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of LITERATURE

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BOUDOIR AND BEDROOM OF A CHINESE LADY OF RANK.

Masterless Literature

BERNARD SHAW spoke in his New York address of the frame of reference which American politics for the last decades has so noticeably lacked, meaning the absence in our boom years of any principle of political science to which reference could be made when questions arose as to whether legislation was for the ultimate good of a people or for the particular advantage of a person or a group. Such a frame of reference for government Mr. Berle outlined in his cogent and significant essay on government policy in 1933 compared with 1929, published in this *Review* week before last. The political science of the last decade according to both his judgment and Shaw's attack has been either "masterless erudition," or worse.

This lack of a frame of principle, or of knowledge, or of theory, or of all three in happy combination, is no isolated phenomenon. It has been characteristic, as Mr. I. A. Richards pointed out, also in this *Review*, of the study and teaching of the humanities in our universities, where the purpose of the study and the teaching of literature has too often been voided by a failure to consider ends in the fevered pursuit of means. It has been characteristic of finance, as is now evident even to brokers' clerks; it has reduced the practice of religion in many institutions to a technique; it was responsible for Prohibition; and it has stamped the literature of the twenties with its own image.

There can be no such thing as a frame of reference for literature in general except in terms of rather abstract philosophy or esthetics, but a frame of reference for a national literature there can be, and must be, and has always been where an age and a nation attained effective self-expression.

To say that the twenties failed to express themselves seems paradoxical, for that clamorous and protesting period specialized in self-expression. But was it effective, except as a safety-valve is effective in blowing off high and dangerous pressure? A chorus of dissonances, whistles blowing day and night, high and low, with no rhythm and no harmony—that is the impression the literature of the twenties leaves upon the memory. Plenty of steam, plenty of noise, and a highly satisfactory discharge of pent-up protests, but, now that it is all over, a recollection chiefly of burst inhibitions, vociferous descriptions of confusion worse confounded.

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Chinese Life

THE HOUSE OF EXILE. By NORA WALN. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1933. \$3.

Reviewed by PEARL S. BUCK

THIS book of Nora Waln's is undoubtedly one of the most delightful books of personal experience that has yet been written about China. Its authenticity is beyond question, not only because of the accuracy of detail, but because of the obvious sincerity of the writing. I am charmed by the style of the writing. It is a little studied, a little sedate, beautifully meticulous in its careful choice of the right word, and all this suits very well the subject of the book, particularly the formalism of the life described in the first part.

With the latter half of the book comes a change. Out of the rigorous courtesy, the quiet rectitude of an ancient and noble Chinese house we are plunged into the torrents of new China and revolution. But Nora Waln shows us the best aspects of this part of Chinese life even as she portrays for us the best and most idealistic of old Chinese family life. It is all fascinating material simply and beautifully expressed.

I confess I think Miss Waln's ability is better shown in the first half of the book. Obviously her keenest sympathies are with the old and exquisite life of the courtyards of old China. Or perhaps it is only that the reserves and the delicacies of that life appear most congenial to one of Miss Waln's temperament. There is a poetic and fine quality in that old Chinese life of maids and ladies which Miss Waln has caught so perfectly as to make it appear undoubtedly a life which is congenial to her. Only complete sympathy could portray with such delicate perfection.

The point of view of the book is, of course, that of a Westerner viewing an Oriental situation; a sympathetic, cultivated, comprehending Westerner, but still a Westerner. One regrets that Miss Waln did not know Chinese when she first entered the house of Lin, so that she might have understood the private conversations that undoubtedly went on about her, the unguarded remarks, the comments of servant maids. Nothing is franker and more racy in any Chinese household than such talk as this, and it forms always the most interesting foil for the rituals, the formal dignities, the poetry, even, of the life of mistresses and masters. To the practical eye of a servant maid, to the weary mind

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A Primer for Intellectuals

By BERNARD DEVOTO

AN English translation of Vilfredo Pareto's "Trattato di Sociologia Generale" has been under way for four or five years. Commercial firms may be excused for hesitating to spend the money required to print nearly a million words which, in the happiest circumstances imaginable, could not become a best seller.† The reluctance of at least two scholarly foundations cannot be so readily condoned; conceivably their income was bequeathed to them for the purpose of publishing important books which cannot be expected to return a profit. About the importance of Pareto's masterpiece opinions can differ only in degree. That it is one of the most important books of the twentieth century is unquestionable. That it is the most important is an opinion held by a number of people entitled to speak with authority. One of them, a professor of the history of science, has said that the book may eventually be considered the greatest intellectual achievement since Newton's "Principia." His comparison is exact: it seems likely that the "Trattato" has done for the science of sociology about what the "Principia" did for the science of mechanics.

Perhaps for that reason it will be best, when the English translation is published, to omit the word "sociology" from the title. Over a period of six months I have observed a group of professional sociologists engaged in studying Pareto.‡ Their discomfort has been acute: they have been mostly bewildered and always angry. Their anger seems a little unscientific but is easily understood. Pareto is not a sociologist at all, as they understand sociology. He uses a technique altogether different from any used before him in the study of society, and he reaches conclusions which invalidate all the sociology that has gone before him—except for scattered bits of Aristotle, Machiavelli, Bayle, Marx, and Sorel.§ It is best, then, in order to introduce Pareto to America, to present him as something else—a procedure which would have had his complete approval. Words, he insists, are mere conventions, and we must not dispute about them. When such a dispute appears, assign a mathematical expression to the thing in question, carefully defining it. You will then be discussing a thing, not a word, and meaning will be possible. Much of the sociologists' anger arises from their failure to observe that the adjective "générale" qualifies the noun "sociologie." That is,

† The English translation of Pareto, it may now be announced, will soon be ready for publication, and will be issued probably in several volumes by Harcourt, Brace & Co., beginning next Fall or Winter.

‡ In the French translation: *Traité de Sociologie Générale*. Edition Française par Pierre Boven. Revue par l'Auteur. Paris: Librairie Payot & Cie. 1919.

§ In an article so brief as this one, statements have to be made with a flatness that would be modified and explained in a longer treatment. To be at all clear about Pareto's significance, I have had to misrepresent his text in this way. Especially is this true of the repudiation of sociology. The reader must understand that the repudiation is true only of general, that is systematic, sociology, that Pareto only occasionally touches the subject matter of the specialized sociologies, and that a demonstration of a sociology's failure to meet logico-experimental tests does not deny its social utility.

Pareto is examining the basic structure of society, whereas specialized sociologies confine themselves to the form of society. A less enraging title of his books would be "Treatise on the Functional Relationship $a + b = 2x$ in Society," or "A First Approximation of the Functional Relationship in Society of the Residues and Derivations." The titles are too long? Call the book, then, "The Structure of Society." And observe that it is the first attempt ever made to bring the scientific method to bear on that structure. The first attempt, that is, which did not assume its findings in advance, which was not made in the service of some metaphysical, religious, political, or economic cause. Was Marx, for instance, in a skeptical mood when he began "Das Kapital"?

The fact that Pareto is almost unknown in England and America is one of the most amazing, and amusing, commentaries on our intellectuals. At a time when everyone is planning some reconstruction of society and violently proselyting for converts, no one seems to have bothered to inquire what the only attempt to describe society has to say about it. At a time when the search for a "new ideology" is held to be the first essential in approaching "the new world order"—I inclose the phrases in quotes for they have no meaning—the frantic searchers have not heard of what may be the alphabet necessary for their new language. There may be references to Pareto in obscure sociological journals in England, but there are none in the liberal journals and none in the books of English sociologists and world-renovators. A single literary allusion exists, in an essay of Aldous Huxley's. The American bibliography is brief. Pareto has never been quoted in the *Nation* or the *New Republic*, nor in the works of Messrs. Chase, Soule, Thomas, Goldenweiser, Cowley, Arvin, or any of their colleagues, allies, or

This Week

WOOD CRAFT.

By JOHN DRINKWATER.

"THE ODYSSEY OF CABEZA DE VACA."

Reviewed by HERBERT INGRAM PRIESTLEY.

"CANDELABRA."

Reviewed by ARTHUR COLTON.

"THE PROPAGANDA MENACE."

Reviewed by JOHN CHAMBERLAIN.

"INTIMATE MEMORIES" OF MABEL DODGE LUHAN.

Reviewed by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER.

"NOT TO EAT, NOT FOR LOVE."

Reviewed by LINCOLN KIRSTEIN.

"HUMAN NATURE."

Reviewed by THEODORE PURDY, JR.

"MAN OF TWO WORLDS."

Reviewed by MARIE AHNIGHTO PEARY.

"TOWARD THE UNDERSTANDING OF KARL MARX."

Reviewed by FELIX MORROW.

"PRICES."

Reviewed by FABIAN FRANKLIN.

Next Week, or Later

RECENT RELIGIOUS BOOKS.

Reviewed by P. W. WILSON.

co-religionists, nor in the works of any revolutionist, radical, liberal, conservative, or paid defender of Wall Street known to me. The Sociological Press published a translation of one of Bousquet's pamphlets about him in 1928. The year before, Dr. L. J. Henderson had published an article, "The Science of Human Conduct," in the *Independent* for Dec. 10, 1927. Except for a footnote in James Harvey Robinson's "Mind in the Making," that was the first mention of Pareto in America. Allusions to the "Traité" may be found in an article of mine in *Harper's*, in 1928, and in my "Mark Twain's America." Arthur Livingstone has mentioned Pareto on occasion. And that, so far as I have been able to discover, is the complete list to date of references to Pareto's sociology, as distinguished from his economics, in America. This article is his first appearance in an American literary journal.

It is not likely that the "Traité" will progress in English-speaking countries much faster than it has done, even when the translation is published. Pareto is not for hopeful people. He cannot be read with comfort by anyone; he probably cannot be read at all by people who serve any kind of cause, who are working for any kind of social renovation, who have strong emotions or beliefs about any aspect of society or any of its possible developments. I mean here literally what I say: the book probably cannot be read at all by such people—psychological outrage defeats the effort. I doubt, for instance, that Mr. Edmund Wilson, who has gone undaunted through "Work in Progress," could force himself through the "Traité." Mr. Wilson is a devout Marxian, and you cannot bring religious beliefs to a reading of Pareto. An effort to engage the attention of such thinkers would probably best be made as a flank attack. One would inform them that Mussolini attributes his conversion from socialism to the lectures of Pareto which he attended while in exile, and that some of Il Duce's measures can be described as measures which a dictator might deduce from a profound mis-

discovered are the "laws" of science that apply within those conditions, but that kind of "law" has no mystical sanction. Pareto's aim is to describe the behavior of society in an effort to discover its continuities. Well, there can be no doubt that he has discovered continuities in society, and has expressed them adequately for the first time in the history of thought, although partial expressions of many of them have always been a part of human wisdom. Of human wisdom, that is, outside of social thinking. To that extent, Pareto is the Newton of sociology. His successors will reveal much inaccuracy and perhaps much downright error. But, it seems likely, however his terminology and classification may be changed, his work will stand as the indispensable first approximation which he intended it to be. That intention provides another difficulty for the intellectuals. They desire absolute truth. The method of science, the method of successive approximations, alarms and offends them. They cannot accept the scientific principle that any method which leads from facts to theory and back to facts is a good method, that all results are partly arbitrary, that all relationships are relative. They demand an absolute, and science has no absolute.

This first approximation comes to us from physical science. That fact is, for the twentieth century, extremely significant—for it creates a conceptual scheme much more harmonious with the scientific habits of this century than the one in which contemporary social thinking has tried to work. Pareto's method existed in his work as early as 1890, a time when the concepts of modern physics, which parallel his, were undeveloped. Social thinking was then, as it still is, conducted in a scheme borrowed from biology. Comte, Marx, and Spencer, like their successors of today, thought in terms of biology, thought of society as an organism. They were, in effect, Darwinians or at least evolutionists. The fatal defects of this scheme are exhaustively studied in the "Traité." Pareto

ever, that a description based on such an assumption was both inadequate to describe society, which is much more than merely an economic system, and specifically untrue. In his "Systèmes Socialistes," of 1903, an objective study of the Religion of Progress, he was already pointing the way to his masterpiece. The "Trattato" appeared in 1916 and the official French translation three years later. It is a unique book. One of the most amazing, and most bewildering, ever written, it does what no other social thinker has tried to do. It studies human irrationality not as an aberration of society but as one of its functions. For the first time it analyzes the functional relationships of protective thinking, of unreason, of prejudice, superstition, and ignorance, of corruption and mass pressure and humanitarian weakness—not as defects which a "better" society would eradicate or should eradicate, but as mere data found to exist in a relationship which must be described. It studies society, that is, as an equilibrium—as a collectivity whose parts are in a relationship of mutual dependence. It brings to society a technique derived from exact science. It creates an instrument for determining the exact nature of relationships of mutual dependence and for measuring their "energy," their "social force." (The quoted words are mine. I use them to suggest the effect of Pareto, not to describe his method.)

The book does much else, but in those limits it is, I believe, unshakable. Those parts of it must be, I think, the basis of any effort to forecast or control the development of society. Those parts, I think, supersede all earlier social thinking as a basis for description. I mean: whatever the value of Marx or anyone else as a means of altering the sentiments of people whose sentiments it may be for other people desirable to alter, Marx as a description of society has been as completely superseded as the chemists of 1750 and the biologists of 1800 have been superseded.

No summary is possible here. Mr. Robinson, in the footnote I have mentioned,

that. Nobody could calculate the resultant of the pressure on the equilibrium, which is a sufficiently arresting fact—but the resultant, even after the fact, cannot be described. Try, for instance, this single item. Up to Prohibition a definite sentiment forbade a respectable woman to drink gin with men in a saloon; but as a concomitant of Prohibition (observe that I do not say as a result) a definite sentiment sanctioned such a woman to drink gin with men in a speakeasy. Try describing that single, simple fact in terms of Marx or anyone else you please. It can't be described in Marxian terms, but it can be described in Paretian terms.

Well, it occurs to students of Pareto that the accurate description of such phenomena is essential as a basis to any attempt to control society. The simple, causal, subjective description of Marxism and the other religions which we as intellectuals are being constantly asked to join seem to us absurd as preludes to thinking and acting about society. We are asked, in effect, to support phlogiston in the world of modern physics. We regard the hopeful expectations of all social renovators now practising their trade as exactly equivalent to the belief of a Baptist parson in 1920 that the Eighteenth Amendment would have the simple effect of regenerating American society in the direction of sweetness and light. Only, these hopeful notions are far more ignorantly dangerous than the parson's, in that they propose more profound disturbance of the social equilibrium—and propose it in complete inability to identify or describe the complex variables, in complete powerlessness to forecast the resultant in any terms except those of revelation.

The collapse of our intellectuals is quite as complete as that of our bankers and industrialists, and more terrifying. One element in it may be their failure to equip themselves with a realistic instrument for thinking about society. Vilfredo Pareto had no more concern with the application of his conclusions than Faraday had with the invention of radio. But precisely as

It is almost as difficult for the person who has no beliefs about society, who approaches the book in an unemotional mood, merely to find out what it says. I seldom publish doubts about my ability to understand any intellectual problem which I have determined to understand. Nevertheless, after five and a half years of close textual study of the "Traité" I pretend to no mastery of it and am writing about it here only because I agree with the Editor of *The Saturday Review of Literature* that some discussion of it in public is highly desirable. The person who is to understand Pareto sufficiently well to make the applications which were outside Pareto's intention, must bring to the study great skill and long experience at mathematics and a sufficient career in physical or biological science to have acquired the mental habits of a research worker. No intellectuals in America have such an equipment, yet it will only be when a large number of such men have devoted their lives to an amplification and application of Pareto's method that ideas about society will have any validity as working principles. Until that time it will be convenient to classify sociology as Pareto does—as pseudo-scientific thinking or as theories which transcend experience, perhaps excellent as propaganda, stimulants, or dogma, but valueless as determination of objective realities.

The sociologists whom I have observed in Dr. Henderson's seminar at Harvard are forever bringing the discussion to a halt with this plaintive question, "But where does Pareto stand?" The answer supplies the key to this revolutionary treatise. Pareto doesn't stand anywhere. His intention is not hortatory, it is only descriptive. A bacteriologist has no desire to convert microbes to a belief in progress; a physicist does not want to make Methodists or Marxians out of his atoms. Their aim is to describe the behavior of microbes and atoms under observed conditions, in an effort to discover what continuities exist in that behavior. The continuities finally

to the mathematical theory of the equilibrium of elastic bodies. To that early study of the mathematics of equilibria and to his lifelong insomnia which allowed him to acquire the most amazing erudition of our time, is probably due the development of his sociology. It was as a mathematician that he became interested in the efforts of Walras to establish "pure" economics on a mathematical basis, and it was his development of Walras's work that brought him the appointment to Walras's chair of political economy at the University of Lausanne. He worked as a mathematical economist for some years. His work develops at a length and in a detail impossible to people devoid of mathematics, theories of mutual dependence, of economic equilibrium, which are said to be of the utmost importance in their field. The idea of equilibrium dominates his economics, and it is the application of this idea to society that shifts the conceptual scheme from biology to mechanics.

The hypothesis which makes economics possible is the assumption that men know what is their best economic interest and act logically to attain it. On the basis of that assumption, it has been possible to make mathematical studies of economic phenomena. It was clear to Pareto, how-

the representation of "laws" of society just as certain generalizations are the "laws" of thermodynamics. They are unquestionably a magnificent achievement, and they will be, whether in Pareto's terminology or a better one, fundamental in the sociology of the future. But they are only one part of a study which is just as magnificent in many other parts. I select another part, not for summary but for a suggestion, or, if you like, a challenge. I select the concept of mutual dependence, which is fundamental in the concept of equilibrium.

In 1920, with Prohibition, the United States made an experiment in the alteration of a social mechanism roughly comparable to a planned society, to state socialism, to communism, to technocracy—roughly equivalent to the processes which these experimental ideas imply. In the light of 1933, what expectations of 1920 have been realized? Who, in 1920, foretold accurately what would happen in the collectivity after Prohibition? Nobody. The one thing it is possible to say of Prohibition is that nobody was right about it. The mutual dependence was incapable of forecast; nobody knew enough about the mathematics of complex social variables to foresee what would happen. More than

ment of the structure and mechanism of society within its conditions. He did not write a twentieth century "Prince"—but he has made one possible. If the world can be helped by the intellectuals—a proposition which Pareto rejected but which I am willing to adopt as a literary hypothesis—they would be well advised to make use of the instrument he has given them.

If, therefore, I were to exercise the right we all have these days to issue manifestoes, mine would take this form: Intellectuals of the world, study Pareto. I should, however, issue it with the reservation that not many intellectuals can read him, for religious reasons. The test is this: If you know what you want society to be, you probably cannot read Pareto. The surgery he does on one's most hopeful ideas about the social order is severe enough even if one comes to him in cynicism or disgust. It would be catastrophic to one who had the will-to-believe in any of its social forms. A devout Christian Scientist, I imagine, could not become an effective student of pathology. One who hopes to grow roses on the bushes in his dooryard cannot comfortably discover that they are currant bushes. Still, the discovery made and the hope abandoned, it may be possible to do something with them as currant bushes, and it is in that possibility of realism that the value of Pareto for our intellectuals resides. If ideas about society which have teeth in them are desirable, here is a bonanza. If realism is more desirable than vision in intellectual leadership, here is its primer.

The German branch of the Ralph Beaver Strassburger Foundation, "for the promotion of good relations between the United States and the European countries," has just announced the awards of its annual prize of \$1,000 to Professor Friedrich Schoenmann, for his recent book, published in two volumes, "Die Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika." Professor Albert Einstein, Thomas Mann, Jakob Wassermann, Stephan Zweig were among the jury.

Wood Craft

By JOHN DRINKWATER

BRING your divine occasions to the woods;
Not in the meadows nor the heath is found,
Not even in the mountain solitudes
Such pure, such still, such consecrated ground.
The highways are for happy enterprise,
Her step on many pastures peace hath stayed,
But in the woods another knowledge lies
In ambush on the pilgrim of the shade.
The doctrine here is not of battles won,
Not of contending in a storm of words,
Nor yet of ease after long labor done,
Shadows of sleep, and troops of twilight birds—
The woods in deep eternal passion dwell,
With never word of strife or peace to tell.



CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS AND FATHER BOIL CELEBRATING A MASS OF THANKSGIVING ON THE ISLAND OF JAMAICA.
From Caspar Plautus.

An Early Explorer

THE ODYSSEY OF CABEZA DE VACA.

By MORRIS BISHOP. New York: The Century Company. 1933. \$3.

Reviewed by HERBERT INGRAM PRIESTLEY
University of California

EVEN in those piping fifteen-thirties when the blood of Europe was coursing high with hope of enrichment from subjugation of the American continent and its natives, when almost universally the voice of conscience was hushed by greed, there were men who could see the essential value of a course of procedure which would lay the new found continents tributary to old Spain and still preserve the human rights of the Indians. Cabeza de Vaca, with a noble tradition behind him and his family, came to be one of those visionaries. He is identified to us in our school histories as "the first" to cross our continent, and many a book has been written in the attempt to identify his exact route by comparing his and other accounts with the present actualities. The study of this phase has its utility in helping to identify the modern names and locations of the Indians seen in our Southwest by the wanderer; so the student of early society contributes to knowledge of human geography.

But we may also think that the essence of a life is in its spirit; we may prefer to know how Cabeza de Vaca suffered and why he survived than just when and where. Professor Bishop, contributing this well documented history for the use of the general reader, has stepped aside from the rutinary work of a professor of romance languages and made a mark for himself by combining an appreciation of the physical tragedy with that of the spiritual man undone by a purpose beyond his generation to appreciate. It is not clear that Cabeza de Vaca was a humanitarian at the beginning of his American career; one may safely imagine that he was not. At any event, he was one of an expedition sent to conquer Florida under Pánfilo de Narváez, who had been neatly whittled out of the conquest of Mexico by the arch-politician and warrior Hernán Cortés. In 1528 Narváez and his men landed on the Florida coast north of the present St. Petersburg, looking for another Tenochtitlan. "Apalachen" was to be this new land of gold, but when it failed and resources were exhausted, the sorry expedition gave up and tried to make for Pánuco down on the coast of Mexico, where Christians could succor them. Then began the real Odyssey, shipwreck on "Bad Luck Island," and years of enslavement to Indian masters, from which redemption came by the development of a technique as medicine man and a constantly increasing prestige as the four sorry survivors made their way along the Gulf Coast and across the mountains to Culiacan. There, in contact with the slave-snatching frontiersmen of Christianity, the semi-mystic found it all but impossible to defend the loyal Indians who had accompanied him from being harried into the wretchedness of that slavery from which he had miraculously escaped himself. Then the ambition to found a great realm where the white should treat the red with some moral compunction; failure to reach Spain before the coveted conquest of Florida was

awarded to Soto, and then a chance in the great valley of South America.

But the Chaco, which today defies the white man and denies him a normal life though arousing the cupidity of nations, was too much for the idealist to conquer, beset as he was by illness and the cabals of those rough and ready subordinates who wanted quick wealth without too much squeamishness. Bishop follows the more kindly interpretations of De Vaca during those bitter days, though he does not ignore the criticism of the notable Ulrich Schmidel, who was not such a friendly critic of the governor.

He has made his search through a hundred and fifty odd authorities, and has made excursions into the old archives in Seville, with the result that his story is reasonably definitive and here first told completely. The narrative is smoothly written, the selection for emphasis is good; the fact that he is dealing with a man whose problems were in the main concrete and factual helps to make it easier for him to avoid that plague of modern psychoanalysis which has turned out so much bogus biography in these recent years.

A Variety of Essays

CANDELABRA. By JOHN GALSWORTHY. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1933. \$2.

Reviewed by ARTHUR COLTON

MR. GALSWORTHY was so modest a man that he would not allow even this title without a deprecatory note: "Essays and addresses supposed to be enlightening—But whether the candles are alight is for the reader to judge." The first essay is called: "Some Platitudes Concerning the Drama," and the second: "Vague Thoughts on Art"; although he is never vague, and platitude does not dwell with him any more than vainglory. Most that he says about the drama may have been said before in one way or another, but platitude is not something said before. It is something not said in a way to shed light. "A human being is the best plot there is"—something of that kind has been said before, but never more compactly.

Mr. Galsworthy was not a peculiar or startling personality, but was a very attractive one. In neither his novels nor his plays is it force or depth or subtlety that one remembers so much as admirable workmanship. It does not seem as probable of his plays as of Mr. Shaw's, that they will hold the stage and see future revivals, or that his novels will last as long as Hardy's. Several times, and in different essays here, on taste, literature, fiction, and on some ten particular novelists, the opinion appears that the great preservative in fiction is character creation. Mr. Galsworthy created characters, but one does not feel that his gift for it was very notable. If he had given himself to criticism he would have been one of the best critics of his time. He was one of the best novelists of his time and one of the most effective dramatists, perhaps largely because he applied to himself his critical faculty, his extraordinary clearheadedness. The result was a certain cleanness of workmanship, which distinguishes him among his contemporaries and perhaps will be his chief preservative.

The Art of Bamboozling

THE PROPAGANDA MENACE. By FREDERICK E. LUMLEY. New York: The Century Company. 1933. \$4.

Reviewed by JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

PROPAGANDA, says Harold Lasswell, is a concession to the rationality of the modern world, a realization that intelligence must be defeated on a wide scale. This was probably true for the World War propaganda which Mr. Lasswell has marked out for his particular province of study. But if it is true in 1933, it is one of the queerest concessions ever made, inasmuch as our post-war propagandists hardly ever trouble themselves to conceal their aims. In fact, the business of an Ivy Lee or an Edward L. Bernays depends upon his public standing as an artful publicity agent. The best modern propagandists operate in a calcium glare, state their objectives, tell newspaper editors and, indeed, whole communities that they are in the business of pulling wool over eyes, and then get away with stuff which millions, with a taste for Machiavellianism, like to think of as dark and devious, but which is, in reality, as open as the surface of a sunlit sea. The more people know about the ways of propagandists, the more they are seemingly fooled by them. The human animal is supposedly more intelligent than the Pavlovian dog. The latter quite naturally expects dog biscuit when the bell rings, for food has hitherto accompanied the signal. But to know the bell is all a trick, and still to water at the mouth! This is the sad experience of our conditioned homo sapiens.

Professor Lumley multiplies examples in "The Propaganda Menace." His book is a sort of glorified filing cabinet. Under "Conceptions of Propaganda," for instance, definitions by Walter Lippmann, Edward L. Bernays, Harold Lasswell, Kimball Young, E. R. A. Seligman, and Charles Merz are neatly card-indexed and cross-referenced and put away for future use. The chapter on "Propaganda in the Past," which makes the not unexpected discovery that Saracen atrocity stories were manipulated by Pope Urban to stimulate passion for the crusades, snaps rubber bands around passages from William Graham Sumner and other students of old folkways. Throughout the book the filing cabinet principle continues, with George Sylvester Viereck, Mr. Lasswell, Mr. Lippmann, the various muck-rakers of the power trust propaganda, Simeon Strunsky, and numerous others serving to fill out the envelopes. "The Propaganda Menace" is built out of quotations.

Naturally, such a book could not fail to be, in part, stimulating. Its method is at once its virtue and its fault. It is not an original contribution except for one flash of definition-making. For his own use, Professor Lumley defines propaganda as "promotion which is veiled in one way or another as to (1) its origin or sources, (2) the interest involved, (3) the methods employed, (4) the content spread, and (5) the results accruing to the victims—any one, any two, any three, any four, or all five." The definition is certainly inclusive, and it covers the propaganda of the World War, the propaganda of the National Electric Light Association, the propaganda of the Key Men of America. But it is hardly workable in the 1933 social context.

Let us see where it fails. The French government recently decided that France

was not getting an even break in the United States. So, quite openly, it voted more than a million dollars for an official propaganda service to be devoted to soliciting the good will of Americans. Lectures, moving pictures, pro-French magazine articles, Sunday night broadcasts, and official news agency dispatches are planned. The American correspondents in Paris cabled all this to American newspapers, which gave it front-page display. There was nothing veiled as to origin or sources, interests involved, or methods employed. If the content spread is veiled, and the results accruing to the victims unpredictable, it cannot be said the victims haven't had fair warning. Similarly with the German Nazi propaganda. Herr Goebbels is named Minister of Propaganda and Popular Enlightenment. The very title is a storm signal. Yet millions will probably be fooled by Goebbels and his paradoxically open dissembling. The bell rings, the dog ought to know he will get no food, yet he waters at the mouth.

Professor Lumley has not gone into the rage for publicity which is becoming the distinctive hall-mark of those in charge of seeking publicity for others. Nor has he gone into ways and means of combatting propaganda. His is a simple caution: be alert. But why should one be alert if one is in sympathy with the aims of many of our propagandists? Fortunately, there is one man who is working night and day to provide people with the means of combatting such propaganda as they desire to combat, and with the means of knowing all propaganda when they see it. He is C. K. Ogden. A reading of his edition of "Bentham's Theory of Fictions" (Harcourt, Brace) will put one in possession of the tools by which to understand propaganda. Following Bentham, Mr. Ogden urges us to cut into the structure of language, to seek for the "hidden metaphor." The will to look for the hidden metaphor would result in this process: When the National Electric Light Association, for example, repents of past sins and is reborn as the Edison Electric Institute, the seeker for the hidden metaphor would say, "Edison was a benevolent scientist, working ceaselessly for the good of mankind. Several books have implied that the National Electric Light Association has not sought the good of mankind. Therefore, it takes the name of the benevolent scientist as an

earnest of future good behavior. But the fact that it takes such a name may be in itself suspicious. I will, therefore, give credit for good intentions, but I will watch it closely."

If one could bring Ogden and Bentham into play in one's reading of the daily papers, the artful propagandist might find it more difficult to get the hearing that suits him. Professor Lumley, in stopping short with the simple caution, "Be alert," has ended his book

where a really interesting book on propaganda would begin. Caution is not enough; one must know how to be alert, and here Professor Lumley doesn't offer a great deal of help. His book, on balance, must be added to the enormous literature of sterile fact-grinding which is an American phenomenon. Our problem is not in evading all propaganda, but in knowing, philosophically, where we stand, and hence what specific propaganda to avoid.

The manuscript of Gustave Flaubert's book, "Les Trois Contes," has been sold in Paris for £360.



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