

woman engrossed in a volume. When I did, and, through an old habit of mine, refused to pass until I had got the title of the book, I was struck by the lightness of the story. People nowadays seem to prefer an evanescent fiction to solid biography and history. It may be a reaction of the war—surely, it can be explained in some way. Or it may be due to the inroads of the movies, which make little or no demands upon the intellect, and owe their tremendous and appalling popularity to that very fact. Give people something that amuses them, and does not make them think deeply, and you have won them, inevitably, to your cause. The success of the baby's rattle is based on a complete understanding of the infant mind; and the picture houses, with their perpetual grinding out of nothing at all, are packed by audiences who are seeking an escape from all but the most primitive emotions. They are not necessarily dull people; but mostly they are people without imagination. The movies rather glorify life for them, and the onlookers are released from opaque and drab surroundings through the magic of animated pictures that tell some sort of tale, no matter how trivial.

"We read and write nowadays a sort of shorthand. We are too busy, most of us, for the delicate and beautiful things of life. We are anxious to reach any intellectual destination, as any physical destination, at the highest possible speed; and we take short cuts whenever we can. The swiftness of modern life has swept us all on in a sort of blind frenzy, until leisure is now only a word and a moment's idleness an undreamed-of event. We forget those little side-trails off the main highway that are perhaps more crowded with glamour and delight; and we lose, through our vain wish for momentary money-making, the very essence and sweetness of the rushing days. We spend what leisure we accidentally have in a dark cavern looking at a picture which has little relation to life as it is, forgetting the books on our shelves which came out of the hearts and souls of men and women who studied humanity and crystallized it enduringly on paper.

"There is a curious delusion that the classics are dull. They contain, as a matter of fact, more movement and genuine thrills than the most lurid movie. But the thrills are an integral part of any legend of ancient Greece or Rome, or even of latter-day London and Paris; and there they lie in our libraries for all to get acquainted with who will. Is the coming generation to miss the rich opportunities which you and I enjoyed? Are the glorious stories of Ulysses and the Iliad and Penelope and Nero and Alexander the Great and a thousand

others to be lost in the clash and roar of these demon days? Are they to be superseded by the tale of 'Somebody's Terrible Vengeance' or 'Anybody's Amazing Murder'?

"I think things will readjust themselves. I am not one to deplore every new movement, every fresh enterprise, that comes along. Instead, I look for the good in each young development, and pray that that, and that alone, will last, and the evil accompanying it may perish to make way for other crusaders."

NOT WHAT BUT WHOM

Dear Dr. Abbott:

I am deeply impressed with the thought that out of the fullness of your experience and faith you could (and should) prepare a formula of belief for the *incurably religious*, for whom the Apostles' Creed has become meaningless, to say the least.

Something as concise as the Ten Commandments, or the Lord's Prayer, which could be the outspeaking of the human heart and bind men (*i. e.*, believers) in a brotherhood hitherto unattained.

A. A. T.

EDITORIAL reports in The Outlook have informed our readers that recent attempts have been made in two Protestant denominations to frame some brief formulas of faith, though these efforts were apparently inspired by a desire not to provide some new formula expressive of the results of modern thinking, but to restate in new formulas old opinions to check the propagation of new opinions. In this respect they differed widely from the proposal of my correspondent; in two respects they differed from each other. In the Presbyterian Assembly the proposal for a new creed was allowed to die in committee; in the Baptist National Convention the proposed creed, apparently a compromise between two wings, was carried by a large majority. The Presbyterian Assembly is a legislative body, and any creed adopted by that body would have had something of the moral force of law and might in time, by proper constitutional methods, become a law; if the Baptists still retain, as we presume they do, their historic spirit of independence, any creed which the National Convention adopts has no force, moral or ecclesiastical, on the Baptists. It is simply an expression of the opinion of those who voted for it.

There is, however, in all three proposals one common element: all express a common but, in my judgment, a mistaken opinion that uniformity of belief and teaching is desirable. I think that uniformity of belief and of teaching is very undesirable. What humanity needs, what is necessary to human progress and real intellectual spiritual life, is not uniformity, but liberty and

variety. The unity must be, to use the words of my correspondent, "the outspeaking of the human heart;" it must be a unity of emotion and purpose, not a unity of intellectual opinion; it must be found in the prayers and hymns of the Church, not in the sermons of the ministers nor in creeds ancient or modern.

If there had been uniformity of belief in pure science, we should still believe that the world is flat and that the sun revolves around it and we should still be studying stars in order to discover the destiny of man. When astronomy was born astrology died.

If there had been uniformity of belief in applied science, we should have no steamboats, no railways, no telegraphs, no telephones, no airplanes. Each of these inventions has had to make its way by the enthusiasm of its advocates in spite of hostile criticism and often of bitter opposition.

If there had been uniformity of belief and of teaching in medicine, we should not believe in the circulation of the blood; nor in the germ theory of disease; nor in the use of anæsthetics; and we should still be subject to annual visitations of cholera and yellow fever.

If there had been uniformity of belief in religion, there would never have been Wesleyanism; nor Puritanism; nor Protestantism; nor even Christianity. Nero believed in uniformity of teaching. Paul, Peter, James, and John believed in liberty and variety of teaching. Their motto was, "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." The only way to prove all things is to subject everything to free and fearless discussion.

Dogmatism and agnosticism are of kin. The one declares that we can know nothing about the invisible world beyond what the Church tells us; the other, that we can know nothing about the invisible world. In fact, the invisible world is an infinite and unknown continent. The more there are to explore it and bring back the results of their explorations, the more rapid will be the progress in the higher life of the human race. The unity of the Christian Church must be secured by loyalty to a Person, not by loyalty to what others have thought about that Person.

This is well said by John Oxenham in his volume of verse entitled "Bees in Amber," published by the American Tract Society:

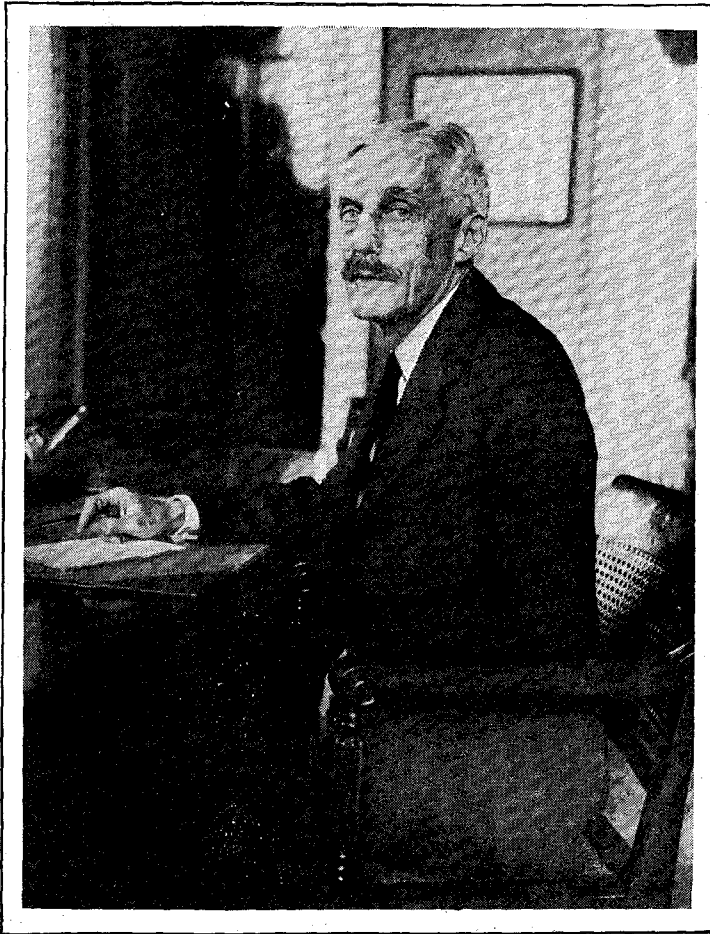
Not what, but Whom, I do believe,
That, in my darkest hour of need,
Hath comfort that no mortal creed
To mortal man may give;—
Not what, but Whom!
For Christ is more than all the
creeds,
And His full life of gentle deeds
Shall all the creeds outlive.

LYMAN ABBOTT.

MR. MELLON

A STUDY OF THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

BY RICHARD BARRY



(C) Keystone

ANDREW W. MELLON, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY

WHICH is the biggest job in the Cabinet, that of the Secretary of State or of the Treasury? Tradition and the Constitution accord it to the Secretary of State, but it would be easy to make out a good case for the Treasury.

Especially now. Without going too much into details, which would fill a large volume, here are a few of his duties: To find five billions a year with which to run the Government, to handle a public debt of twenty billions, to look after ten billions of foreign loans on which there is due half a billion interest with no pay in sight, to enforce the Prohibition Act, collect the income tax, administer the War Risk Insurance, oversee the Secret Service, and look after half the Federal buildings in the United States.

Quite a job. One would say, offhand, it required a business man. Yet Mr. Harding is the first President who has ever conceived and put into execution the novel idea of having a business man in it.

Finding a Secretary of the Treasury ought to be a simple matter. The President ought to have to ask only one question—Who is the most successful finan-

cier in America? Then he should be commandeered. But it has never been done that way. Even now, having a practical financier in the Treasury is only an accident—a sort of happy chance.

One might think that Mr. Harding said to himself: "Because I have promised to make mine a sound business Administration I'll ask the most successful financier in America to take the Treasury. Who is he? John D. Rockefeller of course, but Mr. Rockefeller is too old. Who next? Mr. Morgan or Mr. Baker. Well, Mr. Baker is also very old, and Mr. Morgan is too thoroughly identified with Wall Street both actually and in public consciousness to establish the proper confidence, for confidence is about half the battle, and capable administration the other half. Who, then? I'll ask the boys who is the next best financier. Ah, Mr. Andrew W. Mellon, of Pittsburgh. Never heard of him. But he is the third or fourth richest man in America, is self-made, is independent of Wall Street—and a wizard, a genius in finance. I'll appoint him."

But it didn't happen that way, or at least only partially that way. If Mr.

Knox had been made Secretary of State, as it was one time thought he would be, Mr. Mellon would not have been Secretary of the Treasury, for both come from Pennsylvania. The old Keystone State, being the richest jewel in the Republican diadem, always rates at least one member in a Republican Cabinet—but no more than one.

So Providence seems to have been looking after the United States when the President asked a man from New York, Mr. Hughes, to be Secretary of State, thus displacing the obvious Cabinet possibility from Pennsylvania, Mr. Knox, and making the inevitable place for a simon-pure business man, a practically successful financier of the first grade, Mr. Mellon.

Do I anticipate events and the verdict of time in asserting that Mr. Mellon is the proper Secretary of the Treasury? Not entirely. The point is that he is the *kind* of man for the job, and nearly everybody in Washington knows it.

A little incident of a recent Cabinet meeting will explain just why he is the right kind of man. The President brought up one of the many new problems that had been thrust at him for solution. It concerned the possible scrapping or further operation of one of the Government's war plants. The President asked one after another of the men about the table their opinion in the matter. The opinions were this and that, but *all* were theoretical. No one had positive data to go on until the question was passed to the shyest, quietest, most retiring of the group of twelve.

"And what is your opinion, Mr. Mellon?" asked the President.

"I haven't looked into it thoroughly yet," replied the new Secretary of the Treasury, with his accustomed modesty, "but I had a similar case recently in one of my own plants to deal with. The amount involved was the same—\$12,000,000. I scrapped mine."

That was all. Except that for an instant a sort of shocked silence descended over the Board.

Certainly this is the kind of man we have not had in that job, but which we do need now. It should be said here that Mr. McAdoo was the kind of man we needed in war time as Secretary of the Treasury—a *beau sabreur* of finance, a dashing leader of unconquerable audacity, who, when Congress said it needed one billion, replied, "I'll get you five billion."

The opposite type is required for the present era of reconstruction, and Mr. Mellon looks like the proper person. I asked him not long ago if he had read Alexander Hamilton's notes on the founding of the Bank of the United States, or if he knew the history of the Treasury Department. He replied no to both questions. I then asked him what