

The BOWLING GREEN

John Mistletoe, XX.

STRATFORD'S bathing place on the Avon was crowded that afternoon. The meadow was parked with bicycles and Baby Austins; the river plentiful with banana skins and orange peel; the launch *George Washington* churned up and down with merry tourists; the muddy shore of the stream was trodden to a treacle; the dressing kennels stank. Just so the banks of the great river of Shakespeare have been trampled into mire by the hooves of commentators. It was a thoroughly human sight, but not alluring, and we fled away to Warwick for dinner. A brilliant cottage garden by the roadside at Longridge did much to cheer us, and we stopped to chat with the ancient who was placidly editing his flowers. Even in Warwick disappointment waited, for the gay Miss Absolom of the Old Bowling Green Inn turned down our application for dinner. They were only serving meals for guests sleeping in the house, she explained. Mistletoe pleaded that he had stayed there (with Miffin McGill) in 1911, but the old guest books had not been kept so he could not prove it. However Miss Absolom relented far enough to accept a gin-and-ginger, which we drank by the bowling green, and then at her advice went on to the Crown for meat. Coming back to Stratford in the cooler evening the moon was lifting over curious level sheets of mist. Sturdy artisans of Stratford were just being put out of the pub opposite the Birthplace; it was "Time, gentlemen, time." They showed a refreshing skepticism, when asked, as to whether that was where Shakespeare was born. The pilgrims, in a mood of irony, saw the closing shadows of a movie, and studied the George W. Childs fountain in the dark.

It needs a strong idealizing stomach not to be dismayed by Stratford in the tourists' rutting season. The Shakespeare Hotel ("American Bar"), the little china busts, the Hathaway Tea Rooms ("Genuine antiques for sale"), the Hathaway Farm at Shottery ("Mixed Holiday Camp, Army Tents, Town Water, Gas and Sanitation, Paved Dancing Area, Exclusive Postcards"), the commutation tickets admitting to all the association-places at reduced rate, all these seem to take one very far away from that urbane evasive ghost. Even the *Shakespeare Pictorial*, a lively monthly of advertisement, feels the prick of comedy; it observes of itself "This publication is used in the studies of the English classes at the University of Denver. It is a steady fact." The enthusiastic Garrick, when he wrote (in 1769) his "Ode upon Dedicating a Building, and Erecting a Statue, to Shakespeare, at Stratford upon Avon," hardly knew what he was starting. That was the festival which Boswell (always alert for any kind of hullabaloo) greatly enjoyed, and reproached Dr. Johnson for staying away. Boswell records the "whimsical haberdasher" of Stratford who improved the occasion by selling "Shakespearean ribbands" in bright colors; this was the first of the long line of Stratford tradesmen who have prospered on Prospero. Outside the graveyard the big motor charabancs are lined up. A clear American voice just emerging from the church pleased us with the freakish irrelevance of chance overhearing. "I like her feet, they're so nice and small," he was saying. Perhaps they seemed especially small in comparison with the footprints the visitors had been investigating.

But in the church itself one lays away cheap and easy satirics. There on a bright morning the chancel paving is splashed blue and pink from the colored windows. It was still early and for a while we were alone. I am sorry if you do not in that place feel frost on the spine. There you need not fret over collation of minutiae. You remember only the great dreamer who, as every artist must, fought for us each; who in his hour carried on undefended heart the burden of all earth. There, if anywhere we can judge of, words became flesh and walked among us. You have to go to Stratford to feel that special twinge, and only the thin-blooded snob will be frightened away by the banana skins and the little china effigies. On the grave was a bundle of heather "from the Shakespeare Club of Leonia, N. J." and a bunch of purple asters with a little paper slip. The stone is inside the chancel rail and has to be read upside-down; we were alone so we stepped softly over the barrier and stood beside the slab itself to

verify the inscription. On the paper with the asters was written in strongly Teuton characters "*From a German Shakespeare admirer.*" It seemed to me so important a scrap of paper that I took it with me. If I leave it here, I said to myself, it will presently be cleared away by the sexton. If I take it, I can use it as a permanent memorandum that books are stronger than bayonets.

Perhaps I shall never see Stratford again. I shall think of it in the colors of that forenoon of hypnotic heat, remembering the bench in the churchyard overlooking the river, the trimly revised garden of New Place grilling in the glow, Cass Gilbert's sun-dial (keeping excellent time) and the rich juice of the mulberries which so prettily symbolize those luscious purple-oozing plays. But I think of Stratford also, as one must, in connection with *The Tempest* into which men have always read allusion to the poet's retirement. Shakespeare himself is the last person I should dream of asking what he meant by that sad and tender fantasy. What we read into it is what makes it important for us, and to the artist it has always offered innumerable suggestions. Probably it came from something deeper than the author's conscious intent, and as D. H. Lawrence magnificently said (in his half-crazed and half-intuitive *Studies in American Literature*) "the proper function of a critic is to save the tale from the artist who created it." We collaborate with Shakespeare in giving *The Tempest* whatever meaning we most need; we save it from being just a masque of "quaint device" for Court amusement, or a footnote on the Virginian voyages. Superb fantasy! as clear as Lake George water; as refreshing as the pool of Siloam.

The island is the solitude of the mind, and Prospero represents Thought, Imaginative Creation of any sort. I like to think of him as a scientist of the Einstein, Jeans or Eddington type; indeed his affection for his mantel reminds me very much of Einstein clinging to the old raincoat which the newspapers have often mentioned. All great scientists instinctively are Shakespeare's kin; Jeans in his noble essay on Cosmogony telling us that the universe "melts away into radiation" is precisely in the Prospero mood. Ariel typifies the magic skill of Art, the stenographer of Thought. Miranda, obviously, symbolizes those tender human ties and weaknesses that prevent the artist from being mere disembodied pensiveness. Caliban, the strong animal impulses—sloth, greed, lust, farce—that the artist must transpose and modulate. The shipload of castaways—who have already annoyed us by their fool behavior during the storm, and become intolerable in their tedious prating once they get on the island—are evidently the necessary but always incomprehending Outside World. Mixed of worthy old counsellors, usurping dukes, treacherous plotters, young lovers, drunken clowns, honest seamen, they offer a fair cross-section of the Audience, the Public.

With these elements and with his Tinker Bell, Ariel, "flaming amazement all over the ship, in every cabin" (have the analogies between *The Tempest* and *Peter Pan* ever occurred to you?) Shakespeare had all that was necessary to portray for us the full cycle of the life of imagination. We begin to perceive that the storm which opens the play was not just a West Indies hurricane. It was a symbolic tempest; a brain-storm if you will. Shakespeare had been through one semi-circle of the hurricane; he was 46, his great creative period was over (his mind had accelerated faster than most men's.) At the vortex of a hurricane is an area of calm; this he had reached. He was still willing, if necessary, to give the rabble "some vanity of mine art, they expected it from me," but like Professor Jeans's universe he was melting into radiation and knew it. He was abjuring his rough magic, drowning his book, not without bitterness. He was going back to be a Stratford citizen, arguing about the good tangibles of tithes and highway repairs and enclosures. No artist can live forever on the lonely island of his art.

Ariel's taunt to the intruders, "Your swords are now too massy for your strengths," can well be taken, if you wish, as a comment on machine civilization which is overpowered by its own engines, and where our wild play with Nature's forces is our greatest peril. And surely when Prospero says the famous lines

These our actors,
As I foretold you, were all spirits and
Are melted into air, into thin air. . . .
This insubstantial pageant. . . . We are such stuff
As dreams are made on, and our little life
Is rounded with a sleep,

he is in the very accent of the intuitive mathematicians who have dissolved all our old rule-of-thumb universe by the transition from Euclidean to non-Euclidean geometry. Even his fits of peevishness are what we might well expect from a philosopher who has spent twelve years in close brooding. But he has taught Miranda chess, which (provided she does not play too much better than Ferdinand) will be a great assistance to the happiness of their marriage. The after-life of Ferdinand and Miranda is an irresistible theme to speculate. Mistletoe touched upon it once in some verses—

Shall we be happy, King and Queen in Naples?
This sole sea-rounded life is all I know,
I fear the buzz and burthen of that world. . . .

but who will do me the larger epilogue I fancy? Prospero would be an indulgent grandfather, pampering the children with stories of Caliban and occasional conjuring tricks. Would Miranda, who had known nothing of women, find the ladies of the court easy to get on with? I think she sometimes sighs for the Bermoothes.

There must have been very human ironies in Shakespeare's last years. He had hardly settled down in Stratford before the town council passed a minute denouncing the drama. "Every third thought shall be my grave," was the magician's retiring resolution, but that still left two-thirds of his thinking for the famous real estate transactions—he who had in fee simple the greatest unreal estate ever created. It is always odd to think of Shakespeare's son-in-law (a Balliol man, Mr. Fripp tells us) as a Puritan churchwarden, devilling parishioners for dozing during sermon or drinking after evening prayer. We would not have these legends otherwise. The greater the personality the wider the ripples of paradox it creates around it.

In the fable, Caliban and the powers of mischief are rather easily outwitted. Prospero forgives them all. What else is there to do? It is forgiving one's self that is hard. The epilogue is humble enough. It had been a tough life, my masters. A man not know the things he has told us without having trodden some queer byways. But he came to land. There is an almost unnoticeable character in *The Tempest*, Francisco, who has only one real speech. What he says, speaking of a brave swimmer against troubles, is good parable:—

I saw him beat the surges under him,
And ride upon their backs: he trod the water,
Whose enmity he flung aside, and breasted
The surge most swollen that met him: his bold head
Bove the contentious waves he kept, and oar'd
Himself with his good arms in lusty stroke
To the shore, that o'er his wave-worn basis bow'd
As stooping to relieve him. I not doubt
He came alive to land.

It seems, though it is not certain, that he died on his birthday. It would have been like him to do so, thus coming full circle: the roundest circle of human power and paradox that we have known. We have learned that even after a wine has been barrelled it is still en rapport with the vineyard. When next year's flowering comes on the vines, the liquid in the cask stirs and fumes and scintillates in its darkness by some chemical heredity. Those plays and poems have been long in the wood, but they are still sympathetic to their native soil, the old stony vineyard of human yearning. When pure sun or ragged rain beat upon that hillside, the words tremble in their paper storage. How beautifully Virginia Woolf said of him, "thought plunged into a sea of words and came up dripping."

For our own need we borrowed him away from scholars and libraries for a little while, thinking to bring him back to tavern and greenroom where he was most at home. It is time to return him. Much has been said and surmised, little of it that he would recognize. But he would have identified the feeling behind a little casual song written not long after his own time but never printed until lately:—

So have I seen a silver swan,
As in a watery looking-glass,
Viewing her whiter form, and then
Courting herself with lovely grace:
As now she doth herself herself admire
Being at once the fuel and the fire.

"At once the fuel and the fire." Is there any better history of the mind?

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

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Books of Special Interest

Recent American History

THE GREAT CRUSADE AND AFTER.
By PRESTON W. SLOSSON. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1930. \$5.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

MR. SLOSSON, whose special field of study is European history, has undertaken to report the social and economic changes in American life in the past sixteen years. It is a rather staggering enterprise. The enormous number of facts to be recorded, the difficulty of synthesizing them until time has helped sift out the significant from the insignificant, the necessity of generalizing on imperfect data, might daunt anyone. When we recall that the authors of "Middletown" filled more than five hundred pages with facts and figures on the recent changes in one American city; when we remember what far-reaching alterations the World War wrought in the texture of American society—then we may well set our expectations low. But in this instance there is no need to do so. Mr. Slosson has written a book that has great immediate value and that will probably wear well. His performance is by no means flawless. But the thoroughness of his book, the interesting flow of editorial comment, the clarity of the presentation, and the skill with which most pitfalls are avoided, commend it to any serious reader.

It is a chronicle rather than a criticism. The author has undertaken to record our war effort, the post-war processes of social and business reconstruction, the changing scene of farm, factory, school, and amusement centre, with adequate explanation but without much appraisal. His judgments are few and cautious. This objectivity of treatment has evident merits; but it also has the drawback that it flattens the whole narrative, and makes for an appearance of general complacency. Thus Mr. Slosson records our prosperity without much effort to discriminate between false and real values, or to count the cost of the prosperity. He could have read J. A. Spender's comment on the subject, in his recent book on America, with profit. He treats of American lawlessness, of changes in ethics, and even of the post-war corruption in Washington, with an evenness of tone, a lack of "edge," that are rather surprising. After all, the social historian is more than a recorder of facts. To bring forward the statistics of racketeering and homicide in the same vein that one brings forward the statistics of tractor-production or rayon-consumption, is to neglect a proper scale of values. Excellent as Mr. Slosson's book is, it would have been still better had it possessed a more critical point of view.

But as a chronicle it has scope, color, and scholarship. The array of footnote references is an impressive object-lesson in the zeal with which a great body of specialists are constantly accumulating data upon the varied facets of our national life. Mr. Slosson naturally begins with the war, which he treats with special reference first, to the forces which played upon public opinion, and, second, to the economic effort behind the fighting lines. His verdict that the war fever, for all its intensity during one short year, left no deep imprint upon national consciousness, and that the American people will never recall the World War battles with the thrill long associated with the Revolution and Civil War, is no doubt just. Among the problems left by the war he gives special attention to labor troubles caused by the sudden change in living costs, to the conservatism that bred the "red hysteria" of 1919-20, and to the new impulse to criminality and violence. Together with all this he treats, without any clearly evident connection, the alleged apathy of the people in facing political issues after the war. It would seem that this apathy was rather a product of our recent lamented prosperity than any direct sequel of the great conflict.

Prohibition is treated in a cautiously balanced fashion, with gains summed up neatly against apparent losses, and any decision on the merits of the question flatly side-stepped. It is a thorough treatment; we have consumption figures, conviction figures, homebrew and bootlegging figures, and even an account of the changes in diabetic habits and the rise of the drugless drugstore as phenomena connected with prohibition. The author makes no mention of the rapid recent surge of revolt, from Boston to even Senator Jones's Oregon, against the "drys." Some lessening of drunkenness and poverty he believes may be fairly attributed to the eighteenth amendment. The advance of American woman also receives a full and interesting chapter. It is less graphic in its description of the new economic "equality" of women than could be wished, but it is compre-

hensive. Equal suffrage, the progress of co-education, and laws on women's rights by no means crowd the short skirt, the flapper, and supposed alterations in morals out of the picture. Thirty absorbing pages are given to what is rather unhappily called "the saga" of the motor car. Mr. Slosson draws no important sociological conclusions from his study of the omnipresent automobile, but he does point out its principal effects—those on agriculture, on recreation, on city expansion, and on the unification of national life.

The chapter which comes nearest to the possession of high critical quality is that on "The Cult of Nationalism." Mr. Slosson may or may not be right in declaring that the principal "spiritual phenomenon" of the times (it seems rather unspiritual) is "the remarkable intensification of nationalism." But he certainly brings forward an impressive array of evidences for his assertion. The most lamentable bit of proof is of course the Ku Klux Klan, with its Mer Rouge tragedy and its trail of mire and hatred across politics. The rejection of the League and the abject fear of the World Court long displayed in many quarters were other manifestations of the nationalist cult. In its more rational phases, it brought about the drastic limitation of immigration, which was really overdue and is now regarded with general approbation even by former critics; and it helped inspire a greater national pride, manifested in more attention to American art, American song, and American history and biography. The tariff piracies, the loose talk of "Nordic" superiority, and the self-complacent comparisons recently common between impoverished Europe and prosperous America were all a product of the same spirit. Mr. Slosson does not forget Mayor Thompson and the attacks on "unpatriotic" text-books, though he speaks well of Chicago in other particulars and of the general advance in education.

The book is well worth reading and study. A generation hence, when a more accurate survey of these crowded times can be written, it will still be of value as a contemporaneous view. Naturally, different students of our national life will emphasize different facts, and some will feel that Mr. Slosson has neglected a good deal that he should have mentioned in detail. He says almost nothing about the general "welfare legislation" of the period—the long list of achievements which we connect with such a name as Gov. Smith's. He says next to nothing of our vast technological advance, or of such a growth as the great new chemical industry which has risen since 1914. The expansion of the great public utilities and the heavy shadow cast over politics and part of business by the "power interests" are not discussed. The treatment of magazines gives little hint of the vicissitudes through which those of the better quality have passed and are still passing. The valuable chapter on agriculture and the recession from the farm is not quite as gloomy as many would make it. Economic and financial subjects are often discussed without deep probing. On the other hand, it is astonishing how much the book does contain, accurately stated and in sound proportion, in its 450 pages. Farming, advertising, journalism, vocational education, religious movements, publishing tendencies, the status of the negro, the trend of wages, changes in travel, architecture, household arts—all these and a thousand other topics are here. Without exception, all are readably handled. In its double appeal to students of history and students of present-day affairs, the book deserves a wide circulation.

For Paramours of Print

A BOOK OF THE DAYS FOR 1931. By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY. Being a Briefcase Packed for His Own Pleasure and Made Into a Calendar for Sundry Paramours of Print. New York: The John Day Co. 1930.

Reviewed by ARTHUR COLTON

"PARAMOURS of Print" is good. It is both alliterate and significant. It means people who love letters with a certain lawlessness, with fervor, dash, and gaiety, and no tendentious care for consequences, in fact with the supposition that there are not going to be any; people whose relation to books is so personal that it has no relation to conventions, standards, or other people's opinions. It goes further. It means book lovers of disposition so susceptible that anything in print is to them antecedently attractive, presumptively adorable, whom the inevitable disillusion disappoints but never discourages. "Sundry" is also good. It means separate, individual, unclassified people, ungrouped, unfused, and

each not quite like anyone else. Paramours of print are usually sundry in their dispositions. At least they should be. If it is merely a herd passion, a vacuum that gulps down the wind, an appetite that devours three newspapers and two detective novels per day—if it is not selectively alert, but a sort of mechanic process—it is more kin to the machinery that printed the book than to the fervor and thought that conceived it. The appetite of Gargantua with the palate of Brillat-Savarin is the enviable combination. It makes for great happiness. It also makes the right compiler of Calendars. For Calendars should be unexpected and inspiring as without a good palate you cannot be inspiring, and without a wide range you cannot be unexpected.

Mr. Morley is that kind of a book lover. His palate can only be appreciated in three-hundred and sixty-five selections, but his absorbent appetite can be illustrated more briefly. The quotations for the 3rd day of the twelve months are from: "The Bartender's Manual"; H. L. Mencken; E. R. Sill; Dr. Johnson's "Prayers and Meditations"; Burroughs; Chekhov's "Note Book"; De la Mare; Hardy; George Herbert; William Penn; John Donne; and Montaigne. For the 10th from: Leigh Hunt; P. H. Chavasse's "Advice to a Wife"; André Gide; Heywood Brown; Sir Kenelm Digby; W. Compton Leith's "Sire-nica"; Elizabeth Bibesco; Burroughs' "Journal"; Hobbes's "Leviathan"; Bhikshu's "Buddhist Catechism"; D. H. Lawrence; and "The Prologue" spoken at Drury Lane by Garrick in 1747. For the 19th from: Aristotle; "The Miscellany of a Japanese Priest"; Conrad; Whitman; Katherine Mansfield; Hobbes; "Advertisement in The Hancock" (N. Y.) Herald; Hazlitt; Arnold Bennett; Bertrand Russell; Sir Kenelm Digby and Louise Imogen Guiney.

Such a Calendar is a stimulant. There is some kind of a kick in every glass. There is a heartening somewhat even for reviewers: "Jan. 31. Sat. He who first praises a book becomingly, is next in merit to the author. *Walter Savage Landor.*" It is good for the vaguely wandering, unpurposed, and hence dissatisfied reader, for it blazes the beginning of a hundred trails that all lead somewhere. A quotation that sets the waters flowing is better than a whole history of literature which dries them up. You do not make book lovers or paramours of print by telling them what they ought to read, but wherever you rouse a curiosity you may have made one of those fortunate among the sons of men.

Russian Secret Police

THE OCHRANA, The Russian Secret Police. By A. T. VASSILYEV. Edited by RENÉ FÜLÖP-MILLER. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. 1930.

Reviewed by A. M. NIKOLAIEFF

THE volume under the above title is an account of the last Chief of Police in Czarist Russia, about the functions, methods and work of the "mysterious and dreadful" *Ochrana*, i.e., Secret Political Police. It also contains a description of acts of terrorism, committed by the revolutionaries, and of the coming of the revolution, together with an outline of the rôle played by certain members of the Government, the Duma, and Army leaders in the period preceding the fateful events. Personal experiences of the author, who was arrested after the revolution, kept in prison for six months, and finally left Russia (in 1928 he died "peniless" in a hospital in France), are, likewise, related in the book under review.

The *Ochrana*, the author admits it, had acquired an evil reputation, and he ascribes the fact to the propaganda of the revolutionaries who "naturally did their utmost to bring discredit upon their bitterest enemy." He set himself the task of proving that such an opinion was not based on facts inasmuch as the *Ochrana* did its work with correctness and "its measures were always strictly legal." However, it would be difficult to deny that public opinion in Russia, regardless of the revolutionary propaganda, was far from being in sympathy with the methods practiced by the Secret Political Police.

Two measures called forth gave reproaches against that Police, as incompatible with the conception of the liberty of the individual and of justice: the secret censorship of letters in the so called "Black Cabinet," and the use of administrative penalties. Although the administrative banishment was "leniently applied" and meant merely that the political offenders "were obliged to reside for a certain period (up to five years) in some locality East of the Urals . . . were permitted to enjoy ordinary social intercourse . . . carry on their trades or professions as they chose . . . and latterly