

meats, all sorts of souse fish (lobster, crayfish), fruit etc. . . in the face of the whole University."

With his indisposition heavy upon him he went out as usual and meeting Mr. Robert South, an Oxford Don of his acquaintance, he confided to him his trouble. "Anthony à Wood if thou canst not make water thou hadst better make earth" was all the comfort he got. After more than a week closeted in his rooms he still apprehended no danger, but was "very froward." His relations, thereupon (perhaps his two young nieces who were to inherit his property), begged Dr. Arthur Charlett to come and explain the situation to him. This hearty friend lost no time in being "plain with him" and under his reasoning, that fell only too pat, Wood was persuaded to make a will and put his papers in order, those papers of such inestimable value "to any of his own temper." "Two bushells-full he ordered for ye fire . . . expressing both his knowledge and approbation of what was done by throwing out his Hands." Absolutely convinced at last as to the correctness of Dr. Charlett's prognostication the old man would not be satisfied until he had superintended in person the digging of his own grave in the exact spot he wished his bones to lie "in Merton College Church, deeper than ordinary, under, and as close to the wall (just as you enter in at the north on the left hand) as the place will permit."

It can hardly be doubted that the contemporary rhyme made while he yet lived will receive fulfilment:

Merton Wood, with his Antiquitie
Will live to all Eternitie.

"Sunset and Evening Star"

THE LETTERS OF QUEEN VICTORIA.
Second Series (Third Volume). Edited by
GEORGE EARLE BUCKLE. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1928. \$9.

Reviewed by WALTER S. HAYWARD

FOR the time being, at least, the publication of Queen Victoria's correspondence comes to an end with the issuance of this third volume in the Second Series—the fifth volume in all. The six eventful years from 1879 to 1885 are covered. Disraeli makes his last appearance, yielding the stage to his bitter rival Gladstone, who, in turn, gives way to the new Conservative leader, Salisbury. At this point, the editor draws the curtain, as Rosebery and Balfour, now eldest of statesmen, are about to make official entrance.

One is impressed by the imminence of death in all this correspondence. Those from whom the Queen received her political tutelage as a constitutional monarch—men like Melbourne, Peel, and the Duke himself—have all gone. She feels that she is fallen upon evil times. The tides of Democracy are relentlessly breaking down the barriers which had been built against it. In 1884, for the third time in the century, the franchise is extended. In a letter to Gladstone she refers with regret to 1841 when she remembers he first kissed hands as a minor member of Sir Robert Peel's cabinet. She feels most the death of Lord Beaconsfield, whom she esteemed one of her "best, most devoted, and kindest of friends, as well as wisest of counsellors. . . In or out of office she could turn to dear Lord Beaconsfield for advice and help." She misses the familiar "Madam and Beloved Sovereign" on his letters to her, so different from the chill respect of the Gladstonian communications. Perhaps she misses even more the feeling of counting for something in the government, which he had always contrived to give her. In acceding to his wishes, she had felt she was carrying out her own, so successful was his flattering personal solicitude as contrasted with Gladstone's method of treating her as a "public meeting."

One by one, the Queen's old friends and familiars are beginning to go. Dean Stanley of Westminster died but a few months after Beaconsfield, and with him "how many of the traditions of the past are gone," she writes in her journal. Only a year later died Dean Wellesley of Windsor, whom she describes as "the last of her old friends who were connected and bound up with the happy past and with all the joys and sorrows of her family." One senses that the breath of life is not particularly sweet in her nostrils. She was, as Tennyson, himself now an old man, told her, "so alone on that terrible height."

She loses, however, none of her interest in public affairs, and none of her insistence on what she re-

gards as her constitutional rights as sovereign. These are stirring years for the Empire, and the Empress-Queen is one of the staunchest imperialists in her domains. She wants all her ministers to be "right" on foreign policy, and "right" for Victoria means the "forward" policy. The army must be kept up; preparedness is the only possible plan; the prestige of the Empire must be maintained at all costs. No one rejoices more than she to hear afar

The measured roll of British drums
Beat at the gates of Kandahar.

No one is more insistent that Arabi Pasha be punished for his Egyptian revolt. She will have no peace with the Boers until Majuba Hill has been avenged. She must bid "God speed" in person to her soldiers leaving for overseas service. She is actually ill at the news of the fate of Chinese Gordon at Khartoum. "Mr. Gladstone and the government have—the Queen feels it dreadfully—Gordon's innocent, noble, heroic blood on their consciences. May they feel it, and may they be made to do so." She wants to know why they cling to office when so discredited at home and abroad. When Gladstone finally resigns as a result of the catastrophe in the Soudan, she rejoices almost openly.



LLEWELYN POWYS

During these years Ireland is much on her mind. For her, Land League and Fenian outrages culminate on that spring day in Phoenix Park at Dublin where the talented and well-liked Lord Frederick Cavendish, on the eve of taking up his duties as Chief Secretary for Ireland, is stabbed to death. The Queen felt very strongly that a policy of weakness towards Ireland was a policy of disaster. She is always urging Gladstone to greater firmness, and rarely with any result. She encourages, and she warns, and if she is not always consulted, it is not from lack of energy on her part.

This last volume is uniform in appearance with its predecessors. Nine photogravures are reproduced, including the Queen (by Von Angeli), Beaconsfield, Gladstone, and Salisbury. The editing is excellent, and the typographical work almost perfect. As a source for the period, this series is invaluable; yet of exceptional interest also. The events discussed are not yet in the limbo of forgotten things, and for some, at least, there will be many a name and place mentioned which will strike the chords of memory.

Instructions left by Thomas Hardy to his literary executors (who were given full authority to deal with his writings) included a request that they would (if this had not already been done) cause to be published at a reasonable price an edition of his complete poetical works, so that they should be within the reach of poorer readers. He recommended them to present one of his MSS. to the library of Magdalene College, Cambridge.

He left £200 to the literary executor (other than his wife) who shall act in that capacity, and if such work should extend for more than three years, then for the presentation to friends of books, of which royalties on his book sales. Directions are given for the presentation of friends of books, of which he had made a list.

Hampden in "Henry V"

SHAKESPEARE'S "HENRY V." Produced by
Walter Hampden at Hampden's Theatre, New
York, 1928.

Reviewed by J. RANKEN TOWSE

MOST of the comments in the daily press upon Walter Hampden's production of "Henry V," although not altogether unkindly or unjust, betray a lamentable lack of appreciation of the absolute values and intrinsic merits of a representation, almost phenomenal in contrast with the prevalent jazz, clap-trap, sensational absurdities, and elaborated nastiness of the contemporary theatre. The writers confine themselves mainly to a re-enumeration of those patent and undeniable constructive defects which this piece has in common with many of the other chronicle plays, while practically ignoring the ingenuity with which some of those obstacles have been surmounted or avoided. "Henry V," of course, is not one of the Shakespearean masterpieces. It is not even entitled to a very high place among the chronicles. But notwithstanding its manifest defects from the ordinary theatrical point of view—its episodic nature, want of plot, rapid and sustained dramatic action, and any exceptional humorous or emotional appeal—it nevertheless reveals, in many passages of its dialogue, especially in its vivid and vigorous human portraiture of the King and the varied and vital sketches of subordinate personages, rich evidence of the incomparable genius of its creator. That it is one of his minor achievements may be granted very readily; but it has distinctive merits—apart from its histrionic opportunities—which certainly warrant its retention in the repertory of any theatre pretending to exercise its legitimate artistic functions.

In the not distant past, before Shakespearean acting was permitted to become a lost art, the piece was not found unprofitable even by the commercial theatre. It was only when scenery was asked to do the work of non-existent actors that not only this, but much greater Shakespearean dramas vanished from the stage. Hampden, the finest actor and most enlightened manager in America, is now trying, let up hope successfully, to restore them and redeem a debauched and debilitated public taste. And in organizing a competent stock company he is going to work in the right way. Already he has established a home, and an audience, for the best drama efficiently presented. He is now giving the most satisfactory performance of "Henry V" that has been seen in this city during the last half century.

Within that period there have been three revivals of the play in New York, all popular as gorgeous spectacles. In all three the text was treated as a matter of secondary moment. Briefly, the effort was expended in the attempt to present realistically the scenes which Shakespeare decreed must be left entirely to the imagination. Dramatically considered, the production in which George Rignold figures was, perhaps, the best. He himself was in no way remarkable as an actor, but as the King he was a splendidly virile figure before whom the women fell down and worshipped. He had neither dignity, nor eloquence—but he was fortunate in his support, notably in his Pistol, Fluellen, Macmorris, Williams, and Princess Katherine and, above all, in the magnificence of Mrs. Calvert, whose superb declamation was the artistic triumph of the performance. The irony in her speeches was, of course, totally imperceptible to the management. Richard Mansfield's "Henry V" was also a fine show, a feast for the eye but little else. He was a man of far superior culture and intelligence to Rignold, but by temperament and habit he was sadly unfitted for the part of the King. The English actor, Lewis Waller, who was graceful and animated in action and had fine spirit and diction, furnished a much more striking embodiment, but his production, also, was pictorial rather than dramatic.

Hampden's production is artistically superior to one and all of those mentioned for the simple reason that it is at once more generally effective and much more in accordance with the form and spirit of the clear design of Shakespeare. Like all his predecessors, he has taken many liberties with the text, by clipping it judiciously and transposing occasional scenes. But all these changes, are, in the circumstances, completely justifiable. By means of them and the ingenious reduction of scenic accessories to a respectable minimum—in itself sufficiently suggestive and picturesque—he has succeeded in providing a representation that is as smooth, rapid, continuous

and intelligible as if it had been given under the Elizabethan conditions for which it was originally devised. All, or nearly all, illustrative spectacle, as Shakespeare was careful to explain, is left for the imagination of the spectator to supply. The play is made to speak for itself and attention, perforce, is concentrated, as it always ought to be in literary drama, upon the text. And this, upon the whole, is interpreted with a naturalness, vicacity, and uncommon general competence that inspires great confidence in the future of Walter Hampden's direction. He has already brought his company to a rare degree of coöperative efficiency, which is exhibited throughout in this latest effort, notable for its level excellence.

As the King he is naturally, and indeed inevitably, the dominant figure. It is a character for which he is admirably suited by his personality and he plays it with an easy, simple, unaffected dignity, an air of habitual but unstressed authority, which is essentially princely but always natural, kindly, and human. He aims at no demonstration of the theatrically heroic. He is handsome, manly, resolute, gallant, mildly humorous, and impressively devotional in the critical moments before Agincourt. Of the wild prince he shows no trace, having Shakespeare responsible for the somewhat miraculous transformation. His is a thoroughly thoughtful, consistent, and individual conception, keenly intelligent and owing little to tradition, which will please all true connoisseurs and ought to meet with the popular approval which it undoubtedly deserves.

Incandescent Poetry

THE LAND. By V. SACKVILLE-WEST. New York: George H. Doran. 1927. \$1.50.

REQUIEM. By HUMBERT WOLFE. The same. \$1.50.

RUSTIC ELEGIES. By EDITH SITWELL. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.

Reviewed by LEONARD BACON

THE three poets whose volumes are the subject of this notice are all persons of distinction of mind, and they cannot be grouped in the convenient cubby-holes of schools and tendencies dear to the critical column-filler. Each one of them has a different order of experience to express, a different region of the soul to penetrate.

Miss Sackville-West's "The Land" is an odd work from all standpoints. Virgil is never out of her mind, but the oddness arises because we feel, too, in her that impulse that nearly two centuries ago drove James Thomson, long in populous city pent, to express a stiff enthusiasm for that art which lies at the bottom of all human achievement. Briefly Miss Sackville-West takes her reader round the year in rural England painting with an exactness that spares nothing the life and manifold activity of an English farmer. That struggle with a refractory soil and a niggard climate was never more elaborately described. Jesus, the son of Sirach, doubtless overlooked the possibility that a lady might expatiate on such subjects, when he asked the awkward question: "How can he be wise whose talk is of bullocks?" Miss Sackville-West has found a spiritual wisdom in these matters. Often her verse is languid, but her poem in its entirety is not. Some passion not to be isolated animates the whole. The stuff looks like pitchblende, but there is radium in it. And the divine energy has given a mystical property to unpromising materials. "The Land" is a powerful performance full of deep feeling.

Mr. Wolfe's "Requiem" is so different from Miss Sackville-West's poem that only a desperate critic would attempt a transition between them. Mr. Wolfe, in the first place, is a wit and a metrical virtuoso, and he suffers from this. His more powerful and his less effective pieces are performed with the same mastery. And it is real, not trick, mastery, though with the cynicism to which wits are subject, he resorts at times to trickery. He has attempted in this book to define success and failure of personality. It is a requiem for losers and winners. He goes over his subject with the artificial inclusiveness of a scholastic philosopher, and at times you think sadly of detestable volumes with numbered sections and paragraphs. Nevertheless the book burns with exquisite phrases and lyrical passages that must capture any nature with enough sympathy in it to be called a nature at all. To borrow a figure, his philosophy is merely a bench on which he displays the gorgeous robes he carries in his coffers.

Miss Sitwell provides us as usual with the un-

expected. Only certain people can altogether sympathize with her eccentricities. I strongly suspect that she does not herself. But "Rustic Elegies" is a remarkable and revealing book and full of music sometimes mad and sometimes sad. Its title is perfectly appropriate. It is a fantastic study in the emotions derived from rural elegance forgotten, and the amenities of a lost Paradise. In a very real and deep sense it deals with the country. The same relation exists between Miss Sackville-West and Miss Sitwell as between a barefooted girl splashed with the must of the wine-press, and an Italian Lady hooded and masked for the carnival, waiting under a cypress tree beneath an enigmatic moon. Hooded and masked Miss Sitwell is. She is a shrouded fantastic figure whose attitudes are at one moment grotesque, at another ridiculous, and at still a third poignant and beautiful past expression. If ever a book illustrated the phrase *reculer pour mieux sauter* this does. In two-thirds of it perhaps she is recoiling and withdrawing, one hardly guesses from what, to the very verges of insanity. She hides herself and her meaning and her feeling in the elaborate robes that are her delight. Then in the twinkling of an eye everything bizarre and eccentric and *posaic* is "stripped away with a passionate gesture," and piercing and individual beauty is before us. Lewis Carroll might have poached from some of her pages, but Donne and Crashaw would have looked with respect at others.

The criticism of poetry is always ticklish, and nowhere is it done worse than in this country, where, as Mr. Benét and a hundred others have shown, a passion for cataloging has emasculated thought and violated feeling. These three books are full of the light of far-off spiritual conflagrations. It would be silly to fit them to some pot-house programme of new or still newer poetry. Time may stifle their fires. But what of it? Here was a burning.

The Why of War

BACK OF WAR. By HENRY KITTREDGE NORTON. New York: Doubleday, Doran. 1928. \$2.50.

Reviewed by JOHN BAKELESS

Author of "The Origin of the Next War"

THE forces that lie "Back of War" form the subject matter of Mr. Henry Kittredge Norton's new book. Although it offers little that is new and nothing that is of arresting importance, it is nevertheless a competent, judicial, and highly intelligent appraisal of the more important forces that control the moving pawns of the diplomatic chess board.

A little cynicism is a good thing in the study of international relations, however, and Mr. Norton's lack of it is one of the two chief counts against him. The other is the annoying way in which, at the end, after a careful and competent survey of the chief causes which produce modern wars, he allows his book to fizzle out into a summary of unrelated events in half the countries of the world, so that it fails to come to a final focus. No single definite conclusion—except, perhaps, the obvious one that war is possible and undesirable—emerges; no tangible point of view is apparent; and one lays down the book that began so promisingly with a sense of disappointment. "Back of War" might have been such a good book—instead of which it becomes a useful compilation of incompletely related fact and theory.

When that is said, however, the worst is said. If there is nothing very new, at least there is a great deal that is true; and in spite of the contemporary rage for "originality" and novelty, it is still better to be right than to be startling. If nothing new has been contributed to the old, old problems of war and peace, at least the reader has passed in review the chief causes of modern war—though without discovering the cause—and has enjoyed a convenient summary of recent international relations. There are few readers who will not be the better for familiarity with both.

Mr. Norton does not adequately emphasize the curious paradox presented by the fact that war persists as a universal institution. This paradox, to my mind, lies very close to the root of the whole matter. Here is a destructive behavior pattern which has existed since the beginning of our racial history and which persists in the modern world in spite of unanimous agreement that it is wasteful, evil, and that if it is not soon abandoned it may even involve the destruction not merely of civilization, but of the race. Yet, having agreed that we are doubtless en-

compassing our own destruction, we all go blithely on heaping up armaments; and our diplomats, in their interminable conferences, invariably fail to reach any but temporary and admittedly inadequate solutions.

Surely such a contradiction points clearly to the existence of powerful forces, inciting to hostility, which have so far eluded our control, and motives for warfare lying far deeper than the obvious ones usually avowed when nations declare war.

These are the forces which we must discover and eliminate if the war problem is ever to be settled, as it must be settled if civilization is to continue; and these forces are, I believe, primarily—though not exclusively—economic. Mr. Norton has not, however, felt justified in reducing war causes to a single formula. He refers, at least, to "multitudinous causes of international conflict," in which he includes some lingering primitive motives for combat as well as economic, political, social, and psychological forces.

It is difficult for a reviewer, with any degree of dignity, to bestride his own particular hobby in public. But at the risk of assuming for a moment that ungraceful attitude, I suggest to Mr. Norton that if he will analyze the causes of the wars of the last fifty years, he will invariably find economic forces at work, and he will usually find them dominant.

It is a familiar commonplace that war, under modern conditions, attacks first the fine flower of the race and the fine flower of the racial achievement. And as—another commonplace, which is, nevertheless, worth remembering—in the next war air raids will carry home to the sensitive metropolitan centres of our civilization the horror and destruction which has hitherto been pretty well concentrated on the battlefield, it is no exaggeration to say that we may lose our whole heritage of art, architecture, and culture, as well as some millions of lives.

If, by the fiendish (but militarily effective) system of striking at the centres of civilization, we carry the process of disruption far enough, we can quite easily make it impossible to build our culture up again after the next war, by breaking down the economic organization that lies behind it. Once that is shattered, our iron machinery will rust away, our steel-and-concrete buildings crumble, and the great libraries that house the garnered wisdom of forty centuries will vanish with them.

Ours is, in no metaphorical sense, a paper civilization. Our literature, music, science, and philosophy, plus a fair proportion of our art, are recorded on paper, which endures only so long as it is protected from the weather. Let our complex civilization once fall into a thorough-going confusion and we shall see the permanent destruction of all we have achieved, and—as our museums fall to pieces—of most of what preceding civilizations have handed on to us. That is the real danger that war on the modern scale involves—not the temporary waste, the difficulties of reconstruction, or even the lives of a few million men, women and children.

I suspect, however, that in his honest desire to be upright in avoiding sensationalism, Mr. Norton leans too far backward. The fact that these things are "scientifically possible" is in itself disconcerting enough—mankind has not hitherto been slow in grasping all the means of destruction that science provides. And no one—not even a veteran and talented student of world politics like Mr. Norton—can say definitely what is and what is not "politically probable" a few years hence. It was certainly not "politically probable" in 1913 that the United States would five years later raise an army of four million and ferry half of it to Europe; but the thing happened. The disasters which Mr. Norton deprecates certainly do not seem very probable today; but they may be happening to-morrow.

The Saturday Review of LITERATURE

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Published weekly, by The Saturday Review Co., Inc., Henry S. Canby, President; Roy E. Larsen, Vice-President; Noble A. Cathcart, Secretary-Treasurer, 25 West 45th Street, New York. Subscription rates, per year, postpaid: in the U. S. and Mexico, \$3.50; in Canada, \$4; in Great Britain, 18 shillings; elsewhere, \$4.50. All business communications should be addressed to 25 West 45th Street, New York. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 1, 1879. Vol. IV. No. 37.

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