

## AFFAIRS OF THE WORLD

BY WILLIS FLETCHER JOHNSON

PUBLIC condemnation was swift and scathing upon the threat of a general railroad strike, to a degree and an extent never surpassed; for a multiplicity of reasons, all cogent and sufficient. It was felt that it was nothing short of monstrous to propose such a thing in the present economic condition of the country, unless for cause immeasurably stronger than any that was suggested in this case. It was perceived that the strike would be a direct and contemptuous flouting of a great agency of Government which had recently been constituted at the request of the very men who were organizing the strike, and which was looked to by the nation with a large measure of hope as calculated to avert precisely such disturbances. Perhaps above all, however, public disapproval was aroused by what was admitted to be the real purpose of the strike; a purpose concerning which, for almost the first time in such controversies, both the labor unions and the corporations, the Brotherhoods and the Directors of the roads, were in exact agreement. It was not to be a strike for higher wages, nor for shorter hours, nor for improved conditions of employment, nor for recognition of the unions. It was not to be a strike against the reduction of wages last July, though that was the actual pretext and was the only issue upon which the rank and file of the men voted. It was to be a strike—though probably not one man in ten among the prospective strikers realized it or wished it—to compel the transfer of the railroads of the country from corporate to Government ownership and control. Memories of the Adamson law, and of the plasticity of the Government Railroad Administration during the war, moved ambitious labor leaders to think that under Government ownership they would be able to dictate terms and to exact concessions far more easily than under corporate control. It is gratifying beyond expression to have ground for believing that it was that feature of the strike threat that most aroused the

nation-wide reprobation and opposition of the people; for, let there be no mistake, that is the one supreme issue in the transportation problems of this country, which must at some time be fought out to a finish.

Immeasurably gratifying, too, was the course pursued by the President in calling for what is colloquially known as a "show-down" on the question of the validity of the Railroad Labor Board and its orders. He purposed, as the first step toward settlement of the controversy, to find out whether that Board really amounted to anything as an agency of Government. If it did not, if it was futile, there was no occasion for its continued existence; the dust-bin yawned for it. But if it was not futile, its orders should be obeyed, or should be enforced, just as are those of any other department or bureau. Of course, the President's demand for a "show-down" was a two-edged sword. It applied to the railroad corporations as well as to the labor unions; insisting that the authority of the Labor Board should be recognized by the one as well as by the other. We have said that the strike order was a direct flouting of that authority. But it is not to be denied that some time before there had been defiance of the Board by some of the railroad corporations. That was reprehensible, and would largely have vitiated the case of the companies in the strike controversy had they been one of the principal parties thereto. But they were not. Nominally against them, the strike was in fact threatened against the Government and the people who constitute the Government.

The collapse of the strike, in such circumstances, was inevitable. The Brotherhood leaders realized that they could not hope to win a fight against the American nation and its Government, and so they called it off. In one sense the result was what President Wilson called "peace without victory"; so far, that is, as the two nominal antagonists were concerned. The Brotherhood had to give up the strike, let the July wage reduction stand approved, and postpone the drive for Government ownership. On the other hand, the railroad executives had to postpone their plans for another reduction of wages, and to face the prospect of

a substantial reduction of freight rates. But it was peace—or at least an armistice—with a genuine and important victory for the third and chief party in interest, the Public. It meant that there would be no disturbance of travel and transportation, no demoralization of the business which is hopefully struggling toward restored prosperity, and, above all, no flouting of public welfare and Governmental authority by either capital or labor. The President's potential intervention was effective. The Labor Board was proved to be valid and efficient. The Railroad law was vindicated as a part of the real law of the land. In such results there is cause for profound satisfaction; and for confidence that the maintenance of such a spirit will assure right settlements of all future renewals of the controversy.

The Senate, acting against the counsel of its leaders, perpetrated an unworthy bit of *brutum fulmen* in the passage of the bill for repealing Panama Canal tolls on American coasting vessels; its purpose in so doing being something into which it would not, for sheer shame, be pleasant to inquire. It quite ignored all three of the essential considerations which should prevail in dealing with the tolls question. The first is, whether for economic reasons it is desirable to seek remission of the tolls. The Canal, as the advocates of remission volubly and vociferously remind us, was built with American money. Yes; and it is not yet paid for, and it is not yet getting anywhere near to paying for itself. We have seen no reason for exempting any of the shipping which uses it and profits from it from the necessity of contributing its just share toward paying for the Canal. We have seen no reason why all the rest of the nation should be taxed to pay for the Canal, while those who use the Canal most are freed from tolls. The Suez Canal has long been so profitable that it has been necessary to reduce tolls from time to time in order that the dividends may not exceed the maximum permitted by law. When the Panama Canal reaches that happy state, it will be time to consider reduction or abolition of tolls. The second consideration is the method of securing exemption for our shipping, provided it be economically desirable. Concerning that there can be no doubt. It must be done by diplomatic negotiation, not by act of Congress. It is indisputable

that the understanding of both countries in making the Hay-Pauncefote treaty was, that American shipping was to pay the same tolls as that of any other country. Exemption of our vessels would therefore involve amendment of the treaty, and that can be done only by the same powers and processes that originally made the treaty. This is practically conceded by the chief advocate of the bill which was passed by the Senate. Senator Borah is reported as saying that he supposed there would have to be diplomatic negotiations over the matter, if and after his bill was enacted. Surely, then, in urging passage of his bill he was putting the cart before the horse. It is stultifying to enact legislation and then to seek approval of it by diplomacy.

The third consideration is that of time. Had the initiative been left, as it should have been, to the treaty-making department of the Government, we could confidently have trusted to its discretion to select an appropriate time for the negotiations. We may be sure that it would not have selected the time of all times when there was danger of embarrassing if not of balking other diplomatic negotiations of incomparably greater importance. It may be desirable to relieve a favored class of American commerce from the burden of paying its way. It is certainly immeasurably more desirable to relieve the entire nation and the entire world from the burdens of needless armaments. Years ago President Wilson asked for repeal of a former exemption act in order that he might not be embarrassed or handicapped in some unspecified diplomatic transactions which were vaguely referred to as possible in the future; and on that ground Congress made a favorable response. In the present case the act of the Senate was to be deprecated because of the danger that it might embarrass immediately impending transactions of the most specific character and of transcendent importance. We have hope that such embarrassment will not be realized. But if it is not, that will be simply because the action of the Senate will be regarded as mere "buncombe" not to be seriously taken and certain not to be confirmed by the House of Representatives. But is that a dignified or worthy light in which to regard the Senate of the United States?

The ratification of the treaty of peace with Germany was effected in gratifying fashion. All the Republican votes were cast for it save two; the votes of those two Senators who, however considerable their ability, are above all others habitually inclined to eccentricity of course and to disagreement with their colleagues. It is related of Anthony Trollope that at a dinner or in a drawing-room, hearing imperfectly some statement made by someone at the other end of the room, he would roar with full diapason, "I totally disagree with you, sir! *What was it you said?*" On the Democratic side a few more votes were recorded against than for ratification; but it will not be invidious to observe that the minority—a numerous minority—favoring ratification included most of those who are esteemed as the intellectual and moral leaders. Ratification was therefore performed in an exceptionally impressive manner, auspicious of a fine degree of patriotic coöperation in the further settlements and readjustments consequent upon the ending of the war.

The universally regretted death of Senator Knox suggests another rebuke to those *laudatores temporis acti* who are constantly harping upon the decline and degeneracy of the United States Senate. It is easy to count upon the fingers of one hand the Senators who, even in the "golden age" of that body, outranked him in the genius of legislative statesmanship. It is impossible to name any who surpassed him in patriotic integrity and devotion. His services to the nation, both in the Cabinet and in the Senate, were so great that at this nearness to them few observers can have the sense of perspective and proportion to estimate them aright. They were crowned, of course, by his efficient leadership of the opposition to the Covenant of the League of Nations, in which he distinguished himself with constructive as well as destructive proposals. Not more than once or twice in all our history has it been the happy fortune of any Senator to participate in a greater service to the nation than that; and the pain of his loss is in a measure mitigated by the fact that he lived to see his course approved by the people and vindicated by the logic of events with a fulness and emphasis unsurpassed in history, and to see the crowning detail of the work, and the one to which he especially ad-

dressed himself—the making of peace with Germany—substantially assured. It would have been grateful to have him spared, to vote for ratification of that treaty. It was a splendid tribute to his statesmanship that, though he died before the vote was taken, the influence of his words and work remained potent to assure the right result.

From the point of view of sentiment, and of piety, the greatest possible interest invests the paying of international honors to “unknown” soldiers of the World War. Such tributes, at the Arc de Triomphe, at Westminster and at Arlington, are a due memorial service to the heroic dead and also, we must believe, are vital and valid bonds of irenic affection among the nations which participate in them. But they have a still more profound and profitable significance, in the reminder that “common mortals”, so obscure that their very names are unknown, are the participants in and victims of war, no less than the great commanders whose names are inscribed in the Pantheon and in the Hall of Fame. There is truth in Cowper’s lines, that—

War’s a game, which, were their subjects wise,  
Kings would not play at.

But now kings have become subjects and subjects kings. The recognized danger of war now lies not in the will of kings, but in the militarist emotions and passions of the people. The recognition of the “unknown soldier” is a valuable admonition to belligerently-inclined peoples, that the issues of peace and war are now with them, and that by them must the costs of war be paid if they elect to play that game.

*“We falter on, now hoping, now despairing,  
And hour by hour drag out life’s little span;  
They passed in one tremendous deed of daring—  
They lived for Honor, and they died for Man!”*



## NEW BOOKS REVIEWED

THE BOOK OF JACK LONDON. By Charmian London. New York: The Century Company.

Although any attempt to label and pigeonhole human beings according to an arbitrary system is doomed to comparative failure, a classification based upon temperaments and instinctive dispositions seems quite as likely to be fruitful as the well-known anthropological divisions into *dolichocephalous* and *brachycephalous*, or *makroskele* and *brachyskele*. Of these, indeed, no one appears to have succeeded in making much, while William James's distinction between the tough-minded and the tender-minded continues to prove fertile and will not down. Without crossing James's tracks, one may make some use of the popular distinction between the "primitive" and the "civilized" type; and this in the present case, seems a proper thing to try, because, from one point of view, an attempt to clarify this distinction appears to offer the only fair and promising approach to Jack London.

Of course, before defending such a classification, one has to make the usual apology. The division is merely theoretic. Neither the purely primitive, nor the purely civilized human being exists: we are all mixtures of the two, or intermediate types. But in this regard one is, after all, in the same boat with the anthropologists, who cannot discover any "pure" races; and the value of a distinction does not depend upon its being hard and fast.

By way of further hedging, one must define the two types in such a way as to exclude the idea of a steady evolution from primitiveness to civilization. A survey of human development suggests the idea that the two types have existed side by side from the earliest times. The civilized type appears sporadically among primitive peoples, and the primitive type comes into existence occasionally among highly civilized peoples. Thus certain American Indians become good doctors and lawyers, and show no essential difference from their white brothers—in fact, there is no difference—while certain inheritors of the culture of the ages suddenly abandon the orderly ways of civilization and go to live, for a period, among the Eskimos.

Finally one has to insist, with all possible energy, that the distinction is not intended to be invidious. Which type is best, who can say? Certainly mankind can be too "civilized", as our wonderful success in destroying life and our sacrifice of certain higher values for the sake of material progress seem to show; while on the other hand the primitive man has never been especially brutal, being, at worst, more nearly a brute than a brutal human being. The earliest men, one gathers, were, apart from certain tribal customs, kindly and gentle,

and the archæologists tell us that the skeleton of a modern criminal may be much more gorilla-like than that of a prehistoric mammoth-hunter. The too-civilized man really shocks most of us quite as much as does the too-primitive. If our ideal is not the prize fighter, neither is it, as Veblen points out, "the finikin skeptic in the laboratory or the animated slide rule."

On the whole, it is the primitive man who has produced romance, poetry, religion; while the civilized man has created law, business, and science. With few exceptions, the greatest literary figures have had a broad streak of the primitive in their natures.

But, though all are descended from both strains, the broad distinction holds, and it is in nothing more clearly marked than in this: that the predominantly primitive man does not really understand his (mainly) civilized brother. Your primitive outdoor man believes that the civilized recluse nourishes within his heart a secret joy in bare-handed struggles and bloodshed, and regards pretenses to the contrary as mere hypocrisy. He sincerely believes that there is always a woman in the case and is skeptical about voluntary celibacy. He drags his bored civilized friend off fishing with him and cheerfully ignores the latter's fathomless *ennui*. And the civilized is just as blind and much more offensive in his estimates. He denies to the primitive, intellect, imagination, and sensitiveness of feeling.

The misunderstanding and the hostility are chronic. Thus, Jack London despite his hyper-sensitiveness and his eager intellect was often, by innuendo, represented as a man of low proclivities. He was not. On the other hand, London himself declared: "A physical coward is the most utter of abominations"—to which dictum every civilized person responds from the depth of his heart with an assured "No!" More in the same strain: "Say what you will, I love that magnificent scoundrel, Rupert of Hentzau. And a man who can take a blow or an insult unmoved, without retaliating—Paugh!—I care not if he can voice the sublimest sentiments, I sicken." Mere fustian from the viewpoint, let us say, of William Dean Howells; while, on the other hand, a reviewer of primitive mind seems to have thought that he had said almost the last word about Howells as a novelist when he remarked that at a critical point in one of the great man's stories, "the villain throws the hero's hat out of the window."

Some of the greatest imaginative writers have stood as interpreters between the primitive and the civilized in us; and because they have had to feel and to be both types at once, they have been afflicted with unrest. In Shakespeare this is perhaps observable both ways: that dissatisfaction with the too-too primitive men about him which made Hamlet lean on the over-civilized Horatio, and again a yearning toward Arcadia. In general the nostalgia is for a primitive state of society and for the things that are of the earth earthy. The civilized man, on the contrary, dreams, like Mr. H. G. Wells, of the future, and sickens for a scientific Utopia.

Jack London was one of these interpreters, and herein lies his significance.



To say that he was primitive, with the full grasp and keen critical analysis of civilized conventions, which the high-brained primitive, even the savage, always manifests, is no dispraise. And he had in him, too, a civilized heredity of no mean strain. He was both types at once, and he is not to be understood by such as are primitive after the manner of Sir Andrew Aguecheek, who sometimes delighted in masques and revels and bear-baitings "almost altogether"—a mock primitiveness, this!—nor by those in whom, according to James's formula for grown-up, civilized people, instinct is almost wholly supplanted by habit.

All his leading traits as they appear in his biography confirm this general diagnosis. It is primitive to be sensitive, but not nervous. It is primitive to dislike hysterics in a woman and to rather enjoy anger in a man. It is primitive to be impressible—to take in impressions wholesale and then to react to them instead of sifting them at the start. London was not a cave man; he was a sensitive chap; but hear his disclaimer: "I am a funny sort of fellow, I guess," he once said to his wife. "Because I have sung the pæan of the strong, and despite the whole heart I have thrown into showing the weak how to become strong, as I saw it, the world has given me the personal reputation of a cave man. How much of a cave man have you, or has anyone found me? . . . even in my 'violent' youth a woman was always to me something to handle tenderly." London absorbed bookseagerly, and he assimilated exactly what he liked. Ouida's *Signa* and Spencer's theory of style affected him most! But everything from dime novels to Nietzsche went in and had some effect; his mind was not screened by conventions, but accepted all, coarse and fine.

London was super-acute in his sensitiveness to pain. If unjustly used, he hotly cherished his revenge. He had the courage and the absence of nerves of a savage, yet he reacted strongly to supernatural dread. He was a born chief and understood the secret of chiefship. He preferred a sail boat to an automobile. He was a socialist—a direct actionist—yet he went in for physical rather than political adventure. He was not a pessimist. What primitive can be? "I am not a pessimist at all", he said to a reporter. "Why, I exploited to you that love is the biggest thing in the world, and held out my arms to you and to all the world in love while I was talking to you. No man who is a lover can be a pessimist. When you have grown a few years older, you will realize that a man who disagrees with your political, economic and sociological beliefs, does not necessarily have to be a pessimist—especially if he be a self-proclaimed lover." (Will the reader please try to imagine Thomas Hardy as saying this!) In short, he did what none of the civilized can accomplish: he managed to be a meliorist and a materialist at the same time.

He was not always wholly moral, but his sins were the sins of nature and weighed not heavily upon his conscience. The primitive conscience does not, indeed, accept natural sins as sins at all. But the unnatural is abhorrent to it. When the civilized type sins, it does so with an ill conscience and justifies itself by sophisticated reasonings. Compare DeQuincey's experiences as an opium

eater and London's bouts with John Barleycorn. The "intellectual being" does not seem the more agreeable.

Finally Jack London's deepest trait was sincerity. Sincerity is the prime virtue of the primitive. Reserve is the affectation of the barbarian. Irony is the vice of the civilized.

And so one may conclude that London was one of those gifted persons with a deep vein of the primitive in them and a sufficiently sturdy civilized heredity to enable them to cope successfully with the conditions that the civilized have mainly created. Was he one of the great interpreters of human nature? For this is the real test. The answer, one thinks, must be that on the whole the primitive was too strong in him, not balanced with sufficient delicacy against the civilized element. Despite his eager mentality, his intense philosophizing, he did not attain a literary poise. Refinement of taste, a certain aloofness of soul—things which Shakespeare (to make an unfair comparison) miraculously understood as well as he understood primal motives—he never perfectly comprehended. To the end he seems to have had a somewhat childlike faith in instinct along with a somewhat childlike faith in logic—"Convince me," he would say. "Just show me where I am wrong." The red-blooded theme was somewhat overstressed; the materialism and the socialism—phases of intellectual virility, no doubt—seemed shallow. His synthesis was not complete—he was not quite one of the great interpreters, though he had the twin nature and the divine unrest. God rest him!

As for the book as biography, it is such a thing as no man could write, being both utterly frank and not at all critical. The truth is all there, and there is no concealment, no bias, but the narrative manages to be all eulogy. It is a great book for warm admirers of London, and a great love story. We have had in recent years several remarkably frank biographies, but the frankness of biography can never have quite the same value as the frankness of autobiography.

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JULIEN T. DAVIES: MEMORIAL OF A LEADER OF THE BAR. By Joseph S. Auerbach. New York: Harper and Brothers.

The experienced in such matters know that the hardest man to write about is the admirable man. The biographical sketch of a mighty and gifted scoundrel is a golden opportunity for the literary man and a feast for his readers. Strong contrasts are the particolored raiment of readable biography and small eccentricities are its gems. The just man seldom gets his due. No one wrote a biography of Aristides, while the sins of Alcibiades are written in gold all over the history of Athens. The life of Benvenuto Cellini will always be read for its entertainment and for its vivid revelations, and that of John Wilkes furnishes a biographer with many an effective opportunity for laudation.

And so Mr. Auerbach has undertaken an unusually difficult task, for the subject of his sketch is an all-round admirable man, a great and good man, not

showily conspicuous, a man too like what most of us desire to be to permit of much praise without either affected eloquence or dull commonplace.

Mr. Auerbach, however, has discharged his difficult task not only with spirit, but with singular success. He says simple things well. He limns with distinguished clearness plain ideals of intellect and honor; he makes us feel that the good man, the pillar of society, the salt of the earth is simple in principle but complex in mind, and that his problems are none of the simplest. Successful goodness, honorable success, are organized achievements, not the easy outflowing of untempted minds or happy dispositions; and every such accomplishment ought to stand out like a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

Of Mr. Davies he says: "To be in doubt as to the propriety of a course of conduct was to be resolved against it; and his whole life was a rebuke to the shallow cynicism that the law is what is boldly asserted and plausibly maintained." It is an unobtrusively big saying, for the dry-rot in our lives is not so much rascality as cynicism and professional narrowness. And in a day in which lawyers are perhaps the least popular of expert and hard-working men, Mr. Auerbach, without at all writing *pro domo*, has truly represented the ideal of the good lawyer as approaching more nearly that of the "happy warrior" than is commonly deemed possible.

The little memorial of Julien Davies will be preserved as a just and fitting estimate, and, like few such tributes, will sometimes be read for its literary—that is, its essential—merit.

**TURKEY: A WORLD PROBLEM OF TO-DAY.** By Talcott Williams. Garden City: Doubleday, Page & Company.

Mr. Williams knows Turkey, and he has faith in the United States. Consequently he wants the United States to accept a "receivership" for Turkey. The term seems ill-chosen. Most of us would rather accept a mandate than a receivership any day. But then Mr. Williams is not the king of phrase-makers: he is just an exceptionally interesting and well-informed writer. He urges his point persuasively, vibrates the strings of our better natures—and leaves us unconvinced.

Geographically and economically, the situation of Turkey is such that no one Power may venture to take it all. "The attempt would bring a European coalition." But, on the other hand, "no division can be anything but temporary. . . . A network of agreements as to railroad rates, concessions, and loans to native governments is needed to provide for, but cannot prevent, future friction between France and England over Mesopotamia and Syria." There are many other and similar aspects, of course. On the whole, it is a very pretty problem, and what Power can solve it if not America?

History shows that under ordinary circumstances civilization is of slow development. While England went through centuries of political experience, the German Empire was a forced growth. We cannot expect the Turkish region to

develop into a modern commonwealth under present conditions. Yet recent history shows that isolation under favorable circumstances can work wonders; witness the marvelous development of Japan. "How swift the growth may be if there be isolation, security, and teaching from without, Japan shows. Given these, and a nation may be born in a day. The United States, a nation, detached, could give Turkey isolation."

The Turk is a man and as an individual is rather a fine type of manhood; his sins are sins of the government, conceived not at all after the fashion of Western governments (not the Government of Turkey, but the government *in* Turkey) and sins of collective action. If a certain cosmopolitanism, a tendency to praise all races rather aggressively, be something of a pose with the widely read and widely travelled man of journalistic training, if provincialism comes to seem to him at last the unforgivable sin, there is little sign of bias from this cause in what Mr. Williams writes, and his intimate knowledge of the Turkish people gives weight and interest to all his words.

Of course, religion and religious institutions like polygamy complicate the problem. The Koran has been harmful to Turkey; the harem is harmful. But religious differences and prejudices are not very different from sources of intolerance that we understand better as being closer to us. The Turk is not a peculiar fanatic. "The Moslems feel about living under the rule of Christians exactly as southern whites do about living under the rule of negroes." From all this is fetched the argument that the United States as the only truly non-sectarian Power is alone fitted to undertake the rule of Turkey.

One of the most interesting and novel portions of Mr. Williams's treatise is that which describes the origin and history of the pasha system—really an odd device that has had curious consequences. This, while highly instructive in itself, supplies a new reason for American participation. "The revolution in Turkey raised to the rank of pasha men of high character, scholars of eminence, patriotic and able administrators. These are the hope of the empire and of all its races. They once constituted a party in favor of accepting and loyally supporting the supervision of the United States under a mandatory. If this were undertaken, the new administration could come in without a shock. This is the specific administrative reason why, if America assumed control, there would be no such resistance as a ruling class, a trained bureaucracy, factions, or fanatical elements can give."

Finally, Turkey, in common with all Asia is bankrupt—a state in some degree curable by modern organization. The causes are understandable and in a measure remediable. They are not merely laziness or incompetence or, one infers, procreative recklessness. The factory system in Europe swamped Asiatic industry. Modern transportation, the increase in ship tonnage, destroyed the usefulness of the old trade routes. The industrial revolution has proved in the end a boon to the West, but the East has not even had an industrial revolution. The people of Asia are "where we would be if cottage industries and town trades, weaver, spinner, joiner, cordwainer, tailor, smith, and

tanner, had been put out of business, and miner, farmer, and small shop-keeper had gone with them."

Like almost every book by a journalist, even a great journalist, Mr. Williams's discourse is a somewhat perplexing mixture of exposition, authoritative assertion, explanation of personal opinion, history, and argument. The author is somewhat given to bold, forthright statements: Another great war is certain. India is bound for self-government. Lincoln would have approved our acceptance of a mandate for Turkey. He lays a good deal of stress upon the fact that no country save Turkey has given an important cabinet post to a woman—a fact of the sort justly prized by the journalistic mind, but susceptible of many interpretations. He scorns niggling, has the air of writing fast, and frequently embodies in the middle of a paragraph a statement that would serve its purpose much better as a note at the foot of the page. He has written, however, an exceedingly informing, provocative, variously interesting, and reliable book about Turkey. He not only gives the facts, but contributes his ripe opinions of their importance. His case is logically complete. Only he fails to convince us that we should accept the trusteeship; he has not found the arguments to persuade the doubters, and may even confirm them in their doubts.

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MY LIFE HERE AND THERE. By Princess Cantacuzène, Countess Speransky, *née* Grant. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Probably no more entertaining reminiscences have been written in recent years by a native American woman than these by the former Julia Dent Grant, granddaughter of one of the three most prominent men in our annals. And this is remarkable because to a coldly critical eye there is in the story little that is of great significance or stimulus. But the charm of the narrative is great; and this is probably due to the fact that in all the subjects the author treats, from the last days of General Grant to the last court function at St. Petersburg she is so thoroughly and simply American. Adaptable, dauntless, glowing with enjoyment and good feeling, making ardent friends of cynical old diplomatists, conciliating without effort the Dowager Empress of Russia, tactfully subduing the too-devoted Crown Prince of Germany, awakening no spark of jealousy, the American woman goes her way through the most exclusive European circles, liked by everybody, not too critical to enjoy it all, and quietly triumphant. Need one say that the Grant blood does not permit of the too obsequious manner or the too admiring gesture, and that verve in the high-bred American does not imply a tiresome vivacity?

Really, most of the book is about dressing and dancing and court functions, and about people not too deeply analyzed, but its pictures are familiar and vivid, and as the story of a happy, successful life, a continuous victory of the American temperament over strange conditions, a sort of splendid vindication of the type we admire, it is in its naturalness, spontaneity and unconscious charm, almost unrivaled.

A DEFENSE OF LIBERTY. By the Honorable Oliver Brett. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

"Democracy, like every other political device," writes the author of *A Defense of Liberty*—which is really a defense of Liberalism—"has two roads on which it may travel, backwards towards State control, or forwards toward individual liberty." Individual liberty, Mr. Brett apparently regards as a goal rather than a direction, if one may judge from the following passage: "Many people who are afraid of the damp never walk on the grass except when there is a notice forbidding them to do it. All decent men exceed the speed limit, and endeavor to elude the tax-collector. For the instinct of personal liberty is, fortunately for humanity, deeply ingrained in human nature." Such a pronouncement, when compared with the off-hand dictum that Julius Cæsar was almost certainly the greatest human being that ever lived, does not inspire confidence—even in a lifelong admirer of Cæsar!

The instinct of insubordination is, then, wholly good, and the instinct of submissiveness generally bad; and this is to be our touchstone. There is in this book hardly a trace of recognition of the idea that progress may be in the nature of a spiral in which humanity seems to move now forward and now backward, both conservative and liberal forces helping to determine the actual movement and its real direction. On the contrary, there must be no compromise between the two political forces. Though political history is simply the story of the long struggle for adjustment between liberty and government, the main thing is to be liberal.

Really, Mr. Brett's main idea is that Socialism is not progressive but reactionary. Curiously enough Mr. Hyndman uses the same argument—or, more specifically, the argument that Socialism is nothing new, but rather a return to primitive and formerly successful ways—as a justification of his creed. It would seem as if the controversial value of this half truth might by now be regarded as exhausted. Absolute State control is, of course, reactionary and pernicious, and one does not see to what else Socialism tends, but it is not true that everything not individualistic is reactionary; increased sympathy, increased coöperation for the good of all mankind—these things, however arrived at, are not reactionary but progressive. Similarly, in so far as Socialism involves sudden or rapid change, it is not conservative but radical.

In short, in talking about Conservatism, Liberalism, Radicalism, Socialism and the like, one is always in danger of merely playing with words. The terms—especially the vague pair, *Conservatism* and *Liberalism*—are scarcely subtle or definite enough to be useful in dealing with the facts. Thus, one finds in Mr. Brett's book chiefly platitudes, such as the statement that "Human development rather than national must be our political objective; laws and States exist merely for the purpose of increasing the private happiness of those who live under them and in them; they are not and cannot be ends in themselves"—and passages that imply sweeping conclusions, like one already quoted.



WILLOW POLLEN. By Jeannette Marks. Boston: The Four Seas Company.

A certain looseness of form in the new poetry certainly favors a freer release of sentiment and imagination, and gives, sometimes, a charming effect of naturalness and spontaneity. Whether this release makes on the whole for greater concentration and fineness of workmanship is another question.

However this may be, no one would be inclined to complain of looseness of form in the following lines—a favorable but not exceptional specimen of Miss Marks's poetry:

The rain upon my roof is the rain of apple blossoms,  
At my feet the water willows stand knee-deep in rushes;  
A swaying mirror for the sun the lake swings and tips,  
Spilling broken drowsy shadows and silver leaves.  
In the willow pollen the bees hum;  
In the apple bloom the bees hum;  
Fluttering up like a begging hand  
The ash tree twirls its mystic seven-fold leaf,  
The thrush its song.

The more one dwells upon this passage, the more one perceives that it is a true picture. Beneath the purely literary magic of the lines, they bear the marks of verity. But the poem goes on—

O beautiful world, what are you?  
And who made you?  
Are you no more than a fragrant dream,  
A jewelled crust of loam for sun to shine upon,  
A swaying mirror,  
Willow pollen,  
A twirling song,  
A crumbling leaf?

This is disappointing—an inexpensive kind of intellectual reverie, approaching banality.

It is a hard rule which requires that even lyric poetry should have, besides its personal touch, an element of the universal—and that this element should not be a mere abstraction or attenuation of thought or a mere enhancement of feeling, but a real insight—a distinctive way of thinking and feeling. But there appears to be no other way: poetry should make firm, indelible impressions, conveying thought in such a form that truth seems to suffer if a word be changed. Always a little too personal, Miss Marks's poetry never quite achieves this high distinction, tending to become merely rhapsodic at the point where real revelation ought to begin.