

The Crowd in Peace and War. By SIR MARTIN CONWAY.
New York, Longmans, Green and Company, 1915.—332 pp.

The war has stunned everyone somewhat from his power to think, and has set him to feeling after the reason, the meaning of it all. Many there are who, congenitally unfit for dispassionate judgment, lacking the discipline of science in cautious generalization, and untrained in social psychology, rush into print with discussions designed to catch the popular ear, with philosophies which oftentimes cause the social scientist to "gasp and stare." An admirable case in point is the present volume by Sir Martin Conway, a student of art. As a contribution to knowledge the book is worthless; but as such it was probably not intended, and as such it would therefore be unfair to judge it. It is rather an attempt to deal in popular language with the relations of "crowds" to individuals and of "crowds" to one another.

Judged even in the light of the purpose for which it was planned, the work must face indictment on at least three counts. In the first place the author has failed to acknowledge his heavy debt to the French crowd psychologist, Le Bon. In the opening chapter where, "illustrating by concrete examples rather than by defining," Sir Martin endeavors "to show the kinds of human aggregations to which the word 'crowd' may be applied," he finds these two kinds of crowds: (a) "assemblages of human beings, all physically present together at one time and within one area, each individual conscious of the presence of the next," and (b) "groups of human beings not physically assembled together within sight and hearing of one another at any time and place, yet forming collective bodies which have a separate and conscious existence." In the second chapter, inquiring into "the nature of such crowds," he concludes that a crowd, the emotions being the basis of its formation, has no brain, never displays a trace of intelligence, and that "the opinion of a crowd has no relation to the reasoned opinion of the majority of its members, but is a mere infectious passion that sweeps through the whole body like an electric current." To any one familiar with the work of the Frenchman the striking resemblance between his teachings and those just quoted is apparent. Several passages of Conway are indeed little but loose translations of sentences published by Le Bon in 1896. Take a single illustration from page 8 of his book. "A multitude of people walking in the street, each about his own business, may form a dense mass of humanity, but they are not a crowd until something occurs to arrest their attention and inspire in them a common emotion." Le Bon in his *Psychologie des Foules* (page 12) says:

"Mille individus accidentellement réunis sur une place publique sans aucun but déterminé, ne constituent nullement une foule au point de vue psychologique. Pour en acquérir les caractères spéciaux, il faut l'influence de certains excitants." Conway does not refer to Le Bon.

The second charge is obvious. In claiming that the social mind—for such is the author's "crowd" mind—never acts rationally, and making this proposition the major premise of his later chapters given to discussions and analyses of group relations, he has taken over and made fundamental in his work Le Bon's error, and a large part of his structure must, when submitted to criticism, fall. So long ago as 1896 Professor Giddings in his *Principles of Sociology* had said in attacking Le Bon: "In the prolonged deliberations of a group of men that alternately meet and separate, or that communicate without meeting, the highest thought of the most rational mind among them may prevail." In the long list of modern social psychologists, including such men as Hobhouse, Cooley and Wallas, we find not one defending Le Bon's position in its extreme form. To champion this theory of social psychology without supporting it with convincing evidence or even careful argument seems inexcusable. That crowds—especially those gathered in physical contact—do too often act on mad impulse, do with discouraging frequency give no evidence of a brain, no one would deny. That they always act in such fashion only those given to hasty generalization would affirm.

In the third place, even where the argument is not built up on this antiquated error, the volume contains much that is erroneous. It is replete with confused thinking, and it brings little or none of the more recent thought and research to the reader. To Conway, instinct is still a vague, mystic power to shape men to its will. "The relation of man to man," we learn, is still a dark mystery which science has scarcely yet attempted to lighten. Has the author never seen *Physics and Politics*, has he not even turned the leaves of the volumes on sociology that have become multitudinous almost beyond number?

What place is there, then, for the present volume? Le Bon's *Psychologie des Foules* has long been translated. It is a far more systematic analysis of the crowd psychology to which Conway subscribes than is *The Crowd in Peace and War*, though it is perhaps a little less popularly written. Conway's book has little to recommend it even to the dilettante other than an easy conversational style and considerable wealth of recent and popular illustration—and, of course, an abundance of loose, incoherent thinking and hasty generalization.

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In Freedom's Birthplace: A Study of Boston Negroes. By JOHN DANIELS. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914.—xiii, 496 pp.

Back Bay, Boston Common, Faneuil Hall and Old North Church are rather unusual settings for observations on the Negro problem; but Mr. John Daniels has used them to good effect in his book, which is an addition to the small number of concrete studies of the Negro. Any rational program of race adjustment must be based upon this sort of detailed knowledge of actual conditions.

The Boston Negro population, as Mr. Daniels shows, is a highly selected group; the upper classes have lived in a superior environment for several generations, and the lower classes, made up of emigrants from the South or from the West Indies, have been selected from the southern groups by reason of energy and ambition for improvement. The increase in population has been due to constant immigration, the death rate having been notably greater than the birth rate up to the last decade.

Education, sanitation and the standard of living are treated only in an indirect manner without detailed analysis of the problems in these fields. Negro breadwinners are divided into three general groups. Almost three-fourths are in the group composed of menials and common laborers; about one-fourth are in the middle-class or higher-grade manual and clerical occupations; and less than one-fifteenth are in the group composed of professional men and proprietors. The increasing tendency for Negroes to enter into the second or "middle-class" occupations causes an increase in their self-confidence and in the respect shown them by white people. "Inherent industrial unfitness," and not color prejudice, is the chief reason assigned for the low economic status of the Negro. The labor unions of Boston have neither helped nor hindered him. The Negroes of Greater Boston have accumulated over \$3,000,000 worth of property, but Mr. Daniels estimates that not over ten or fifteen per cent of this total is held free of debt.

The first four chapters of the study trace historically the attitude of the white people toward the Negro from colonial times to the present. In early times the Negro was treated as an inferior. Abolition agitation, the appearance of Negro leaders, and the bravery of Boston Negro troops in the Civil War for a time allayed all race prejudice. With the mistakes of reconstruction, and the influx of ignorant Negroes after emancipation, the Negro lost public favor. Recent