

Points of View

A. H. A.

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

I think that some of your readers, at least, will be interested in the efforts now being made to develop the scientific and educational service of the American Historical Association. As a necessary means to this end, the Association is asking for an endowment of \$1,000,000; but the chief significance of the present movement lies in the growing appreciation, which it implies, of corporate effort in the field of historical scholarship.

It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of the contributions made by the Association during the past forty years to the equipment of historical workers. Probably no historical periodical, here or abroad, serves the interest of the craft more effectively than the *American Historical Review*. Through this Association, scholars like Osgood, Jameson, and Andrews have worked to enlarge our knowledge of the unedited materials available, in public archives and in private collections, for the reconstruction of our national history. Scarcely less important has been the work of correlating, and, through annual conferences, making more effective the activities of state and local historical societies. Without such foundations, the work of our best contemporary popularizers, not to speak of the academic historians, would have been quite impossible.

The kind of work which the Association has already done must of course be continued and improved. With rising costs for paper, printing, and clerical service, this in itself demands a much larger income than is now available. In some directions important work has been curtailed or postponed. The members of the Association, however,—and this applies especially to the younger men,—are increasingly conscious of new responsibilities. Without disparaging the admirable work which has been, and always will be, done by scholars working on individual lines, the corporate factor in scholarship will certainly be increasingly important. This will be true not only in providing the apparatus of scholarship, but also in the organization of research, through surveys of work already done, the indicating of gaps which need to be filled, and the enlistment of workers for such tasks. There is reason to think also that our historical scholars are going to feel more keenly the need of coöperation with their colleagues in other social sciences. How much might be done, for instance, by providing a proper historical approach to the study of such problems as, let us say, foreign policy, immigration, economic and political sectionalism, or the adjustment of our legal institutions to the changing social order?

If the American Historical Association is to bear its part in such coöperative service, it must receive financial support on a substantially larger scale than can be secured from its active membership—made up, as it is so largely, from the teaching profession. Those who know the record of the Association and have sufficient imagination to appreciate the possibilities of coöperative research on the lines indicated are sure that the cause is one which should appeal to all men of liberal spirit who are interested in the formation of an intelligent public opinion.

EVORTS B. GREENE.

The Artist's Aim

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

I differ so radically from the opinion expressed in your article, "The Publisher's Function," that I must of necessity state my objections, with all due apologies, humble deprecations, professions of good intent, etc.

For an artist to permit anyone to make suggestions about his work, least of all a publisher, is as good as committing suicide. He alone knows what the book should be like, for the idea is his own, the product of his own soul; and no matter how hard he may try, he will always fall far short of his aim. How then can anyone, the most sympathetic of mortals, be of help; and when the motives for the suggestions are monetary ones—to make the book more salable—how can he be anything but one of the obstacles for the artist to overcome? In hack writing it is no doubt different. The city editor of the daily can chop up the reporter's story to his heart's content without even a protest, provided the pay cheque be received promptly at the end of

the week, but a newspaper sells for two cents and is worth little more. When read, it is used for wrapping lunches or stuffing damp shoes, but the writing on it is forgotten.

Salability is not the first aim of creation, nor the second, nor the third, and as you know, he that seeks to save his life. . . .
JAMES GROSVENOR.

New York.

Kuprin's Translation

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

Allow me to correct a slight misstatement in your otherwise excellent review of Kuprin's "Sulamith," which has come to my attention today. Translations of "Sulamith" and "Gambrinus" did not appear the same year, as your review states: "Gambrinus" appeared last year, whereas the present edition of "Sulamith" is dated as of this year; furthermore it is not really a new edition, but merely the same (save for a new title page) as that which was first brought out by Nicholas L. Brown as far back as 1923. And, while the reviewers are almost unanimously praising Kuprin, and some even going to the reckless extent of commenting graciously on my translations (*mirabile dictu!*), it may not be amiss to bestow some credit on Mr. Brown,—one of the few American publishers who "have definitely taken the lead in making Continental European literature known to English-speaking readers," to borrow a phrase from Mr. Boyd, in an article you published. Beside publishing many translations from languages other than Russian, and for which other publishers are now receiving encomia,—translations which are now collectors' items (even in supercilious England),—Mr. Brown has done more than any other publisher, American or British, to make Kuprin known in English. In addition to "Sulamith" he has published Kuprin's greatest novel, and it was really he who commissioned—and paid for—the translation of Gambrinus.

Incidentally, while formerly you have always given me credit as translator, in this instance you have failed to do so. If "Sulamith" truly "shines" and has "lyricism" in its English garb, why not chuck the translator an odd leaf of laurel by at least naming him? And, since Kuprin (who knows English) has been kind enough to write me that he is envious of the perfection of the English version of "Sulamith," I trust it will not be entirely vanity to hope that the slug with my name was dropped accidentally when you were moving back to New York.

BERNARD GUILBERT GUERNEY.

New York.

Hardy Again

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

There may be three possible reasons—probably there are many more—why Thomas Hardy's name has been omitted from the list of Nobel Prize Winners in Literature. These suggestions are open to question and rejoinder but they may be permissible from one who has studied the winners with earnest thought, and question about them and their rival candidates.

First, the age of Thomas Hardy may be a deterrent factor. While he is today recognized as "unchallenged and unchallengeable" among living English writers, this prestige has come tardily; it has been stressed since he reached the four-score mark. Some one will answer that the Nobel Prize has been given to several writers almost as old, or approximately past seventy-five—to Theodor Mommsen, Frederic Mistral, Carl Spitteler, Anatole France, and others. The fact remains, however, that in such cases the awards were often censured because they were testimonials to *finished* work not incentives to *further* writing. The phrase in the will of Alfred Nobel which specified "the work should be done the year previous" was obviously impractical and was given corrective, broad interpretation in the Code of Statutes of 1901. The donor's intent, however, seemed to be an inspiration to further accomplishments in science and literature, as well as an honorable reward for completed work.

Second, another stumbling-block may be that phrase, "for literature of an idealistic tendency." With all tribute to Thomas Hardy's genius, it has manifested itself in novels and poems of fatalistic philosophy rather than "idealistic tendency." Exception might be made of "The Dynasts," the

glorious epic with a final note of idealistic surmise, as interpreted by certain critics. Compared with the works of other authors who have been winners, judged by books like "Growth of the Soil," "Penguin Island," "Lonely Lives," or "The Peasants," the fiction and poetry of Thomas Hardy would not seem to merit indifference or discard.

Third, while Mr. Hardy's name has been often suggested during the last five years, his nomination, as far as this writer is informed, has been by individuals or small literary societies. Turning again to the Nobel will, and Code of Statutes, it is decreed that "The right to nominate a candidate for the prize-competition, shall belong to Members of the Swedish Academy and the Academies in France and Spain which are similar to it in constitution and purpose; members of the humanistic classes of other Academies and of those humanistic institutions and societies that are on the same footing as academies, and teachers of aesthetics, literature, and history at universities and colleges." Previous honors to Selma Lagerlöf, Echegaray, Sully-Prudhomme, and Anatole France, by the Academies of their respective countries, may have influenced the preferences of the Nobel Committee at Stockholm. Is there an Academy of similar prestige in England or America to nominate candidate for this award in literature?

ANNIE RUSSEL MARBLE.

Rebuttal

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

Mr. Edward Davison's explanation of his animadversion on my use of "Fabian tactics" (in "The Fourth Queen") is even more astonishing than his original slip. He says: "My error was not really due to ignorance. . . . I have to plead the momentary aberration of a harassed reviewer."

Since omniscience is not an attribute of mortality, ignorance is a legitimate excuse for anyone upon occasion. It was good enough for Dr. Johnson. And "aberration" is a legal excuse, I believe. But if Mr. Davison finds the task of a reviewer so harassing as to occasion aberration, surely it would be more prudent of him, simply for his own sake, to find some less hazardous occupation. Every reviewer has to write a review in a hurry once in a while, or even oftener.

Why is my own error—putting the River Avon in place of the Thames . . . "less excusable"? It was an error; the manner in which it happened is rather odd, but doesn't help it now, and would take too long to explain. But it did not occur in a book or article devoted to pointing out similar minor errors in the work of some one else. The grammarian shouldn't split his infinitives; it stultifies him altogether.

Mr. Davison remarks further: "I have no doubt that Mrs. Paterson *could* explain the encounter (the Armada battle) in such a way as I would understand. But why didn't she do so in the book?"

Because, in the nature of things, it was impossible to devote the whole book to that one action. And in less space I don't think I could have made it clear—to Mr. Davison. The general reader finds no obscurity in the present version.

And even if I did get him to understand it, a moment of aberration might undo all my labors. He says himself he was "an old member of the Fabian Society, in fact an ex-secretary of the Cambridge University Branch in England," and yet his knowledge of the meaning and origin of the word Fabian simply went blooey when he hurried a little. In such a case, I don't see how anybody can be held responsible for anything that occurs. Which lets us both out. Still, I wonder what Mr. Davison really meant by the phrase "factitiously explicit."

New York.

ISABEL PATERSON.

A Theory of Writing

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review*:
SIR:

Miss Alice Carey Jansen's recent letter in regard to my review of Grace Kellogg Griffith's novel "The House" gives me an admirable chance to state one theory of book writing. This is, that books should be literature; and that books that are not cannot be fairly reviewed in a literary magazine. Such novels should be considered more as textbooks than anything else. Miss Jansen admits that "The House" is not literature; outside of that, it should be chiefly of value as an addition to knowledge. It isn't. It suggests no solution of a problem, nor does it state a new problem. Such books, which, no matter how

"profound" or "serious" they are, add nothing to the discussion, are really not worth publishing.

As to "Three Kingdoms," it seems that Miss Jansen belittled it with the term "melodrama" because it was somewhat anti-feministic; it shows that the woman's place can be in the home rather than in business; and that the home may be even a better place than the office for some women. It also has some small distinction in its writing, while "The House" must be murdered by the adjective "adequate."

I wish that Mrs. Griffith and Miss Jansen would evolve a solution of the problem instead of writing letters and futile novels about it. For I insist that sociology can have little to do with literature except as a distinctly secondary feature.

EDWARD G. CONKLIN.

Harvard College.

The New Books

(Continued from preceding page)

Science

THE NATURAL INCREASE OF MAN-KIND. By J. SHIRLEY SWEENEY. Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins. 1926. \$4.

The present widespread interest in the population problem has led to the production of a flood of books relating in one way or another to the consequences of what Malthus politely termed "the passion of the sexes." Sweeney's book differs from many recent ones in the field in that it makes a definite contribution of new data to the problem, and does not merely reargue the old premises. This book is the outcome of a long and painstaking research on a statistical attribute of populations much discussed in recent years by Raymond Pearl, and called by him the "vital index." It is the ratio of births to deaths in a population, and obviously indicates the rate at which growth is occurring at the time. The author has laboriously calculated this statistic for the populations of all the different countries of the world for which there are available sufficiently accurate and extensive records of births and deaths. He has then submitted these figures to analysis along the lines laid down by the Pearsonian school of biometrics. The net result is to give a general picture of the present biological status of these populations, their trends in the past, and probable future courses.

It is the author's opinion "that there is only one way that nations can avoid the consequences of relative over-population. That is by an international agreement to control numbers—by a league of stationary populations. Will it ever become a reality? No one can deny that it is possible. We say to parents: 'Your children must not work' and 'your children must go to school.' Would it be inconceivably absurd to say to them: 'You are at liberty to rear only three or four children' (depending upon the size of the population, mortality forces, etc.)?" Essentially the same idea has been suggested by others, notably Harold Cox. Whether it will ever be realized, except by natural evolutionary processes, seems doubtful.

Not the least important part of this valuable book is the introduction by Dr. William H. Welch, who once more displays his extraordinary versatility and breadth of learning by giving an illuminating account of the historical development of the population problem in relation to economic and biological theories.

MICROSCOPY. By ROBERT M. NEILL. Holt. 1925. \$1.

This is an exceedingly elementary book which emphasizes the conspicuous part which the microscope plays in much of our scientific and technical work of the present day. There is included a very brief chapter of the optical principles involved in the compound microscope, and one on the future of microscopy. The general reader would get a fair idea of the scope of microscopy from the book.

Travel

BEYOND THE BALTIC. By A. MacCallum Scott. Doran. \$4 net.

IN FLORIDA'S DAWN. By P. D. Gold. Jacksonville, Fla.: H. & W. B. Drew.

TREES AND SHRUBS OF CALIFORNIA GARDENS. By Charles Francis Saunders. McBride. \$3 net.

TRAVEL CHARTS AND TRAVEL CHATS. By Frederick L. Collins. Bobbs-Merrill. \$2.50.

FLORIDA ENCHANTMENTS. By A. W. Dimock. Stokes. \$5.

BLACK SUNLIGHT. By Earl Rossman. Oxford University Press. \$1.75.

THINGS SEEN ON THE ENGLISH LAKES. By W. P. Palmer. Dutton. \$1.50.

MAJORCA. By Henry C. Shelley. Little, Brown. \$3.50 net.

Columbia University Press 2960 Broadway New York, N. Y.

POETIC IMAGERY
Illustrated from Elizabethan Literature
By Henry W. Wells

"Rarely does sound scholarship so happily fuse with the nice discernment of the poet as in Henry Wells' brilliant discussion of metaphorical language and poetic imagery. . . . It can and does give to the thoughtful artist a substantial and well-digested explanation of his chief stock-in-trade. *Poetic Imagery* should be on the intimate shelf of every poet who is at all concerned with consciously solving the central perplexities of his art."
—Henry Morton Robinson, in *Contemporary Verse*.

Pp. vii+231. \$2.25

AT BOOKSTORES
Or direct from the Publishers
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS

A Bewitching Story in More Ways Than One
FLECKER'S MAGIC
by Norman Matson

Here is a mature fairy tale—its hero a young American, adventure hunting in Paris—its heroine a delicious little maidinette—the emissary of the last witch on earth.

"Mr. Matson himself is a magician of no common order; an adept wizard in the very difficult art of building an imaginative fantasia that does not slump, and is neither trivial nor overheavily moralized. It is a rare delight to turn to such a book as this from the general run of standardized fiction."—H. L. Pangborn, N.Y. Sun. \$2.00

BONI & LIVERIGHT, N. Y.

GOOD BOOKS

THE LAZY COLON
(Large Intestine)
By CHARLES M. CAMPBELL, ALBERT K. DETWILLER, M.D.

Newer methods and latest advances of science in the treatment of Constipation and Allied Disorders. Derived from investigations and discoveries of 350 Physicians and Scientists of international reputation, since the X-Rays were first used in studying the 28 feet of human intestine in 1907. This tract, says *Foges of Vienna*, is the most prolific source of dangerous disease, including particularly heart disease and cancer; also kidney, liver and stomach disorders. Simple, authoritative, extremely interesting.

Partial List of 37 Chapter Titles

Biggest Dividends in Life Paid by a Healthy Colon; Contrary to General Belief: There Is Little Digestion in the Stomach; How Microscopic Plant Life Promotes Putrefaction in the Colon; Surprising Theories of Water Drinking; Mysteries of the Intestine Revealed by X-Ray; Some Curious Causes of Intestinal Stasis; Commonest Form of Stasis; Startling Theories of Self-Poisoning; Story of the Urine Tells Harrowing of the Arteries and Blood Pressure; Purgatives—Their Proper and Improper Use; Mineral Oil as a Laxative; Bran or Agar, Which? Vitamin Facts; The Ounce of Prevention; Greatest Menace of All; Intelligent Use of the Enema; The Coated Tongue—Its Cause and Meaning; Is Sugar of Milk the Long-Sought Remedy? New Light on Longevity; Effects of Tobacco on Longevity; Prominent Authorities on Good Complexions and Loss of Hair; A Bad Colon, Bad Teeth; Starting Right with Young Children.

Judge E. H. Gary, head of U. S. Steel: "It is a fine piece of work and I congratulate you."
Dr. J. H. Kellogg, Battle Creek Sanitarium: "The authors are to be congratulated on producing this excellent work, which will no doubt have a large sale."

Price \$2.50. By mail \$2.64.

THE EDUCATIONAL PRESS
120 W. 32 St., Dept. 4 N. Y. C.

Pin remittance for \$2.64 to this coupon. Sold by mail subject to 5 days' examination and refund of purchase price if desired. If you wish C. O. D. shipment mark here ().

(PRINT OUT)

The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the selection of books and questions of like nature should be addressed to Mrs. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*

A BALANCED RATION

TWO OR THREE GRACES. By Aldous Huxley (Doran).

DEPENDENT AMERICA. By William Redfield (Houghton Mifflin).

THINGS SEEN AND HEARD. By Edgar J. Goodspeed (University of Chicago Press).

L. D. W., East Haven, Conn., asks for a choice of one-act plays for amateurs: the only requisite seems to be that they must be funny.

THE first play in "Double Demon and other one-act plays," by Herbert, Sladen Smith, Mayor, and Simpson (Appleton), is one of the most sparkling entertainments I have come upon in some time. When I ran through it in the course of a lecture last year the delight of the audiences convinced me that this would be, if well acted, an ideal play for small stages. A jury is considering its verdict, impeded by the presence among them of a husband and wife constitutionally unable to take the same side on anything. They convert each other as the Wright Brothers are said to have done in their early discussions, leaving the deadlock upside down but otherwise unchanged. How it is resolved and under what unexpected circumstances the curtain descends, I leave for the audience to enjoy. In the same book—one of the British Drama League Series—is "St. Simeon Stylites," by F. Sladen Smith, which the British Drama League has chosen for its participation in the New York Little Theatre Tournament in May. This satiric comedy has a Shavian taste only because anything British and brilliant is bound to taste something like Shaw. Its hero is more like the pillar saint in Anatole France's "Thais" than a strictly theological figure: on a platform high above the city, he is visited by a pilgrim, a king, a lady no better than she should be and much prettier, and the prince in whose interests they are tempting him to descend—the devil, of course. The reason why he stays is a flash of insight into human nature: if the producer has the courage of his convictions in the matter of scenery and lighting, and if, according to the author's directions, he carefully avoids realism, this should be a success of the type that brightened the first seasons of the Washington Square Players in the old Bandbox.

Christopher Morley's "Rehearsal" is surefire fun and very easy to give: so is Miss Millay's "Two Slatterns and a King," both are in the series of Appleton's Short Plays in paper covers, and some of the recent additions to this series read as if they would act well. "The Flattering Word," by George Kelly (Little, Brown), is more than funny, though it is all of that: it appeals to any sort of audience and in printed form gives lasting pleasure. Based on the universal truth that the one statement certain to please is "I thought you were on the stage," it sees through one of our dearest delusions without poking holes through it.

A book of interest to amateur actors lately published by Appleton is "The Art of Make-up," by Helena Chalmers, detailed and practical, with pictures that make its points even clearer.

Here's a Macedonian outcry. Mme. A. G., in Simbirsk, Russia, on the Volga River, wants to keep hens. In fact, she is now keeping ten of them, who notwithstanding the cold are giving her a few eggs. She needs a popular book on poultry-keeping, suitable for this climate, and for the nurture of about fifty hens under the simplest conditions. The request is relayed by A. E. B., New York, and the books have gone by mail, but the advice will be useful to other readers of this section.

THE best little book on poultry-keeping in the climate of the northern New England States, approximately that of Simbirsk, is "Poultry," written by Professor A. W. Richardson, head of the poultry department of the University of New Hampshire, and published by Harper in their handbook series at \$1.50. She needs also an up-to-date English Grammar in a teacher's edition, for her classes in a school of languages now far enough along to receive English grammar lessons in English. Teacher's College, to whose faculty this

matter was referred, reply that one of their instructors who had had much experience in teaching English to foreign adults, recommends "Grammar to Use," by Lewis and Lynch (Winston), saying that it is by far the best grammar so far published for this purpose.

G. G., New York City, preparing a paper on juvenile delinquency, asks which book will give him plenty of data.

"THE YOUNG DELINQUENT," by Cyril Burt (Appleton), at this writing the latest contribution to this large and growing literature, provides for student, teacher, parent, or anyone to whom the interests of children are dear, not only documentation but an example of the frame of mind and heart in which to approach it. This is the first of a series of three books on the child of subnormal mentality: the others present cases of backward and of unstable children, respectively intellectually and emotionally under par. This study of the child whose moral character is subnormal is the result of wide experience and an open mind, and the conclusions reached through these cases are none the less valuable when applied to the study of youth in general. "The Revolt of Modern Youth," by Ben B. Lindsey and Wainwright Evans (Boni & Liveright), is based on the experience and blazes with the ideas of Judge Lindsey. This, too, is applicable to society at large.

H. O. R., Jersey City, N. J., asks for post-war guide books or records of travel in Ireland.

"HERE'S IRELAND," by Harold Speakman (Dodd, Mead), is a literally "rambling" narrative: he traverses the island with the aid of a "wee horse" whose long grey ears and wise countenance beam on the beholder from the frontispiece. What he sees and hears is set down less in story form than in vignettes: their pictorial quality matches the illustrations, which are from paintings by the author not so brilliant as those in his Chinese book, but as sympathetic. This is one of the travel books that make me convinced that there will be a hole in my life until I go to this place: a good travel book should do this, I think.

The same firm that publish all those "beautiful" books, about Maine, Vermont, and other states ("Old America"), have lately issued a new Wallace Nutting volume of lovely photographic views, called "Ireland Beautiful." A favorite book for the guidance of the leisurely traveler in Ireland, Clifton Johnson's "The Land of Shamrock," has lately been brought back into print by Macmillan in a new format.

G. W. P., Los Angeles, Cal., strongly recommends to the man without definite religious affiliations but beginning to take a strong interest in personal religion, Harry Emerson Fosdick's "Modern Use of the Bible" (Macmillan), and Dean Inge's "Personal Religion and the Life of Devotion" (Longmans), saying of the latter "in fewer than one hundred pages it expresses, as only genius can, the loftiest of present-day religious ideals as held by a most advanced thinker."

P. F., New York City, asks on behalf of a foreign-born friend whose English is yet shaky if there is a book of set speeches that he can use as a guide, as he is often called upon to speak at banquets.

E. J. CLODE'S series of dollar handbooks include one called "Speeches," and another "Toasts and Anecdotes," by Paul Kearney, that might be useful. In the first there are sample speeches of various kinds. But before putting your trust altogether upon them, read "To the Ladies," by Kaufman and Connelly, and see what may happen if two men memorize the same speech.

YOU ARE A WRITER. Don't you ever need help in marketing your work? I am a literary adviser. For years I read for Macmillan, then for Doran, and then I became consulting specialist to them and to Holt, Stokes, Lippincott, and others, for most of whom I have also done expert editing, helping authors to make their work saleable. Send for my circular, I am closely in touch with the market for books, short stories, articles and verses, and I have a special department for plays and motion pictures. The Writers' Workshop, Inc. 135 East 58th Street New York City



Spring Song

At last, the long and heartily hoped-for time has arrived. The sun shine. The air has that "snap" which is so invigorating. People who ordinarily ride five blocks are now walking a mile. The housekeeper, so I am told, is getting ready to perform the annual rite known as "spring cleaning." New advertising posters for spring appear. There is a bibliography of spring books, although such a list is not entirely necessary inasmuch as any good book is appropriate at any time of the year.

* * * *

There is no doubt that certain topics are more popular during this period than others; travel, for instance. Those persons who take part in the annual spring exodus are anxious to find out many things about the places to which they are going and those of us who stay at home do dour spring traveling vicariously in the land of literature. The garden, too, is getting attention and many horticulturists, amateur and professional, turn to the printed page for information as to new ways and means of developing the soil.

* * * *

But there are still thousands of people who sit and moan because they too cannot go abroad, and who do not realize that there are many of us who have been in new and sometimes strange places without ever having left, not the armchair by the fire, but the wicker chair or the hammock on the porch. There are just as many who, living in cities where gardening is impossible, derive a great deal of pleasure from the work of those who so vividly portray in type the growing of flowers.

* * * *

I feel that it is the duty of all of us who do know these pleasures to tell the uninitiated where they may be had. We owe it to ourselves and to those persons who have given us our literature, to perform the necessary introductions.

* * * *

The *Saturday Review of Literature* will interest you and help them; and you will find that the bookmen and women who are members of the *American Booksellers' Association* will be happy to aid in choosing spring and summer reading.

ELLIS W. MEYERS,

Executive Secretary,
American Booksellers'
Association.