

hibition, but also the greater evils that exist under the license system.

Prohibition has been far from the success which its most ardent advocates ex-

pected. The dries have a right to point out, however, that no one ever expected anything good of the old licensed system, and no one was ever disappointed.

## A Friendly Critic

By LAWRENCE F. ABBOTT

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WHEN Robert Burns wrote, "O wad some power the giftie gie us to see oursels as ithers see us!" he doubtless had in mind the innate reluctance of nations as well as individuals to receive humbly criticisms of their personal qualities or manners. Tell a man that he is a sly dog with women or has a sharp eye in money matters, and he grins. But he scowls if he is told that his table manners are bad or his pronunciation is vulgar. When Britannia ruled the seas by methods that are now questionable under international law, it did not trouble her much to be accused of bullying. But when the French called the English a nation of shopkeepers that was very annoying. The French were not at all disturbed when the English called Napoleon a kind of demon and frightened their children into good behavior by holding him up as an ogre who would certainly get them if they were naughty; this was a tribute to French military genius. But when some Englishmen said that the French were a nation of dancing-masters Paris sizzled with fury. Caricature has created more international animosities than bombardments. It is easier to forgive a man for striking you in passion than it is for calling you an ass in ridicule.

Caricature was the method of criticism and correction pursued by Charles Dickens in his "American Notes" and in "Martin Chuzzlewit," which record his impressions of America and Americans received during his visit to this country in 1842. It is a maddening but effective method, and I have no doubt that a fear of Jefferson Brick had a salutary effect upon some of the cheap-John newspaper editors of the last century who could not be touched by a fear of God. The modern tabloids know as little of Jefferson Brick as they do of godliness, and so wend their vulgar way undisturbed by any fear of either. It is a case on their part of the bliss of ignorance. H. L. Mencken and Sinclair Lewis are more useful, or at least more influential critics

of the follies of American democracy than Upton Sinclair because they flourish the rapier of ridicule, while he pounds away with the blunderbuss of denunciation.

It is true that both ridicule and denunciation lose their force when carried on month by month and year by year. The hopeless Cassandras and the sarcastic Voltaires sometimes become equally tiresome. Nor do we need to go back to classical times or the days of the French Encyclopædists for examples of the kind of criticism that often results in *ennui* instead of reform. It is possible to find Bernard Shaw, on the one hand, or the "gloomy Dean," on the other, occasionally a little fatiguing.

There is, however, a kind of international criticism that is both engaging and stimulating. The "Lettres Philosophiques" of Voltaire, the Epistles and Colloquies of Erasmus, the Letters of James Howell, "English Traits" by Emerson, "French Traits" by W. C. Brownell, "Round my House" and "French and English" by Philip Gilbert Hamerton—all these furnish examples of what I mean, although Hamerton's books might be barred on the ground that he married a French wife and was a resident of France when he wrote them, and hence was a eulogist rather than a critic.

To the foregoing list there can now be added another volume.<sup>1</sup> Mr. St. Loe Strachey, for many years editor of the London "Spectator" and a cousin of Lytton Strachey, the author of that entertaining but somewhat biting book "Eminent Victorians," has just published his impressions of the people, customs, and manners of the United States. St. Loe Strachey visited this country last year, and finds that "the American half of the race" is successfully maintaining the traditions of popular government and intellectual freedom which have characterized the English-speaking people since the days of Magna Charta.

<sup>1</sup> American Soundings. By J. St. Loe Strachey. D. Appleton & Co., New York.

Mr. Strachey, I am glad to say—for I share his feeling—profoundly believes in the solidarity of interests among the English-speaking peoples. Their political, social, legal, and economic roots are the same. Moreover, the English and Americans have one characteristic in common which distinguishes them from the nations of Latin origin and culture. The Latin races are logical and syllogistic. They follow a major premise to its bitter end, even to the guillotine. Mr. Strachey quotes with approval the following analysis made by one of his American friends:

The peoples of the Continent act as they think and as they speak. When, that is, you understand how their minds are working, read their books and listen to their utterances, public and private, you can feel pretty sure what they will do. In the case of Englishmen, the exact opposite happens. Englishmen talk and think one way, but as often as not act in quite a different way. That this is a racial idiosyncrasy and does not involve any deceit is unquestionable. All the same, it is this peculiarity which makes foreigners regard England and the English as "perfidious," deceitful, deep, calculating people who can never be trusted to do what you would gather from their thoughts and words that they mean to do.

This is true of the English, says Mr. Strachey, but he thinks it equally true of the Americans. He cites our attitude toward the World War. We said that we were too proud to fight, that we did not raise our sons to be soldiers, that we did not want to get tangled up in Europe, that we were perfectly neutral in thought and deed—and then we amazed all Europe by going in and striking a harder blow than anybody. The simple explanation is that the English-speaking race is not bound by logic. It is intensely practical, and therefore often apparently inconsistent. Emerson expressed this characteristic when he said that "consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds."

The very sympathy which Mr. Strachey confesses for American history and institutions might be said by some to limit his critical capacity. It is clear that he likes America and his book is rather an attempt to interpret it to his British friends than an essay of admonition and instruction to his American cousins. His appreciation of America, as he points out, is hereditary, for a direct ancestor, William Strachey, was the first

Secretary to the Colony of Virginia under the London Company in 1608 and was an enthusiastic promoter of the Colony's interests. Thus the Strachays were associated with America nearly half a century before Charles I was beheaded. No wonder that St. Loe Strachey says he feels no more "sense of

humiliation or defeat" at Lexington or Bunker Hill or Saratoga than he does at Naseby or Worcester or any other of the Cromwellian battlefields. They were all equally the scenes of righteous victory in civil wars marking the progress of Anglo-Saxon civilization. No book that I have read for a long time has quite so

strikingly brought home to my mind the fact that the people of Great Britain and the people of the United States have in common a long and noble history and many splendid traditions. It is a pity that either Anglomania or Anglophobia should ever be permitted to weaken this very real bond.

# Who's Who at the League Council

By ELBERT FRANCIS BALDWIN

The Outlook's Editor in Europe

"INTO how many classes would you divide the delegates here?" I recently asked a well-known English representative—fifty-six nations now send representatives to the League of Nations at Geneva.

He replied: "Into two. There's Benes and there are the rest of us."

Edouard Benes presided over the forty-first session of the League Council, its upper house. The lower house, the Assembly, generally sits through the whole month of September, and the Council is also always in session throughout the Assembly period. Owing to an election on September 8 in the Assembly for new members of the Council, the forty-first session of the latter body had to be at once followed by the forty-second.

The Presidency of the Council is held in rotation by the member states, according to the French alphabetical order. As Czechoslovakia in French is "Tchecoslovaquie" and as Germany is "Allemagne," the rotation had reached the bottom of its list with Tchecoslovaquie. It would logically begin again, therefore, with the presidency of a new member state, Germany, "Allemagne," and in the person of the German Chancellor, also her First Delegate, Gustav Stresemann, as President. With a creditably prompt tact Dr. Stresemann immediately declared that as, in view of the inexperience of the new Council members, it would be wise, he thought, to have as President a man of experience in the necessary procedure, he proposed that Dr. Benes should continue to exercise presidential functions, as in the forty-first session. This met with universal approval, and the Czech seemed not the least satisfied among the delegates.

OF all the fourteen men at the Council's forty-second session, however, as against the nine at the forty-first, the Polish Minister, Auguste Zaleski, typifies this year's greatest triumph.

As I look at the other newcomers, I feel the passing of an older régime to its successor. For instance, Lord Balfour and Gabriel Hanotaux were formerly the British and French representatives, respectively. Now as First Delegates there are Sir Austen Chamberlain, British Foreign Secretary, austere, monocle in eye, orchid in buttonhole, immaculate in dress; and the French Foreign Minister, Aristide Briand, unkempt in appearance, nonchalant in manner, and with a suggestion of something not traditionally French. These are familiar figures because of their prominence at very recent Council meetings. Again, instead of Salandra from Italy, you see Scialoja's thoughtful, somewhat cynical countenance; he is a Senator and ex-Foreign Minister. Of the delegates from the Great Powers, the permanent member states in the Council, Viscount Ishii continues to represent his country as of old, and with precisely the same impassive manner.

THE permanent member states in the new Council are Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan, and Germany. The non-permanents are Belgium, China, Chile, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Holland, Poland, Rumania, and Salvador.

Of the latter, only Belgium is left from the first list of 1920, and, instead of Paul Hymans, for years her untiring representative, we now see, because of a governmental change at home, the Socialist Louis de Brouckère, with his Jovian build and beard. Think of a Socialist with a "de" before his name!

It seems strange to those of us familiar with the former First Delegates of the various countries now to see new people alongside them in the seats of the mighty. Yet there they are. Perhaps the most capable of them is Jonkheer Loudon, of Holland, a statesman well known in the United States, where many will recall him as Dutch Minister at Washington, and remember with pleas-

ure the musicales given at his house. He is a musician himself. Holland succeeds to Sweden's place on the Council. It is a logical succession. Sweden's policy, begun last winter, looking towards conservatism, will, of course, be continued and even accentuated, for in 1922 Holland protested longest against the Council's increase of non-permanent membership, voted at that time. If he had his way, so Dr. Loudon told us the other day, he would now have the Council return to its original membership, even though by it Holland could never get a place thereon.

While the Rumanian Foreign Minister, Mitileneu, has been First Honorary Delegate, Nicolas Titulescu, Rumanian Minister at London and professor at the University of Bucharest, will hereafter represent his country on the Council. In either case Rumania is worthily represented. Much is expected of her in these days when her strategic position in eastern Europe is increasingly signaled, now by a treaty with Poland to the north and now by a treaty with Italy to the south. It is not forgotten that the Bessarabian difficulty still remains, to hit her hard at Bolshevik pleasure.

AMONG the Latin-American representatives, Señor de Villegas, of Chile, suddenly leaps to first place. He may develop the same kind of aggressive efficiency shown four years ago by his countryman, Agostin Edwards, who became President of the Assembly. Close on the Chilean's heels is Dr. Francisco Urrutia; he has been here from the first, and his scholarly addresses command respectful attention. More notable still is the ascendancy obtained by Gustavo Guerrero, the delegate from Salvador. Such is the esteem for him that last year he was made Vice-President of the important Traffic-in-Arms Conference. His judgments are balanced, yet courageous, and his appearance at the Council table