

called the Bodleian, there are, or were, two pictures facing each other; one of Christ, the other of Charles the First, known to a certain sect as Charles the Martyr; and the pictures are so much alike that, taken separately, it would be difficult to tell which was which. So far can the emotions of men carry them. There is also a book known as the Eikon Basilike, which professes to be the last thoughts of the martyred king; and though it was not written by him, it had every appearance of being his work, and so deceived many worthy persons. In a measure M. Béraud has created an Eikon of Robespierre, saint and martyr of the Revolution, as the good Dr. Gauden created an Eikon of Charles the First. His book—one of those "soul" histories which are so fashionable now, professes to be the work of Robespierre's devoted friend and follower, with him, or near him, in body as well as spirit from the beginning to the end. It is a very readable volume; one might wish it had some other qualities, but a judicial detachment is not the quality of a devotee, and we must not reproach the author with the lack of it, for that is no part of his purpose. As the publishers observe, he "abandons the traditional moral attitude for one of sympathy and intuition"; and when sympathy and intuition come in at the door, historical truth flies out of the window. One may admit every good quality of Robespierre that every advocate can bring forward; one may reject the old idea that he was a bloodthirsty monster; one may recognize that he was kind to his lady friend and good to his dog; but, as Lanfrey says, "C'est pas assez"—it is not enough! Else we could never admit that good men never do wrong, and bad men never do right in their public capacity. Perhaps no disinterested historian would deny that Robespierre and Mirabeau were at almost opposite ends of the moral scale in private life; what serious and responsible historian would deny that Mirabeau was a far greater statesman than Robespierre?

It is possible for men to say nowadays that when Marat died there passed the greatest constructive mind of the French Revolution, despite the fact that he accomplished nothing constructive. It is possible for men to say that Robespierre was a saint and a martyr; that those who overthrew him were merely ambitious scoundrels, seeking their own account. It will presently be possible to rehabilitate Hébert, because he lived with his wife in a comfortable bourgeois apartment, with two serving maids. Doubtless we shall have a glorification of Hanriot in time, of a like character. We may go lower still—though that is hardly conceivable. But have we not had nearly enough of special pleading on the French Revolution? Is it not time for us to put away these childish efforts to rehabilitate whatever character or party catches our fancy? Was not Lamartine's "History of the Girondins" enough of that sort of thing? Do we not live in a scientific age; and is not the truth even more interesting, if less probable than fiction? Certainly not; not so long, at least, as the issues raised by the French Revolution still live, and they will doubtless live as long as the system to which they gave impetus if not birth; not so long as emotion surpasses intellect even in historical writing. And that will be a long time.

Selling Ignorance

(Continued from page 677)

plained that too many books are published, too many magazines printed. Doubtless, but that too many good books and good magazines are read would be a conclusion no observer of contemporary opinion would ever be likely to form. Thousands of books, tens of thousands of articles, on the Great War have been published, and yet its most elementary lessons as to what brings on war and how it might be avoided, and as to what constitutes modern war and what it must mean for the warring community, seem to have made no entrance at all into the minds of the vast majority of citizens. They can still be sold militaristic ideals that were discredited (though not disused) by 1800, and conceptions of war, its nature, its methods, its probable results, which were stale by 1918. Ex-Admirals talk with a background of political conceptions that Erasmus would have sniffed at, and at the other extreme, ardent pacifists sell non-resistance with a complete disregard of the most elementary psychology. If the oncoming generation is decimated and the hopeful promise of this continent blighted, it will be, essentially, ignorance, remediable ignorance, that is responsible.

Foreign Policy

SURVEY OF AMERICAN FOREIGN RELATIONS, 1928. By CHARLES P. HOWLAND. Published for the Council on Foreign Relations. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1928.

FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES, 1915. SUPPLEMENT: Washington: Government Printing Office. 1928.

Reviewed by HENRY KITTREDGE NORTON

IN the midst of the buffeting of propaganda and counter-propaganda on the desirable relation between the British and American navies, here are two books which furnish a safe anchorage for those who wish to resolve the problem in their own minds on the basis of its essential factors rather than on emotional reverence for the dogmas of either militarism or pacifism. Neither of these two books is propaganda in the usually accepted meaning of the word. One is a calm, judicial discussion of the elements which enter into the determination of our foreign policy; the other is a selection from the correspondence of the State Department and its agents abroad relating to World War issues during the year 1915.

The first volume, dated 1928—which the editors confide to us really means 1927—is most excellent reading. It is such by virtue of the fact that it has recognized no necessity to confine its attention to the year 1927 or any other year. Instead, the editors have looked upon it as something of an introductory volume to the series which is to follow. Its first section is devoted to a study of American foreign policy viewed in retrospect; the second section depicts the growth of the economic power of the United States; the third section is a complete review of our relations with the League of Nations; the fourth, of our financial relations after the World War, and the fifth, of the post-war movement toward the limitation of armament. Each one of these five studies is excellently done. Rarely is greater "objectivity" attained. While now and again a phrase creeps in which would indicate that the editors thought that perhaps our attitude toward the League of Nations has been somewhat remiss, these remarks might as readily be ascribed to a tendency to be so fair as to bend slightly backward, as to an attempt to turn the argument in favor of America's joining the League.

The most timely of the five sections in view of the present discussion of the Kellogg Pact and the Naval Bill, is the last on limitation of armament. This section was written by Mr. Arthur Bullard, and in it he has marshalled in admirable fashion the results of a long and wide study of international problems. He reviews the efforts at disarmament which have been made at Geneva and the semi-successful Conference at Washington. He then discusses the Three-Power Conference at Geneva. While it may be cause for regret that Mr. Bullard has seen fit to repeat the criticism that adequate preparation was not made for the Geneva meeting, the regret is more over the form than the substance. Adequate preparation of the kind Mr. Bullard is discussing was not made; such preparation would have meant that everything was practically agreed upon before the conference convened and it could have gone through to a successful conclusion as did the conference at Locarno. There may also be cause for regret in Mr. Bullard's rather sweeping statement that the words "parity" and "equality" as applied to naval matters "are meaningless." He goes on in the next paragraph to show that they had at least two meanings, one of which was given them by the British delegates and the other by the American delegates.

These minor criticisms aside, Mr. Bullard has given us an extremely able presentation of the real issue between England and the United States on the question of naval parity. British opinion on this matter has so far been shaped by the Admiralty. The Admiralty's conception of the British navy is that of an instrument which under their direction can control the seas in time of war. This control has two purposes. First, to insure the uninterrupted supply of foodstuffs and raw materials to Great Britain in time of war, and second to interrupt the supplies of such material to Britain's enemies. This control is exercised in two ways. First, by the destruction of the hostile fleet, and second by the blockade of hostile ports.

The conflict of interest between the United States and Great Britain centers round the use of the blockade. America has for the most part been

a neutral in European conflicts. She has desired to trade with both parties. So long as the British navy controlled the seas, she has been able to trade with Great Britain. She has not been able to trade with Britain's enemies except on terms fixed by the British navy. In the old sailing-ship days munitions of war were considered contraband and certain supplies including foodstuffs were contraband if they were destined for the use of the armed forces of a belligerent. In other goods neutrals were supposed to have the right to trade with either belligerent without interference from their armed forces. In modern warfare, fought by nations in arms, any sort of supplies helps to stiffen the resistance of the nation receiving it. When that nation happens to be at war with Great Britain, and the British navy controls the seas, it requires only an Order in Council dictated by the Admiralty so to extend the law of contraband as to exclude practically all commerce with the enemies of Great Britain.

There are but two possible checks upon the arbitrary exercise of such power to control the seas. One is international law. This for the present, so far as the question of the freedom of the seas is concerned, is practically non-existent. The other check is a neutral navy sufficiently powerful so that the British Admiralty would prefer to sacrifice some of the advantages of its sea power rather than bring this neutral navy into the contest against it.

If those of a pacifist turn of mind are inclined to think that Mr. Bullard is merely supposing fictitious difficulties and imagining chimeras, they might well turn to the second volume under review and read of what actually happened during the year 1915 when we were neutrals and the British and the Germans were locked in a death struggle for the control of the sea. It was the British who first violated American rights as those rights are defined by American interpretations of international law. The British navy took what seemed to us utterly unwarranted liberty with our commerce, and the volume is rich in material for the consideration of those who belittle the differences between England and America. Our navy at the beginning of the War was not overly powerful, not sufficiently powerful, in fact, to deter the British Government from deciding to give its own navy a free hand in suppressing any trade which might in any way redound to Germany's advantage.

Then came the submarine campaign. Germany claimed it was by way of "reprisal" against Britain for her violations of international law. But the United States, a neutral, suffered from the reprisals in exactly the same way that Britain, the enemy, suffered. Furthermore, the British had interfered only with American ships and cargoes. The form of the German campaign resulted in the sacrifice of American lives. Its violation of international law, even though there was some justification for the "reprisal" claim, aroused the resentment against Germany in this country which finally took us into the War on the side of the Allies. It is impossible to say how history would have been changed if we had had in 1915 a navy such as we were acquiring when the Washington Conference was called.

This second of the Supplementary Volumes of Foreign Relations covering the special war issues maintains the high standard of the 1914 volume and makes its additional contribution to the documentary history of the diplomacy of the War. Although the events are not repeated in the present volume, the volume is for the continuance of this admirable work prepared by Dr. Dennett and Dr. Fuller of the State Department.

In connection with this review the studies of American relations by Philip Kerr and Walter Dill Scott, recently published in the SATURDAY REVIEW, will be found of interest.)

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Hyperspace

THE LIFE OF SPACE. By MAURICE MAETERLINCK. Translated by BERNARD MIALL. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1928. \$2.50.

Reviewed by RALPH M. EATON
Harvard University

RELIGIOUS mysticism always commands respect. The affirmation of faith in the last chapter of this book is the one clear element in the author's wanderings through the abstractions of Einsteinian mechanics and non-Euclidean geometry. M. Maeterlinck speaks the language of the mystic with telling effect but makes of the abstract ideas of science nothing more than fantastic nonsense. Through two-hundred pages he conjures with the magic words "fourth dimension," growing more obscure as he proceeds and ending with a confession of total ignorance upon which he founds his belief in God.

I bow before Him and am silent. The farther I push forward, the farther He withdraws His bounds. The more I reflect, the less I understand. The more I gaze, the less I see, and the less I see, the more certain am I that He exists; for if He does not exist there is nothingness everywhere, and who can conceive that nothingness exists? . . . If in this life I could know or conceive what God is, I would rather that I had never been, for the Universe would be merely an incomprehensible absurdity.

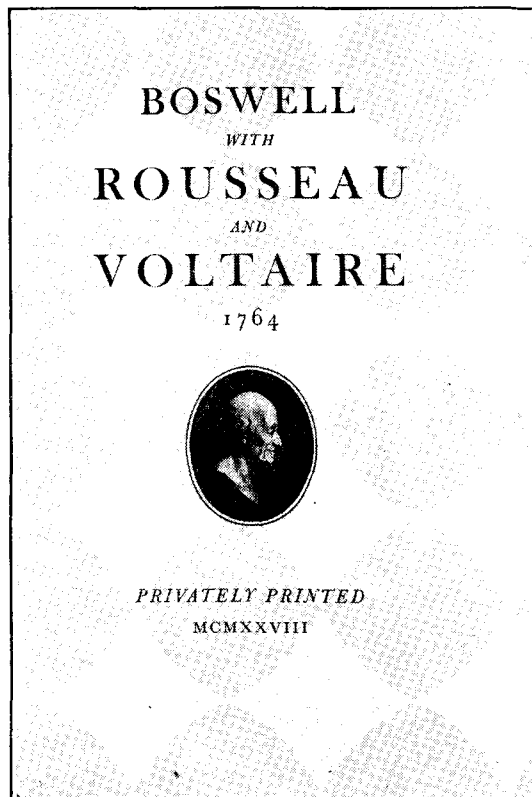
"The Life of Space" seems to have been inspired by Ouspensky's "Tertium Organum," to which M. Maeterlinck frequently refers. The spirit of the two books is the same. Both authors are hypnotized by the idea that time is a fourth dimension of space, upon which they believe the theory of relativity to be built. But the authoritative work on relativity from which M. Maeterlinck quotes, Professor A. S. Eddington's "Space, Time, and Gravitation," makes a different statement even in the passage quoted, "the real three-dimensional world is obsolete, and must be replaced by the four-dimensional space-time with non-Euclidean properties." Neither Professor Eddington nor any other relativity theorist believes that time is a fourth dimension of space. It is a fourth dimension of spatio-temporal events, of physical occurrences, but not of space alone. The difference is profound. For M. Maeterlinck time becomes a superspace in which our three-dimensional world has its being; the happening which we call time is illusion and unreality. "It would perhaps be simpler to declare at once what is probably the ultimate truth: that eternity, perpetual and universal simultaneity, or the eternal present, is the fourth dimension of space and time—that is, the greater unknown of two terms which comprise only the unknown." For the relativity theorists time is of the stuff of nature. The physical world is a related set of happenings within which time has its being. The three dimensions of space are abstractions from the concrete physical facts, which are completely described only when their fourth dimension of happening is taken into account. The concept of time as a fourth dimension of events is precise and verifiable; the concept of time as a fourth dimension of space is vague and contradictory to experience.

* * *

Interesting attempts to represent a fourth dimension of space in imagination have been made by Howard Hinton, an English mathematician, whose works M. Maeterlinck draws upon. It is easy to see that this effort of the imagination might lead to "months of labor and an intensity of a sort of delirium." But it is no trick at all to represent a four, five, or even an n -dimensional space in series, if we spare ourselves the effort of representing it in imagination. A series consists of objects arranged in an order. Space is a three-dimensional continuous series, that is, the series of points which make a line themselves from series of lines, which are planes, and these again form series of planes, which are cubes. We need only define a series abstractly and then conceive of a series of series, a series of series of series, and so on, as far as we like. There is no reason to stop at four dimensions. These mathematical concepts beyond three dimensions have no counterparts in the sensory world, but they are none the less consistent with themselves and easily understood. M. Maeterlinck argues that since mathematicians can construct such ideas space must be really four-dimensional; though he could equally well argue that it must be nine-hundred-and-nineteen-dimensional. He explains the three-dimensional

appearance of the world through the limitations of our senses. This is no different from holding that anything conceivable, fairyland or Alice's tea-party with the March Hare and the Mad Hatter, must exist and that we need only slough off our inadequate eyes and ears to perceive these things. Not a surprising belief for the author of "The Bluebird!"

The doctrine of "escape into the fourth dimension," preached both by Maeterlinck and Ouspensky, has as much foundation in modern mathematics as a doctrine of escape into Wonderland. The poet's imagination peoples his fictitious hyperspace with strange hyperspatial beings, and finally man himself freed from his three-dimensional body may traverse the interstellar distances and stray into remote worlds. The reader will do well to enjoy M. Maeterlinck's Wonderland and discount his science.



Title-page for Volume IV of the Isham "Boswell."

An Entertaining Trifle

ACCIDENT. By ARNOLD BENNETT. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1929. \$2.50.

Reviewed by GRACE FRANK

DESPISE its title and the railway crash from which it derives, this is a perfect book for train reading. Its short chapters give one a sense of covering much ground rapidly, and in the pauses between them one can glance surreptitiously at the snakeskin slippers of the lady over the way with no guilty feeling of betraying one's author. In fact the author's keen eye for the non-essentials of a railway journey and his ability to extract adventure from the least of them, will make even the spiked heels of an invisible neighbor potentially rich in romance.

This novel belongs to Mr. Bennett's lighter moments, those moments when, after dining extremely well at one of the luxurious hotels he so loves to describe, he apparently comes home and beguiles himself between midnight and bedtime by dashing off a few chapters of a "Mr. Prohack" or a "Denry the Audacious." At such times Mr. Bennett writes with gusto and perspicacity, his touch is always competent, sometimes expert, and the things he has to say are very diverting, if not precisely important.

In the present book we follow a successful executive off on a holiday from the moment that he leaves London in a train *de luxe* until he reaches Genoa—after a wreck and various other adventures—in a third-class carriage. Alan Frith-Walter, with his wealth and ease, his kindness and generosity, his small worries and his not very deep thoughts, sums up pretty fairly about ninety per cent of the successful executives one knows. He has an agreeable habit of shifting his angle of judgment so that the impossible people of his first impressions become quite companionable on second consideration, and, integrity itself in all his financial dealings, he is able to perform miracles even in a train *de luxe* by effectively administering small bribes. Only the head waiter, "at once defiant and intimidated," resists him for a moment: "he had the air of saying that for a tip of fifty francs you could not fairly expect the whole earth."

Usually, however, Mr. Frith-Walter expected the whole earth and got it. For six pounds a week and a sympathetic demeanor he had secured the services of "a creature mysterious and divine," his perfect private secretary. With a sympathetic demeanor—which did not always square with his thoughts—he attempted to placate his daughter-in-law, Pearl, when she unexpectedly appeared on the train and told him that she was running away from his son, Jack, because the boy had gone Labor. "But he won't stay Labor," said Alan at a venture. . . . "No," said she, with the very faintest well-bred sneer as she took a fresh cigarette, "he'll be Communist next."

The book proceeds smoothly something like that, and in the end it makes very little difference whether Jack goes Labor and loses Pearl or stays Tory and keeps her. As a matter of fact, Mr. Bennett's solution is more original than either of these possibilities, but he holds his readers' attention less by his plot than by his humorous fooling with people and things—especially things—along the way. Not to be ranked with "The Old Wives' Tale," the Clayhanger trilogy, or "Riceyman Steps," nor even with "Mr. Prohack," "Accident" is nevertheless an entertaining trifle, wise, amusing, and unusually well-written for so slight a venture.

Life and Miss Parker

NETTLE HARVEST. By SYLVIA DENYS HOOKE. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1928. \$2 net.

Reviewed by AMY LOVEMAN

MISS JANE PARKER, born to a realization of the circumscribed existence that was hers on the morning of her forty-fourth birthday and sallying forth on the impulse of the moment to challenge life, adventured richly for a time only to end by plucking the flower, safety, out of the nettle, danger, that was living. Between her sudden impetuous departure from the discreet routine of a quiet London neighborhood and her return to the unamiable amenities of its circle, lay a round of experiences, fantastic, painful, and surprising that would have shocked a less complacent soul into expansion. But Miss Parker came through them affrighted rather than enriched, uncomfortably aware that life for most of mankind was a battle whose aftermath was suffering and guerdon courage to endure the pains of the spirit, but determined to suffocate the uneasiness that stirred within her in the security of mission teas and Cheyslemore Square.

For Miss Parker quailed before life as her excursion into the Hovingdale countryside revealed it, quailed before the fact that life had brought to Anne Leaf, into whose home she stumbled, illness, and a love that could know no fulfillment, and eventually forced renunciation; that to Anne Leaf's brother, wearing the pathos of his mild lunacy as evidence of his mortal hurt, it had meant the fullness of love and the agony of losing it; that to the artist who loved her it had brought a hopeless struggle between a reverent passion and the obligations of an uncongenial marriage; that even to his adolescent daughter it meant pain and turmoil of soul. Life proved too much for Miss Parker; she fled it, and returned to her neat, ordered existence to resume its petty duties and pleasures. She marked her return to its safety by sitting down to a conventional Cheyslemore Square lunch of a new-laid egg and some bread and butter and some tea. And, says Miss Hooke, "she ate the egg solemnly, as if it were a rite like the purification of women after childbirth, cleansing her from the stains and pollutions of her contact with Life."

It is a quiet, but excellent, story that Miss Hooke has written, delicate in its intuitions, subtle in its analysis, and tempering its ironical humor with a sympathy that is ready but not sentimental. Those who enjoy good craftsmanship will follow its chronicle with a pleasure that derives as much from the skilful unfolding of the tale as from the incidents and characters that make its story.

Margaret Carlyle Aitken, a niece of Thomas Carlyle, has presented over seven hundred autographed letters of her uncle to the Scottish National Library.

The archives of Schwyz in Switzerland, among which are documents about the legend of William Tell, and other historical treasures, are to be made accessible to the public.