

Books of Special Interest

The Mystery of Pain

THE UNKNOWN WARRIOR. By PAUL RAYNAL. Translated by CECIL LEWIS. New York: The Century Co. 1928. \$2.50.

Reviewed by JANE DRANSFIELD

"I WILL write what I enjoy writing," cries Orlando. Bravo! So shall I. Therefore, casting aside some other volumes, I shall write about this play of Paul Raynal's. It is a beautiful play and yields much. Justifiably, one feels, it raised its author, hitherto only the writer of a comedy, "Le Maître de Son Cœur," into the front ranks of the dramatists of young France, along with Lenormand, Gantillon, and Jean-Jacques Bernard. It is of to-day, fluent yet analytical. It is from the imagination and the spirit. In production it has achieved notable success in Paris, Berlin, Vienna, and Copenhagen. Why it was only a moderate success in England (even though George Bernard Shaw said of it: "It was almost worth having war to have so fine a play"), and why it so suddenly collapsed here on its recent production on Broadway, we hope will be somewhat clear when we have finished.

We did not see the Broadway production, but on the best authority we have it that this was a replica of the English production, and that the text was word for word as in this translation by Cecil Lewis. And on excellent authority also we learn that the play failed because of its vagueness, no one seeming to know at any one particular time just what it was all about. The critics were as fuddled as the audience. All agreed that there must be something worth while behind the mystical symbolism to which the production was keyed, but what that something was floated away in the dim heights of the poetic scenery on the unintelligible chanting of the actors. But why the symbolic presentation? It strikes us that it would have been better to let the symbolism take care of itself, or even to drop it out altogether, and to give the play quite naturally and simply as the human document it is, the poignant story of a French soldier who served in the War, and of his father, and Aude, the soldier's beautiful young fiancée. In fact, this "symbolism" thrust on the play (though partly Raynal's fault) is the cause of its undoing. The French title is "Le Tombeau sous l'Arc de Triomphe." Of course, "The Unknown Warrior" is not The Unknown Soldier, yet the phrases are so close that the mind instantly wings to Arlington. By no stretch of the imagination, however, can Raynal's Soldier, either in characterization or story, be identified with the one who sleeps on the banks of the Potomac. Moreover, this Soldier as portrayed is not a type, not even of the *poilu*. He is an individual, by birth and training an aristocrat, a youth of intelligence and even caustic wit, his service in the ranks being voluntary from a sense of duty. The furore that the play caused on its première at the Comédie Française in that it seemed to attack the patriotism of the French *poilu*, therefore subsided when the truculent audience realized its mistake.

For Raynal's drama is not in its essence a "war play," even though its American publishers so announce it. Nor (again to quote the publisher's announcement) do its three characters pass "through all the pangs of love, disillusionment, hatred, reconciliation, hope, despair," because they are "war-crazed, all three, and they become sober again only at the moment of the *poilu's* departure—to a certain death." True, the War is the background. Raynal served in Flanders and was wounded, and from the torture of his experience arose the white passion in which the work was conceived. True it is also that this passion carries Raynal into his creation, and from the Soldier's lips falls scathing denunciation: "War has lost its prestige. Men used to worship its banners and trumpets, its blood and bravery. Now they give it its real name: drudgery. The most wearing, monotonous, disgusting of drudgeries." In such passages Raynal speaks even as does Ford Madox Ford in "No More Parades." And who of us can read unmoved the Soldier's plea for remembrance? Well might this plea be engraved at Arlington, Westminster, at the Place de l'Etoile.

But what happens in the story? It is the Soldier's fourteen months' service in the War that has brought him to new evaluations; carried him "beyond conventions, laws, ceremonies" up to the plane of "the absolute," where he comes face to face with simple truth. And it is on this plane that the action of the drama takes place. That this action goes on in the realm of the sub-

jective rather than the objective makes it no less real, no less biting. Every moment something is changing in the souls of the three people involved, all tending toward the dénouement, the triumph of the spirit. Step by step Aude is advancing to the final splendor of her love: through intricate self-questioning as to the seeming loss of this love by physical denial because of the lover's long absence; through pity that leads her to give herself to this lover in "le plus pur de tous des mariages" without sanction of law or religion, whether this pity be for the Soldier who must die so soon, or for herself that she might "tear myself out of myself"; and even through the conception, so impossible at the moment, of accepting happiness on earth when her lover is gone. And step by step the Soldier and the Father advance each to his own ultimate triumph—the Soldier over his human need of love's satisfactions, the Father over his self-importance. The play, therefore, closes on a note of exultation that partakes of religious ecstasy. Is, then, Raynal contradictory that while the *cantus figuratus* of his play is a denunciation of war, yet its *cantus firmus* seems its praise, since it is war that has lifted his characters to their heights? Well, in "La Vita Nuova" Dante does not praise death, yet by the death of Beatrice he is lifted into "a new conception born of grieving love." This is the mystery of pain and of the spirit's triumph.

And it is this mystery, not war, which is the theme of this play. Raynal's dedication shows this clearly in the last line. The sleeper under the Arc de Triomphe "dreams of the glory and mystery of pain and of love." In this light the play gains the utmost clarity. And how tender and poignant are the simple human scenes—the Soldier holding Aude's slippers, his summoning of his five dead comrades as wedding guests, his coaxing Aude to sleep by a fairy tale of happiness. There are tense dramatic moments, also, as when the Soldier shows the Father that their positions are reversed, that it is the parent who is now the child of the son. One must read and reread this play before it yields its full fruitage. It is uncommon. It is of the spirit and not the body. It is a refutation of our modern relativity confusions. It is drama seeking, believing in an Absolute.

As to the merits of the translation one can only say that a filmy robe, such as is the French language, cannot be changed into a velvet mantle. What in the French is delicate nuance so often comes off in the English as mere wordiness; and what is subtle self-analysis seems sometimes in the Anglo-Saxon a self-conscious attitudinizing. A Frenchman is not an Englishman or an American. Our minds are different. But this is to utter platitudes.

Character Sketches

AS GOD MADE THEM. By GAMALIEL BRADFORD. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1929. \$3.

MR. BRADFORD is the veteran in modern miniature biography; most of his practice, indeed, has lain in this field. Of his eleven volumes eight are collections of short studies. The objection to calling him "the man who invented the formula" is that it is not a formula but habits of workmanship. Plutarch reviewed the facts, balanced pro and con, and produced a living man, if that constitutes a formula; but habits of workmanship are not so easily generalized. They are everywhere alive with the personality of the biographer. In connection with Mr. Strachey one thinks first of finish, irony, and something of the touch of caricature. With Mr. Bradford the strongest impression is of his justice. His style may be less impeccable, his portraits less deft and vivid; but they are deft and vivid, and they are more accurate. It will be something in the nature of a public service when he does a Hamilton and a Jefferson, because these men have nearly always been handled controversially, and from Mr. Bradford something really impartial as well as penetrative might be expected.

In the present volume of studies of Webster, Clay, Calhoun, Greeley, and Booth, there is no partisanship or prejudice discernible, but the clear eye and the steady hand. If those of Francis Child and Asa Gray seem less illustrative of this balanced impersonality, it may be that one sees traces of personal friendship, or it may be that, in the two Harvard professors the darker shadows were, in point of fact, not there. Probably there is something in both conjectures.

The Problem of Peace

THE WAY OF PEACE. By VISCOUNT CECIL. New York: The John Day Co. 1929. \$3.

THE POLITICS OF PEACE. By CHARLES E. MARTIN. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press. 1929.

Reviewed by HENRY KITTREDGE NORTON

PERHAPS no one in public life has better earned the right to be heard on the problem of peace than Viscount Cecil. From its very inception Lord Cecil has been an ardent collaborator in the task, first, of forming the League of Nations, and, later, of keeping it functioning smoothly. While he has thus devoted a large share of his political career to organizing the world for peace, he has not allowed his ideals to lure him out of the world of facts. His work has been insistently constructive. The fact that it centers about the League of Nations may cause other, equally sincere workers for peace to differ with him as to methods, but there is little room for difference of opinion as to his earnestness or the constructive aim of his ideas.

The essays and addresses which he has collected under the title "The Way of Peace" are confessions of his faith—clearly, sanely, and even beautifully, expressed. The book as a whole suffers from the fact that it is a collection of occasional writings and speeches. This involves, as always, a considerable amount of repetition and the failure to work out pertinent details as might be done in a book planned and written as a whole. We get some penetrating analyses of English politics in its relation to peace, of the forces of nationalism and internationalism, and of the problems of disarmament. Some of Lord Cecil's comments demand quotation: "Whether we like it or not, we are part of Europe. We have got to live with them and we had better make the best of it." "We are still slaves to the conception that each nation must arm itself against all the others." In speaking of the Geneva Conference of 1927 and its use of war as a basis, he says: "nor was that chiefly the fault of the experts. They did what their governments authorized them to do. They were instructed to advise what would be 'safe' for their countries to accept." On the Kellogg Pact, Lord Cecil makes the following remark: "We cannot take away the arbitrament of war and put nothing in its place. It may be said at once that on this point the American scheme is quite inadequate." The author shows his realism clearly, too, in the remark: "It is foolish for a man to preach international peace and to advocate industrial war." Whether the author was merely using a catch phrase or whether giving a considered statement of his own position, one is somewhat surprised to find the following: "Our existence depends upon our command of the sea." It is doubtful if that as a final judgment can be reconciled with the ideals of the League or any other coöperative effort for peace.

And it is for the League of Nations that Lord Cecil pleads first, last, and all the time. There are many books cataloguing the details of organization and the minutiae of accomplishment of the Geneva organization, but this book is imbued with the spirit of the League and that spirit has probably found no better expression.

Quite a different type of work is Dean Martin's "Politics of Peace." The author proceeds from the premise that international politics in the past has been in one form or another the politics of war and that henceforth, with the Kellogg Pact duly signed and ratified, world politics is to become the politics of peace. While he thus tends to exaggerate the abruptness of the aboutface in world politics, the Kellogg Pact nevertheless may be justified as a starting point for an analysis of the present international situation.

Dean Martin sets out to make the survey which must necessarily precede such an analysis. And he makes his survey with a vengeance. He makes it so thoroughly and so well that it seems like carping to offer any complaint. And yet the author himself invites it. He has covered so broad a field that time after time it has been necessary to cram into a brief chapter material which might well be a book in itself. The result is that homeless wanderer of the literary world—an excellent book addressed to no conceivable audience. This is not to quarrel with what is in the book. It may be repeated that the material is excellent and the presentation no less so. The difficulty is simply that the degree of concentration is

so great that anybody who can follow Professor Martin through the first 336 pages of this work must already have been sufficiently familiar with the field to follow the remainder of the argument without reading the first part of the book at all.

It is not until the author reaches the last fifth of his book that he announces: "We are now ready to formulate a definite case against war as an institution." Two chapters later he asks whether war can be outlawed, and then takes up the Kellogg Pact. The remaining chapters deal with the functions of the state and the new politics of peace, especially in their relation to agriculture, labor, the police power, education, and international activities. From end to end the book is crammed with well arranged and clearly presented material, all of which is pertinent in the study of present-day international politics.

Two Monarchs

THE LETTERS OF THE TSAR TO THE TSARITZA. Translated by A. L. HYNES. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1929. \$5.

THE main effect of these letters is but to deepen and sharpen the impression which the world has already received from all that has been learned, since their deaths, of the Czar and Czaritza—the growing sense of their tragic unfitnes for the place into which fate had lifted them.

Here was an "ideal" marriage; two persons who loved each other intensely, were restless and depressed during the briefest separation; and in all the whirlwind of great events in which they were flung and to the direction and effect of which they necessarily contributed, were really interested only in themselves and their children. Could their spirits but have been transferred into other bodies and lodged in some suburban villa, there to live out the placid and harmless existence of the *petite bourgeoisie*, which, in their real enthusiasms, they actually were, how altogether different might have been their paths, the story of R

Letter after letter sometimes oftener, which Europe was Imperial Russia rushing down to ruin, and filled with so little but kisses and embraces and notes about the weather, that they might almost have been written by a man who neither could see nor hear nor understand what was going on about him—or by a child.

During the frightful disaster in the Masurian Marshes, when, during a fortnight, Russia lost 110,000 men in prisoners alone, the Czar's letters ran like this:

... Have visited all the fortifications and batteries on the north side. Saw a few wounded who have recovered. Pleasant warm weather. ... Sincere thanks for sweet letter and two telegrams. Have inspected two splendid hospitals. The weather is still sunny. In the course of the day I shall inspect the Briansky arms factory. I embrace all closely. ... Hearty thanks for two letters and news. The weather is mild; it is thawing. All send their greetings, and N.P. and M. their thanks. Am looking forward to seeing you to-morrow. I embrace you and the children. ... what a nuisance it is to be always so busy and not to have time and opportunity for sitting quietly together and having a talk! ...

"Arrived here at dinner time," the Czar wired from Pskov, on March 2, 1917, just before he signed the deed of abdication. "Hope that everybody's health is better and that we shall soon see each other. Close embrace.—Nick." "A strange mixture," the translator remarks, "of resignation, indifference, concealment, or restraint."

The same comment might be made of hundreds of others of the curious messages gathered in this volume. Of the personalities and events which shaped those supreme days, of Rasputin and others, and their influence on the Czar, one learns only by a sort of indirection—as from the diary, let us say, of a foreigner, who, by chance, happened to be present, in a strange country, during some tremendous happening, with the personalities of which he was unacquainted and the significance of which he failed to understand.

The letters, originally written in English, were translated into Russian under the editorship of Professor M. N. Pokrovsky and are now retranslated back into English. Their intimate phraseology is, therefore, a slight modification, no doubt, of the words originally used.

Books of Special Interest

The Problem of Old Age

OLD AGE. By ALDRED SCOTT WARTHIN. New York: Paul Hoeber. 1929.

Reviewed by BORIS SOKOLOFF

MANY theories have been evolved and many facts and observations made around the problem of old age, which interest equally the biologist and the layman. Of course, we cannot as yet go beyond the sphere of hypothesis, and we are very far from definite decisions, but for that very reason one can welcome each discussion of a given question, as it clarifies the weakness of this or that viewpoint.

Mr. Warthin's book is interesting not only for that reason. It has two qualities which will prompt everyone to read it with special attention. First, it is the work of a well-known scientist, a professor of pathology in the University of Michigan, and, second, it defends a definite and very exactly outlined thesis of the problem of old age. These qualities, however, are at the same time faults. Professor Warthin's highly scientific training leads him to be too dogmatic, to give insufficient consideration to the opinion of his opponent, and to discard it with too much ease. He is too sweeping in his statement that "the modern scientifically trained biologist cannot look upon senescence and old age as disease processes," in face of the fact that modern biologists (Metchnikov, Bracket, and Gurwitch) defend that viewpoint. The lack of impartiality of the work and its espousal of a definite point of view is also a shortcoming.

It is a work of emphasized scientific conservatism. In every line the morphologist and pathologist are felt much more than the experimenter-biologist. The author is more interested in facts than in causes which lead to these facts. Mr. Warthin is a mechanist, I should say: an old-fashioned materialist. To him, "life is a chemico-physical energy quantum differing from inanimate matter in the same specific atomic or intra-atomic arrangement or relationship." He does not dwell upon the numerous works in the field of experimental biology devoted to the problem of old age

and vitality of organs of the human body. He does not make, as it follows from his definition of "life," a great difference between the dynamic powers of living organism and the static powers of organic nature. However, the very study of the potential vitality of living, and the ability of the body to define almost infinitely the dynamically organized energy, and finally the experiments of E. Shultz on the transmutability of morphogenetic process, or the investigations of A. Gurwitch and E. Pearl on the activity of cells, can throw much more light on this purely biological problem than the stating of the involution of the tissues of old people. Mr. Warthin defends the thesis of Minot advocated half a century ago that "senescence is a normal involuntary process and is the gradual development of these lines of retrogression." He divides man's life into three periods: growth, manhood, and senescence, and in a detailed manner as an anatome-pathologist, he describes the changes which are observed during those periods.

He does not consider senescence as a disease, but regards it as a physiologic entity; the result of involution processes "inherent in the organism." He criticizes very strongly the scientists who are defending the opposite viewpoint (Metchnikov, E. Pearl, E. Shultz, Retterer). However, for these scientists, senescence is a pathological phenomenon, a disease with which one can and should fight. There is a tremendous potential energy in the body, but it must be subjected to strict harmony. When owing to auto-intoxication one of the organs ceases to function, the harmony is destroyed. Some cells, the so-called "noble cells" (nervous cells) and cells of the glands, are getting old, and other cells (connective cells), on the contrary, are active. The weakening of the activity (owing to auto-intoxication) of the endocrine glands which control the vitality of the body plays a great part in the process of senescence. From the physiological viewpoint senescence could be formulated as intoxication of the system of endocrine glands. Professor Warthin barely touches on the importance of endocrine glands during senescence, devoting only a few lines to that subject.

Is rejuvenation possible? he asks, and in consonance with his theory replies: "No, of course, impossible. There is no rejuvenation for the senile individual."

This opinion must appear too categorical to many readers. We may question the degree of possibility of "rejuvenation," but we cannot deny the transmutability of the processes. We know of a number of cases when a senile cell was rejuvenated under the influence of various factors and acquired again life ability. We may criticize the experiments of Steinach, Voronoff, etc., in their final conclusions, but we cannot deny the effect which the transplantation of different glands produces upon the body, as has been demonstrated by the splendid work of Leo Loeb.

Mr. Warthin's volume is written in vivid style, is readable, and, as the preface says, is devoted to the tragi-comedy of human life. This saves the reader from the pessimistic after-thoughts which might be caused by the categorical conclusions of the author as to the impossibility of rejuvenation and the unescapable advent of cruel old age.

Motherhood in America

MOTHERHOOD IN BONDAGE. By MARGARET SANGER. New York: Brentano's. 1928. \$3.

Reviewed by DR. JOHN E. LIND
St. Elizabeth's Hospital

IT is perhaps not the least of the rewards that fall to intransigent souls for their earthly efforts that their names should be perpetuated in indissoluble association with the names of their chiefest labors. It is immortality of a sort. Thus we have Carrie Nation and the saloon, Dr. Munyon and hope, George Cohan and the flag, and Babe Ruth and the home run. And we have Margaret Sanger and birth control. For, whether she likes it or not, Margaret Sanger's name will always suggest just that. She coined the term in 1914 and in 1921 organized and was the first president of the American Birth Control League. For many years her life has been given over to ardent advocacy of voluntary parenthood. Naturally this book, like her others, is no dispassionate, scientific presentation of the subject, but a distinctly partisan affair.

The present volume is almost entirely documentary. From the thousands of letters received by her during the past decade she has selected 470 which are quoted in this volume. They are held together with a very thin mortar of discussion. In fact, Mrs. Sanger makes no pretense that her book is anything but a presentation of these letters.

She has attempted to divide the book into chapters, selecting for each chapter a sheaf of letters exploiting one particular phase of the subject. Typical chapter headings are "Girl Mothers," "Solitary Confinement," and "Methods That Fail."

Mrs. Sanger could give points to the original champion in tilting against windmills. In the first place, she is dealing with a subject which is not considered nice, and therefore she must not even talk about it publicly. In the second place, her chief arguments are not readily presented to the public. For it is only those who go about in clinics or into the middle class and poorer homes who really know the tragedy of too large families.

The vast array of undernourished, poorly clothed children and worn out mothers in the present book becomes confusing after a while by its very sameness. Letter after letter gives the same miserable details. Glance through a few of them: mothers of twenty-seven with eight children, twenty-six with five children, of seventeen with four. Mothers who never have rest or recreation, nor even nourishing food or proper clothing, but who spend three-fourths of their time bearing children. Fathers and mothers who look about at their already too large family and beg for help.

It is a crime to impart knowledge of birth-control. But surely there are worse offenses against society. Want, suffering, hunger, disease.

All through the present book are complaints from poor, ignorant mothers that they cannot get necessary information. But does anyone seriously imagine that the rich mother is allowed to remain in ignorance? As the elder Weller remarked of his grog, "It ain't equal, that's what's the matter with it, Sammy."

France is reading and discussing a volume of animal stories entitled "Le Livre des Bêtes Qu'on Appelle Sauvages" (Grasset), by André Demaison. The author, though he writes of Africa, is being compared with Kipling.

Official Guide to Harvard University

Edited by STEWART MITCHELL

Much more than a tourist's handbook, this new edition of the Official Guide to Harvard University, the first to be prepared in the last twelve years, contains a complete description of all Schools and Departments of the University, notes on buildings, gates, tablets, and the like, and a large number of recent pictures. These last include two remarkable airplane views of Harvard and a representative selection of the contents of the Fogg Museum of Art. The book as a whole forms a most interesting item for the general public as well as Harvard men. \$2.00 a copy.

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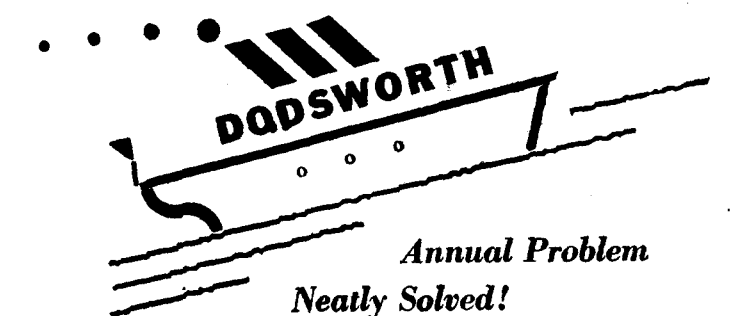
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