

The Saturday Review

of LITERATURE

EDITED BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

VOLUME VI

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JULY 27, 1929

NUMBER 1

The Farm and the Novel

THE recent extensive discussion of farm relief legislation in Congress and the press has catapulted into the public consciousness a figure which hitherto has played far less a rôle in the literature of this country than it has in that of European nations,—the farmer. For all its far-flung agricultural lands—perhaps, indeed, because they are so far-flung—the United States has never had a literature of the soil in the sense in which Great Britain or the Scandinavian countries have developed it. We have had, of course, novels dealing with the life of the farmer,—fine ones of late, like Edna Ferber's "So Big" and Ellen Glasgow's "Barren Ground,"—we have had tales in plenty that begin in the farm and end in the cities, we have had innumerable "Wild West" stories with the ranch for background, but with the exception of the latter which have partaken of the character of tales of adventure, they have been more or less sporadic incidents in the general progression of our literature.

They have been so largely, of course, because of the facts of our history. We have been pioneers, ever on the move, constantly striding on from one section of the country to another, and adventuring from one field of endeavor to a different. We have never as individuals been tied to the soil as was the European of feudal days and of necessity the peasant of the present, and always as a people have been too migratory, too fluent in our social composition, to achieve a tradition of service or attachment to it. The truck farmer of New England or Pennsylvania of one decade was the grain grower of the prairies in the next, and the graingrower of the plains became the urbanite and captain of industry of a following generation. We need no further evidence of that than the personnel of President Hoover's Farm Commission.

In America two conditions have prevailed fairly generally in rural sections. In the thickly settled districts farms have been small, and the village has impinged its social life upon them or the city drawn them into its orbit. In the grain and cattle country holdings have been vast, so vast as to have imposed an isolation upon the farmer which while it intensely focussed activity and interest within its own sector operated to decentralize community life. That life of cot and wold which a thousand English novels and poems have depicted is practically unknown in America, and correspondingly absent from our literature. What our fiction has in the main portrayed is not life on the farm, but escape from the farm, or, when it is sentimentally inclined, return to the farm. Or it has exalted the "great, open spaces," and stressed the spectacular and romantic elements of life where "men are men."

Moreover, the great body of our literature of the soil has been produced not by writers who are a part of the life of the countryside but by those who from the distance of the town look back upon it with a distaste born of early laborious and unstimulating days or with a romantic yearning for the simplicity and quietude no longer to be achieved. In addition, so epic at times has been the advance of American agricultural development, that fiction has again and again concentrated interest on its dramatic rather than on its usual aspects. Such a book, for instance, as Cornelia Cannon's "Red Rus'," for all its portrayal of the monotony, the struggle, and the disappointments of the agriculturist, introduces into its story an epic element that quite swamps its pastoral quality. Yet in depicting its hero's struggle to plant

Everyman

By SIEGFRIED SASOON

THE weariness of life that has no will
To climb the steepening hill:
The sickness of the soul for sleep, and to
be still.

And then once more the impassioned pygmy fist
Clenched cloudward and defiant;
The pride that would prevail, the doomed protagonist
Grappling the ghostly giant.

Victim and venturer turn by turn; and then
Set free to be again
Companion in repose with those who once were men.

Regional Portraiture*

By HOWARD W. ODUM
University of North Carolina

BLACK ULYSSES at the late war sustains a fine continuity and rhythm in his recurring motif, "This old world's rollin' on. . . . Been mighty change since I been born . . . change where I been, never changed me." Nor does he essay less when he affirms with simple force that "What you read about in the books I can tell you and mo' 'cause I was there, Lawdy, Lawd, I was there."

A review of recent literature by and about the Negro might convince one that Black Ulysses is not so far from the truth after all. There has been a mighty change, and the Negro has been "there." The turn of a century, the rise of an epoch, the aftermath of a conflict, the stirrings of a social process—these are always of importance in their elemental significance to people and nation. This is particularly true of the Negro. In no aspect of the American scene perhaps has recent transformation been more marked or development more accelerated than that in which the intellectual Negro has played his part. To say that it is an unusual record is commonplace. Robert E. Park has referred to this importance as a new philosophy of life, a rational basis of new hopes, new attitudes, and new racial and social traits. It is important, therefore, he thinks, to judge Negro literature as an "integral part of a single tradition, and as a unique collective experience." And Allain Locke has referred to this new expression as a sort of composite picture of the new Negro mind and spirit reflecting its influence upon Negro life.

And yet it is doubtful whether there is a "new Negro" except as there is a "new" South and a "new" Times. Again, Black Ulysses may be right: "Change where I been, never changed me." For the first time conditions make it possible for the Negro to tell more of what he thinks, and to express with some degree of freedom what he has long thought. This expression has been achieved not only with artistry, but also with frankness. And the measure of it has been a story convincing and satisfying, vivid, factual, and objective. In 1928, Mr. Locke in his "A Decade of Negro Self-Expression" listed more than six score such contributions, to which have been added since that time others of distinction.

Alongside the American Negro's own literary record of his cultural development during the decade immediately following the Great War there have appeared contributions from white authors presenting many aspects of Negro life and experience. And allowing for much that is false and superficial there still remains a considerable body of literature which purports not only to describe Negro life but also to portray universal human experience in terms of folk expression and folk patterns.

This combination of Negro and white authors has resulted in what appears to be a substantial con-

- * WHAT THE NEGRO THINKS. By ROBERT RUSSELL MOTON. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 17 \$2.50.
ROPE AND FAGGOT. By WALTER W. YORK: Alfred A. Knopf. 1929. \$3.
BANJO. By CLAUDE MCKAY. New York: 1929. \$2.50.
BLACK MAGIC. By PAUL MORAN. Viking Press. 1929. \$3.
NIGGER TO NIGGER. By E. YORKE: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1 THE AMERICAN NEGRO. The Am. Academy of Political and Social Sc

This Week

"Dictionary of American Biography."
Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS.

"Men and Machines."
Reviewed by ORSWYD TEAD.

"The Prophet's Wife."
Reviewed by DOUGLAS TYACKE.

"Vivandière."
Reviewed by GARRETT MATTINGLY.

Hakluyt's "Voyages."
Reviewed by CAPTAIN DAVID BONE.

"The Greek Anthology."
Reviewed by ALFRED R. BELLINGER.

The Bowling Green.
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

Recent Astronomical Books.
Reviewed by HENRY NORRIS RUSSELL.

Next Week, or Later

The Anniversary.
By FRANK SIMONDS.

a wheat that would withstand the ravages of nature Mrs. Cannon has but taken a page from our history.

What with the telephone, the radio, and the automobile rural America is rapidly being robbed of its isolation and its individuality. Not so many years ago statistics showed an appalling amount of insanity among farmers' wives which was ascribed to the loneliness of their existence; today mail order houses everywhere are finding it necessary to establish retail stores to hold the trade of the farmer who finds it more to his liking to motor to a shopping center than to order from a catalogue. When the radio carries to the remotest farm house a political speech, the latest vaudeville quip, or the first rumbling of a European imbroglio at the same instant that it reaches the city dweller, there can no longer be a rural population markedly different in outlook and interest from the urban. Curiously enough at the moment when American literature has come more than ever to look to the American scene for its themes, one part at least of that scene is losing much of its distinctiveness for literature. We shall, of course, have novels of farm life in the future,—

(Continued on page 4)

ution and continuing promise to literature enough what we may call regional portraiture. And particular such promise seems imminent in the South, extending as well to other folk-backgrounds and patterns as to the Negro. It is, as it were, the presentation of regional truth or situations through a sort of romantic realism. Or it is, again, the attempt to portray universal experience in terms of regional patterns. And the range of possible contributions extends all the way from a task in social analysis to a Pulitzer award in drama or fiction.

Here is the President of Tuskegee, in the heart of the South, writing frankly and with simple eloquence and good taste about what the Negro himself thinks of the experiences to which he is subjected because of his race and color. "The Negro thinks" that he "faces handicaps, suffers discriminations, is meted injustices, which make of the race the most underprivileged group in American life." And perhaps he is only "thinking out loud" when he affirms that he wants "that equality of opportunity which is the pride of America." And again "the thinking Negro wants for himself and his children the same things the white man wants for himself and his children." The "Negro thinks" further that there is "no essential difference between white people and black people to warrant such discrimination as is practiced against all Negroes . . . no ideals or standards to which the white man has attained of which the Negro is not capable." Once again the Negro thinks the white man's boast that he "knows the Negro" is but evidence of how little he does know about the race. Such a boast is received by the Negro with a faint and knowing smile, but on the other hand the Negro thinks he knows far more about the white man than the white man knows about the Negro. And many white men who have come to think clearly are convinced that such is the case.

Many other thoughts of the Negro hitherto not expressed in this way are set forth with studied effort to avoid luridness and extremes. Two recent incidents reflect illuminating commentaries upon

largest auditorium of the day, the two other speakers being Governor Gardner and President Brooks of the North Carolina State College of Agriculture and Engineering—both natives of the old North State. And still later Mr. Moton addressed a mixed audience in the courthouse of a South Georgia town in which one block of the crowd was composed of young women from a white denominational woman's college in that city. And he was well received. Over against this, of course, is the flare up over the De Priest incident at Washington which revealed clearly that the white South is not thinking because it is inconceivable that the South which has shown such appreciation of Mr. Moton's book would comment editorially upon the White House incident as it did except in unthinking reactions and political moods.

"What the Negro Thinks" tells a fair story also of recent progress, erring rather on the side of conservatism. It discusses the key problems of dissatisfaction, seeking to tell "an interested public where the hurt is." These are chiefly in attitudes, in the courts, in common carriers, in schools, in housing and community opportunities, in government and politics, in public sentiment, and especially in the failure of the white man to let the Negro have adequate part in helping solve his own problem. Withal, however, the book is optimistic and shows unusual perspective and poise. Its publication and reception mark an epoch for both races.

"Rope and Faggot" presents a still more frank discussion of many aspects of the race question. While having for its sub-title "A Biography of Judge Lynch," it really takes lynching, regarded as of "only minor importance," as an occasion for presenting a regional "symptom of a malodorous economic and social condition." So the various "ingredients" are considered—economic forces, race prejudice, religion, sex, politics, journalism, and theories of racial superiority and inferiority. These are undoubtedly elements, just as they are elements of other major social problems and they should be treated. The book is undoubtedly the most vivid account that has appeared of the lynching situation in America. All that is said against lynching

and lynchers should be said and more. And it should be repeated. This book, too, represents an important stage in the expression of what the Negro thinks. In some ways it contrasts with Mr. Moton's book. Whereas "What the Negro Thinks" aims rather "to speak the truth in love," "Rope and Faggot" tends rather toward bitter characterization and attack. Certainly both patterns are important and it would be unusual, if the author of "Rope and Faggot," with his experiences, training, and viewpoints, should not adopt his present mode.

There is much, however, to criticize in the book. It seems unfortunate that lynching should be considered a minor matter rather than made a basic, vivid, objective. By treating so many of the fundamental economic, social, and psychic factors of civilization the author has divided attention and energies. The effort to apply too many aspects of science to the problem weakens the whole treatment and confuses the issue. In seeking to be "scientific" there has been danger of the unscientific treatment, and in passing judgments upon many men of science the author needlessly brings into the attention disturbing currents.

In attacking so many authors as "scientists who seek to rationalize . . . to find data which confirm their preconceived notions" . . . and in ascribing to so many "the human propensity to believe those things that coincide with one's prejudice and interests, and the equally human inclination to disregard all evidence, however sound and unquestionable, which runs contrary to those prejudices and interests," Mr. White sets up controversy which need not enter into the problem of lynching about which there should be no controversy. And he lays himself open to the same attack when he accuses pseudo-scientists all those who disagree with his views of race, while acclaiming as "scholarly scientists worthy of the name" all those who thus set up Hankins, severe critic of the Negro, as contributing to the prejudice which "play an insignificant part in making lynching seem an unnecessary departure from the hand."

monotony. And yet they are admirable examples of effective portraiture and of the theme of "what the Negro thinks," in which they present many samplings, illuminating indeed to the white man who "knows the Negro." Here indeed, in "Banjo" is the Negro: "American, West Indian, Senegalese, British West African and East African blacks and mulattoes, a goodly gang of them, and one little brown woman." Here appear frankness and artistry, naturalness and abandon, from Bugsy who hates "white folks like pi'son" and "finished with life as he had lived it, a belligerent, hard-fisted black boy" to the "book fellah" whose mind might tell him to do one thing and "them books persweah" him to do another. Here are vivid expressions of what the Negro thinks in such variety as to represent regional portraiture, but far from the southern scene.

If Mr. DuBois, although characterizing Claude McKay as an international Negro, nevertheless feels that "Banjo" has "the characteristic reaction of the West Indian who does not thoroughly know his America," so Walter White, author of "Rope and Faggot" and collaborator in the translation of "Black Magic," thinks Paul Morand is sometimes far from accuracy in his portraiture of what the Negro does and thinks. Nevertheless, "Black Magic's" story, gleaned from "30,000 miles" in "twenty-eight Negro countries," is full of vivid portraiture, as Black Ulysses would say "all sorts and kinds." Four stories from the United States, one from the West Indies, and three from Africa comprise the pattern. How much there is of poetic license, such as has appeared in many recent volumes dealing with Africa, the black man and magic, in Morand's portraiture, this reviewer is unable to say. One thing seems clear, and that is that several persons to whom he has submitted the book find it fascinating reading, and undoubtedly the book presents vivid pictures.

Once again, in the last two volumes listed the scene and types of portraiture shift rapidly, nevertheless continuing with much of what the Negro thinks. "Nigger to Nigger," while set in the Negro colloquial pattern of the common man, might also be entitled the musings and reflections of the folk-

wise Negro about the customs, morals, and doings of the white folks—buckra and high. And if there is poetic license which allows for varied interpretation of the Negro's feelings and thoughts through the keen interpretation of the white man, that is nevertheless portraiture for power and appeal. "It's hard sometimes to understand a white folk's mind," says the chief speaker. And hard to understand 'own, for "I have thought an' dream, an' I d' beautiful dream, but it seem like I ain' kin + dream. . . . I come from wey de door is I come to wey it still is closed. All I go an' dey is drowned." And again, "w' a poor helpless ooman, tears an' w' a flower. . . ."

"Nigger to Nigger" is full of examples of portraiture, rich in humor and pathos, in folk-tale, in philosophy and beauty. These can be enjoyed by reading the book, and we turn now to the final volume, "The American Negro," a special issue of the *Annals* of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. Its "portraiture" again is different—the story of the most significant "information brought forth in the last few years . . . knowledge of the distinctly cultural attainments of its leaders as well as of cold economic and social statistics of the masses," presented in a series of pictures by some twenty-five white, and sixteen Negro, authors. The manner of the volume is characteristic of the present movement in that its chief editorial advisor was Charles S. Johnson of Fisk University, and the book itself was distinguished with jacket in color design by Aaron Douglas and frontispiece by J. L. Wells, both Negro artists who chose subjects "symbolic of the more recent industrial contribution of their race to American Progress." The aggregate picture presented in this volume is composed of seven parts, relating respectively to race relations, the Negro as an element in the population of the United States, the legal status of the Negro in the United States, the economic achievement of the Negro, the mental ability and achievement of the Negro, organization for social betterment, and race relations in other lands. Of the pictures presented ten have been

Perhaps it will not be amiss for this reviewer to look at the picture represented by these and other similar volumes, and report some of the things which he thinks he sees there. On the part of the Negro authors: Literary portraits reflecting a new realism. A new frankness and courage to face facts without fear, excitement, or apologies. Pride and artistry in the rediscovery and interpretation of a rich folk-background of the race. Acclaim of youthful authors, valued and valuable, but not infallible or supremely mature. A new understanding of the challenge to achieve universal, as well as racial, standards of excellence. Race consciousness and urge alongside integral participation in American life and cultural development. A race and a national epoch. The promise of balance and poise in an over-enthusiastic and highly charged atmosphere. A new tolerance, charity, and patience. A mellowed bitterness. A mature vision of racial coöperation, race development, and understanding. A new outlook and with it a new zest, well tempered by the twin forces of opportunity and obligation. The Negro author may see this and more, or he may see something less and of a different sort.

On the part of white authors: An important minority group manifesting an increasing knowledge of the Negro, a natural sympathy, and a coöperative venture in helping the Negro take his earned place in the tide and affairs of the present era. James Weldon Johnson, without agreeing to all the portraiture of the white authors, still believes their work to be one of the major factors in the present development. There appears to be further: An appreciation of the artistic elements and background in Negro life and experience. An effort to influence the public to "look at" rather than "feel about" the Negro, to see him as he really is rather than as he might be or as the white man has thought he was or ought to be. The recognition of a neglected field of literature and evolution of folklore, folk songs, and folk patterns . . . and much more. But we should much prefer to know what the Negro thinks about this part of the present scene, from his viewpoint.

From Barsotti to Brazer

DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY. Edited by ALLEN JOHNSON. Volume II: Barsotti to Brazer. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1929.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

NOT less thorough, scholarly, or valuable than the first volume, this second installment of our own Dr. Johnson's Dictionary carries its roster of notable Americans from Charles Barsotti, who founded and edited *Il Progresso*, to John Brazer, a Unitarian clergyman who expounded transcendentalism before Emerson. The diminution in interest is due to the comparative paucity of distinguished names. There are no great groups here like the Adamses and Bancrofts; there is not a single President, though the first volume had three; there are no really eminent statesmen save Benton and Blaine, and no great generals, writers, or scientists. It is true that two famous newspaper dynasties are represented, the Bowles family and the James Gordon Bennetts, while in politics we have the Blairs, the Blands, and the Bayards, and on the stage the Booths. But on the whole it is a volume of minor figures. The test for editors and authors is all the more severe for this: it is more difficult to utter the significant and adequate facts about a man in five hundred words than in five thousand, and to obtain any facts at all on an obscure person often means laborious search in original records. But however successful, a gallery of little men will not hold the reader so well as a gallery in which we can look for household names and towering figures.

Once more the even-handed attention of the editors to all sides of American achievement, avoiding that excessive attention to letters and politics which has marked previous compilations of the kind, is notable. The essay-sketches (for such they are) of the major artists in this volume, Paul Bartlett and Karl Bitter, both written by Adeline Adams, are especially good: closely-packed, vivid, discriminating. Industry is represented by some names which should be more familiar to Americans than they are. There are, of course, Etienne Boré, who founded the sugar-industry of Louisiana, and George Henry Bissell, who was the first American to divine the commercial possibilities of petroleum, who organized the first oil-company, and who first suggested boring for oil. The railway builders find a representative in Frederick Billings, to whom the chief credit for the completion of the Northern Pacific, so long usurped by Henry Villard, should unquestionably go. It is pleasant to find ample space given to humanitarian workers like Charles Loring Brace, founder of the Children's Aid Society, Henry Bergh, founder of the S. P. C. A., and Henry Ingersoll Bowditch, pioneer leader of the public health movement in America. (Unfortunately only fifteen lines out of three columns go to Bowditch's health work, though it is stated to be his "greatest service," and his activities as a pioneer of model housing are ignored.) Mme. Blavatsky is here, with an entertaining account of her theosophical crusade and her personality—"she was enormously corpulent, was slovenly in dress, gorged herself on fat meat, smoked incessantly, and swore like a trooper." Even distinction in crime again appears as a warrant to immortality. Billy the Kid, already a legendary figure in the Southwest, could not be overlooked, and there is a graphic sketch of Sam Bass, horse-thief and desperado. But Lizzie Borden of the ax and the forty whacks has been omitted.

In point of scholarship the volume again seems well-nigh impeccable. Readers will once more note the inevitable and probably on the whole proper tendency of writers dealing with a controversial figure to present him in a favorable light. One would not suspect from the otherwise able sketch of Thomas F. Bayard that his services as ambassador to England were distinctly disappointing not merely to Congress (the House passed a resolution of censure) but to Cleveland, to Secretary Olney, and to the more discerning English leaders. To him attaches much of the blame for the unnecessary gravity assumed by the Venezuela affair. Nicholas Biddle, "littérateur, scholar, statesman, financier," as he is here described, has of course long been a centre of warring opinions. He is an attractive figure, and it is proper to present him as "a great gentleman and scholar"; but it is impossible to understand him, his disastrous failure in politics, and his partial failure as a financier, without mentioning his weaknesses—and they are not even hinted at. Even some of his

virtues were dangerous. As William Graham Sumner has said, his polished pen, used in letter-writing, "ran away with him." He was a bit too much of a great gentleman, and he flaunted his greatness and gentlemanliness too boldly for the Jacksonian era. The same softening of tones appears in the portrait of the fiery, irritable, restless Frank P. Blair, whose proper element was hot water and who always kept in it. Why say that Blair in 1864 made a speech in Congress "against Secretary Chase and the Radicals whom he derisively called Jacobins?" Blair was never so mild; he made a speech against Chase whom he angrily called corrupt. There is much in this valuable account of Frank Blair (as of his brother Montgomery Blair) which appears for the first time; but the rugged pugnacity of the man hardly has proper emphasis.

With little doubt the two most difficult subjects in the volume were James G. Blaine and Henry Ward Beecher; and the treatments, by Carl Russell Fish and Harris E. Starr respectively, are masterly. Professor Fish marks Blaine's contributions to our foreign policy as his chief title to remembrance, and ably defines these contributions. Mr. Starr sums up the Beecher-Tilton affair with a few judicious words, and devotes most of his paper to a lucid and penetrating exposition of Beecher's intellectual, moral, and emotional qualities, and the part they played in his career. Not less able are some of the briefer sketches, like that of John Wilkes Booth; while here and there are scattered original contribu-



SHEEP SHEARING

From "The Woodcut," edited by Herbert Furst. (London: The Fleurbaey. New York: Random House.)

tions to knowledge of great importance. The biography of Robert Montgomery Bird, by Arthur Hobson Quinn, for example, built almost entirely upon manuscript materials, does something to establish in his proper place a writer who seems to have been unjustly neglected because till recently his plays remained unpublished. So with William Bartram, the naturalist, by Lane Cooper; with Jeremiah S. Black, by Roy S. Nichols; and with Park Benjamin, by William B. Cairns. These contain facts which have never before been placed in print, and which will be welcomed by a multitude of students. Throughout, the volume is lit up by characteristic anecdotal bits and quotations chosen for their light upon personality. It is interesting to read of the loyal Yankee named Josiah Bartlett, who, attending in London in 1783 a play in which the American soldiers were caricatured as riff-raff, sprang up and shouted: "Hurrah, Great Britain beaten by barbers, tailors, and tinkers!" It is interesting to know that on the tombstone of Sam Bass, the desperado, is the inscription, "A brave man reposes in death here. Why was he not true?" It may be predicted that the literary expertness and polish of this undertaking will increase as the contributors seize the opportunity of modelling their work upon the best sketches already published.

The student cannot do without these volumes. The general reader should make their acquaintance. Even an idle perusal of these pages will teach anyone something of the variety of American character and the strange contrasts of the American scene. Here side by side, under the shelter of the second word of the alphabet, are the idealistic reformer, James G. Birney, and the bribe-taker, Secretary Belknap; the Civil War photographer, Matthew Brady, and the recklessly charming playwright, Dion Boucicault; the President Bascom who at Wisconsin inspired LaFollette, and Blennerhasset with his tragic story of ruin at Aaron Burr's hands; Judah P. Benjamin, who made a career under three flags, and the Sieur de Bienville, so gallantly loyal to one. Here are the essential facts of their lives, the chief traits of their characters, and the reasons for their importance in American history, carefully and clearly set forth.

Ethics Under Mac

MEN AND MACHINES. By STUART CHASE. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1929.

Reviewed by ORDWAY TEAD

IF Walter Lippmann's recent book is correctly characterized as a "Preface to Morals," Stuart Chase's latest reflections constitute a remarkably complementary preface to ethics. He here joins forces with those few evaluators of modern life who are incisive because increasingly realistic. Indeed Mr. Chase is in the front rank of observers who refuse to be swept off their feet by sentiment or diverted from the main issues because of bad training or retrospective ideals. He is incorrigibly a modern, healthily robustious, vigorously hopeful in the manner of the true creator with the will to insight.

This book is concerned with the incidence of machinery upon modern life in all its manifold ramifications. Numerous of the pessimistic prophets are quoted to show how great a volume of opinion is abroad that we are going to the dogs because of machinery,—either directly in the case of the machine tenders, or indirectly in our capacity as machine owners, or as users of the vast outpourings of today's mechanical productivity. A whole range of subsidiary issues is considered in order to discover whether machinery has helped more than it has hurt. He weighs in successive chapters the influences of monotony, the loss of hand skill, social standardization, poor quality of goods, unwise use of leisure, technological unemployment. The evidence adduced to show that things are not as bad as they may seem and that, on the whole, the benefits outweigh the evils is not, of course, statistically conclusive for the simple reason that adequate supporting data on those problems have never been compiled. But by a judicious use of the sampling method over a wide range of partial documentary sources, the author shows that at least he has more facts on his side than have the apostles of futility and gloom. And he further shows that these consequences are not as yet beyond human control, but may by deliberate effort be brought more and more into harmony with human well-being.

Particularly sound and timely is his insistence that machine is not the nightmare of widespread mental undoing that it has often been portrayed by the contemporary successors of Blake and Ruskin. The number of industrial workers exposed to the most deadening processes of labor is progressively decreasing. The true character and effect of the work is often not so restrictive as it seems to the observer. And to a certain extent the worker finds his mental level in work—a tendency which could be definitely assisted by conscious study and control. The conclusion is that on the whole machinery is not fostering a race of morons but is rather coming progressively under the direction of human agents who are more and more using it to abate drudgery and lessen the stultifying, disheartening labors of the modern Sisyphus.

Not that this is any pollyanna discussion or whitewashing of the outside of an unwholesome sepulchre! Mr. Chase is a quantitative student whenever quantities are available to be studied. And in his analysis three outstanding problems remain as preëminently serious, stubborn, and challenging to possible progress. These are the dangers of mechanized warfare, which are painted as horrific beyond words; of "technological tenuousness" which leaves no one individual with knowledge of more than a very small fraction of the technical resources necessary to order his life; of the "mounting drain upon natural resources" which may soon deplete the supply of certain necessary raw materials leaving no adequate substitute available.

He thus leaves a clear picture of a group of problems which can be controlled if we will and of three which require the soberest consideration. With this evaluation of the relative seriousness of the several results of machinery's introduction, I find myself in complete agreement.

The last chapter, dealing with the "billion wild horses" of mechanical energy whose power machinery today releases, outlines a problem of functional control of economic forces of tremendous magnitude. Beware delegating executive functions, warns Mr. Chase in a way that suggests the present efforts of a Ramsay MacDonald, to lawyers, actors, bankers, orators, professional labor leaders, politicians, or radicals. We can come to working and tolerable terms with the machine only by taking thought, by creative