds cause for great encouragement in the action of the League, *i. e.*, the draft treaty submitted by the American committee, but he still maintains that the League will "speedily" become a mere military alliance if it does not promptly disavow all war. If so is it not a strange proceeding for a new military alliance to promote the outlawry of even aggressive war? Nothing would more surely wreck a military alliance than the success of such an attempt.

May not the discrepancy be due to the fact that in the first paragraph of Mr. Borah's article (July 9) he is thinking of what the League is actually doing; its behavior under certain stimuli as the psychologists say? While later his attention is fixed on what the League ought to be expected to do from his viewpoint of its constitution and make-up. But if the League is illogical in its behavior, it is not the first time a political institution has done the unexpected thing, as witness what has happened to the Electoral College in the American system of electing a President.

GEORGE BURNHAM, JR.

Whitefield, N. H.

Witter Bynner Speaks Out

SIR: To those of us who were at California during the Bynner year, it was indeed a pleasure to hear him speak out last December in the Poetry number of the New Republic. He describes his class in verse-writing, and adds:

"Similar classes have met successfully at Berkeley with W. W. Lyman and Leonard Bacon. None of us is any longer connected with the University. The powers, I understand, attribute our absence to the fact that none of us held a doctor's degree."

When he was with us in person, he didn't talk to us of himself or his poetry or his teaching, but he often sang us darky songs and was otherwise sociable and charming. And he was interested in politics—real politics, not university ones. This is why he and W. W. Lyman and A. E. Anderson and Robert Clark and Benjamin Ide Wheeler and even President Barrows are no longer associated with a university intent on passing itself along from one university politician to another. The War gave Gayley a chance to knife Wheeler; the peace gave Barrows an opportunity to succeed the War Deans, and the post-peace gave the present grand master—known as the Dean of Deans—his chance to fill the university with his supporters and to control regents and president by flattery, and faculty and students by fear.

Bynner, Lyman and Anderson went, not because they hadn't doctors' degrees, but because they expressed premature sympathy for war prisoners recently pardoned by President Coolidge. On the other hand, Leonard Bacon, who resigned last year, quite of his own volition, was hastily summoned by Colonel Barrows and informed that although all instructors must now have doctors' degrees, he, Bacon, was an exception and need not. In short, the doctor's degree requirement is applied or ignored according to the "needs" of the administration. Mr. Bacon is a brilliant and honorable man; but what made him important at university headquarters was not his scholarship, but his war record.

PROFESSOR.

Los Angeles, Cal.

Why not Continue the Experiment?

SIR: It seems that Leopold and Loeb indulged in murder to discover what it felt like. A nation is agitated over what punishment should be meted out for such experimentation. Why not continue the scientific inquiry?

If prospective and potential murderers, especially those who seek only to discover what are the intellectual and emotional reactions to deeds of violence for science's sake, had the advantage of such previous knowledge as this case could be made to produce it is possible that a deterrent to crime could be established.

I have known several men who took human life and in every instance the reaction was terrible. Two eventually sought relief in self-destruction. One undertook to drown his memories and demonstrated scientifically that alcohol is no palliative to sensitive consciences.

In several instances the deeds were justifiable, and in one really laudable—but the remorse was none the less an ever-present torment.

I have, therefore, remained apathetic to hysterical demands for drastic punishment, for murderers I have known punished themselves more than society possibly could. I believe that if set aside in a safe place and kept under observation the slayers of the Franks boy would become striking examples in point. As I believe that it is better to give than to receive, so am I convinced that it is worse to slay than to be slain, and I believe that so excellent an opportunity to verify the theory should not be neglected.

HENRY PENCE.

Cincinnati, O.

A Benefit of the War

SIR: With your doubts as to the benefits of the War it is impossible not to sympathize. The War did leave an aftermath of weeds in which the wheat is difficult to find. Among the results of the War there is however one which I cannot conceive could have been gained in any other way. This is the freeing of humanity from the hereditary and imposed mechanical controls implied in the governing systems of the three great empires of Germany, Austria and Russia. It is easy enough to say that the systems that have followed the downfall of these imperial organs do not reflect the people's will. That is a matter for debate. By the loosening of historic bonds they at any rate make it possible for the people to seek or to create the instrumentalities of their will. Germany and Austria and Russia were not only set up as barriers against the popular will; at least one of these was successfully poisoning and undermining that will. Until it is shown how under the pre-war system the people could have "broken through" to their governments, the destruction of these governments must stand as a benefit of the War.

THOMAS H. DICKINSON.

Wilton, Conn.

The Conventions of 1876 and 1880

SIR: In the very interesting article recently published in your magazine, Then and Now, by William E. Dodd, the writer has the campaigns of 1876 and 1880 mixed.

General Grant was not a candidate for nomination before the convention of 1876, but was in 1880, his principal supporters being General Logan of Illinois, Senator Cameron of Pennsylvania and Senator Conkling of New York.

Blaine was the leading candidate at both of these conventions, in 1876 leading on the first six ballots and receiving 351, his highest number, on the seventh ballot, when Hayes was nominated with 384 votes.

In 1880 there were thirty-six ballots, General Grant leading on thirty-five and being second on the thirty-sixth, when he received 306 votes to 399 for Garfield, who was nominated; and Blaine in this convention ran second on every ballot up to the last, on which he was third with forty-two votes.

W. O. HART.

New Orleans, La.

A Laodicean

Some Early Impressions, by Leslie Stephen. London: The Hogarth Press. 7s 6d.

IT is characteristic of the man who is responsible for more biography than any other of his countrymen that he left no record of himself except these four papers written for the *National Review*. Probably Sir Leslie Stephen would have said that this was all that he deserved. For Stephen was trained at Cambridge, and, to generalize rashly in the face of many exceptions, it may be said that Cambridge men of the last century, in contrast with those of Oxford, were characterized by a certain impersonality, reserve, indifference. Oxford had a movement called by its own name, the subject of the most brilliant literary journalism since the days of Port Royal. Who can imagine having heard of a Cambridge Movement? Among other Cambridge men Sir Leslie Stephen has never been written up. His works on Ethics, and on English Thought in the Eighteenth Century, his criticism in *Hours in a Library and Recreations of a Biographer*, not to speak of the *Dictionary of National Biography*, give him a name in nineteenth century letters, but not a personality. For that omission we have to turn to George Meredith's *Vernon Whitford in The Egoist*, that "Phoebus Apollo turned fasting friar," and this thin sheaf of reminiscences republished by Leonard and Virginia Woolf.

The first chapter deals with Cambridge of the fifties. Cambridge as Stephen saw it was very different from Matthew Arnold's Oxford, home of lost causes and impossible loyalties, whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the Middle Age. The difference began doubtless with the emphasis on classic literature at Oxford and on mathematics at Cambridge. It is symbolized by landscape—instead of the Cumnor hills, we have the Fens; instead of the Isis, the Cam. "It is the contrast between romance and the picturesque on one side and humdrum prose and the monotonous levels on the other. . . . Cambridge has for the last three centuries inclined to the less romantic side of things. It was for Puritans against the Cavaliers, for Whigs against Jacobites, and down to my time was favored by 'Evangelicals', and the good high and dry school which shuddered at the 'Oxford Movement.'" Nowhere does Oxford show its romantic spirit more happily than in its readiness to recognize its spiritual master with an O Richard, O mon roi! Nineteenth century Oxford saw a succession of leaders beginning with Newman. Thomas Hughes and Matthew Arnold have told us with what enthusiasm Carlyle's voice was heard after Newman's had been stilled; and then came Ruskin and Morris and Thomas Hill Green—all representative of the romantic and mystical side of things. Cambridge was too matter-of-fact, too given to logic, too disinterested to yield itself to such loyalties. "We had," says Stephen dryly, "no spiritual guides among the Cambridge residents," and Carlyle was considered "an eccentric Diogenes." In later years when Stephen saw the prophet occasionally in Cheyne Row he always felt "something like the editor of a Sadducees' gazette interviewing John the Baptist." In fact Gallio was the patron saint of Cambridge. Almost the only expression of sentiment was furnished by the association of The Apostles, among whom were Tennyson, Hallam, Maurice, and other tender-

minded Cantabridgians; and even among them was Clerk Maxwell—the physicist.

Cambridge had indeed its peculiar religious attitude as had Oxford—Maurice and Kingsley instead of Newman and Pusey, the Broad Church Movement instead of Tractarianism. But the Cambridge theologians came off badly in both their great matches, with the Catholics and with the Liberals. The intellectually dominating force at Cambridge was supplied by John Stuart Mill. Stephen's most intimate friend, Henry Fawcett, "knew Mill's Political Economy as a Puritan knew the Bible. . . . In our little circle the summary answer to all hesitating proselytes was 'read Mill.'" The ground was thus prepared for the triumph of the scientific spirit at Cambridge, in the years after Darwin had published *The Origin of Species*; and Stephen himself was fixed in the group of later utilitarians, rationalists, positivists with John Morley, Frederick Harrison, George Meredith. He had to confess that his religious history lacked romantic glamor of the tragedy of declining faith. That was for Oxford neophytes like Arthur Hugh Clough to experience, and Oxford poets like Matthew Arnold to celebrate. It is true he found his Cambridge career cut short by his inability to come to terms with the Thirty-nine Articles. He had taken orders "on a sort of tacit understanding that Maurice or his like would act as an interpreter of the true facts," but suddenly he realized that the Bible stories in which he was called to profess complete credence could not be both true and false, and since he thought them false he would not go on saying that they were true. But he did not find this experience as did so many, a source of exquisite pain. "I did not feel that the solid ground was giving way beneath my feet, but rather that I was being relieved of a cumbrous burden." But, on the other hand, Stephen seems to have found no great inspiration in his liberation. In his gentle Laodiceanism he looks back a little wistfully to what he had missed. "I am often tempted to regret that I did not swallow my scruples and aim at some modest ecclesiastical preferment. Bishops indeed have fallen upon evil days; they no longer enjoy the charming repose of the comfortable dignitaries of the eighteenth century. But I should dearly like a deanery. To hold such a position as was held by Milman or Stanley seems to me the very ideal aim for a man of any literary taste; and, what with the 'higher criticism' of later days, it does not seem that it need have been hard to follow old Hobbes' advice and swallow your pill without chewing it."

In a similar spirit of good faith and unpretentious realism Stephen does not try to persuade himself or us that he took to the literary profession "from an overpowering love of letters." It was merely that he "had to scribble in the absence of other professions." He found a congenial group of hard thinkers and hard hitters in the staff of the *Saturday Review*—Freeman, Morley, Lord Robert Cecil, but what made the atmosphere of the paper peculiarly grateful to Stephen was its detachment, which was generally called by the uglier term cynicism. "The journalist who is anxious about his soul ought, I suppose," ruminates Sir Leslie, "to have an enthusiastic belief in the causes which he advocates. There are, of course, many such men." He mentions R. H. Hutton and Godkin. "But that singular entity called a newspaper, when not dominated by an individual mind, always presents some problems in casuistry to a conscientious contributor. It may be the organ of the party to which you belong, but