

The BOWLING GREEN

Notes With a Yellow Pen

II.

IN Chicago, that last week-end in February (24th to 27th) there was a queer feeling of suspended animation. People were waiting—they scarcely knew for what. Waiting for spring after a bad winter; waiting for the new Administration only a week away; waiting for Beer; for the World's Fair; for news of the banking situation in Michigan; waiting to see if Mayor Cermak could possibly win his long fight for life. NEW BLOOD FOR CERMAK said one of the many newspaper extras. One had a subconscious feeling that Long Distance telephone calls were ringing everywhere. The basement coffee-shop at the Palmer House, where Colatine and I had breakfast after a night on the Nickel Plate, was busy with coffee and toast and cheerful waitresses, but men's faces were solemn over the morning papers.

What a grim town it is when one gets away from the bravado front of Michigan Avenue. Those dark alleys toward the downtown railway stations are very sinister. The financial caverns of La Salle Street, always dour, looked even more sombre than usual. Maryland had followed Michigan with a fiscal freeze-up, and there were unhandsome rumors from the Senate committee investigating banking ethics. The story current in Chicago that week-end was that things were so promiscuous a white woman had married a banker. But not even the shadowy abyss of La Salle Street gave such an impression of gloom as Mr. Insull's empty opera house. Even the movies seemed to have abandoned it. The Blackstone Hotel was closed. The school teachers were still unpaid. But behind these perplexities Chicago's mercurial spirit was moving. Lyon and Healy's music window was full of "William H. Woodin's latest waltz hit, *Spring Is in My Heart Again*," and his F. D. Roosevelt March. Marshall Field and Company were taking advantage of the lull to redecorate the store against the Century of Progress exposition. The first touch of Western alacrity that always pleases my ear is the voice of Room Service at the hotel. When you say—perhaps ordering coffee, or White Rock, "Will you send that up right away?" the Western answer is always, "You bet I will."

A Chicago lady of means who had lost everything except her Rolls Royce found herself an office job. Her chauffeur, who could not find any other work, was staying with her just for board and lodging. He drives her to her office every morning. The car was halted by chance alongside an Unemployed rally. Some roughnecks began shouting indignation at her handsome car. She saw the back of Charles's neck redden with anger. She opened the window and retorted to the crowd. "Shut up, you damn fools," she cried, "this car keeps the driver working and it's cheaper to ride in than a taxi."

All circulation of money seemed to be mysteriously clogged. I stopped in one big store to buy some undershirts; my twenty-eight cents change got stuck in the pneumatic tube. The apparatus gave a deep, wistful, gasping sigh (like the husbands of Charge Accounts) and expired. I had to wait for a Floor Manager and all sorts of autographed vouchers before the surplus could be reciprocated. In that same store, I heard, all employees were to go on commission, instead of salary, from March 1st. That was what happened to Pinneberg in *Little Man What Now?* that fine German novel of which you will be hearing more very soon. But the Chicago elevator girls seemed to me even more beautiful than ever. Or was it just that the department-store elevators were empty enough so that one could see them better?

In gray times Chicago turns eagerly toward midnight amusement. Miss Texas

Guinan, who is a shrewder forecaster of public morale than many financiers, had just opened a new cabaret in expectation of the World's Fair traffic. A carload of those little wooden hammers had arrived for her customers to pound enthusiasm on the tables. They were doing so. The dance floor was crowded. That Saturday evening Colatine and I had been to a demonstration of the Lie Detector (Northwestern University's famous machine for measuring veracity), so we were presumably sensitive to any kind of deception. We watched and listened to various manifestations of huzza without noting any insincerity. Those people were having fun and they didn't care who knew it. The dancing was so thick that collision was inevitable. One couple, bumped strongly in postern at an unstable moment, rolled deliciously on the floor. Their eyes looked upward with most humorous surprise and appeal, but no anger. They were like government bonds, begging not to be walked on. It was a good-humored mellay, and Miss Guinan presided with hoarse and genial bonhomie. But I could see that she regarded me as an old Hoboken showman rather than as a literary person, and I began to fear she might call on me for a speech. Making what we regarded as a legitimate professional deduction from the check, Colatine and I slipped away. After the uproar of the cabaret Colatine had a notion that the Dunes would be a pleasant peace. But it was late, a drizzling winter and the dunes were far. We did not go, but I was sorry. I've seen those famous sand hills only from the train, but I had a queer dream about them years ago. I dreamed—without any known reason for it—that Mr. Don Marquis and I were riding desperately in a taxi-cab, somewhere in the Loop and under the Chicago L. We were fleeing from some vast calamity, an earthquake or fire, and peering anxiously above to see if the L would collapse on us. Don kept saying, "If we can get out to the dunes it'll be all right."

I gave Tex Guinan's little wooden mallet to a travelling sociologist who was on his way to speak a series of lectures in Des Moines. He promised to use it as a gavel in case his meetings became unruly. "Ideas have a chance in Des Moines" was the slogan that vigorous city had adopted for its parliament of civics. I hoped there might be some pleasant symbolism in the idea of Miss Guinan's little mallet of merriment going to so serious a meeting. There should be more human hilarity in our learned conferences.

The Lie Detector, which our old friend Burt Massee was kind enough to have demonstrated for us, was very interesting. It takes a combined graph of the subject's respiration and blood pressure while he is being asked questions. The simplest form of demonstration is for the supposed felon to choose one of ten cards. The operator of the machine of course does not know which one has been chosen. Each card in turn is then held up before the chooser; he must deny them all. They may be exhibited to him in serial order, so that the subject knows when the guilty card is coming; or in random order so that it comes unexpectedly. The test is whether the operator can deduce, from the behavior of pulse and breath, which was the chosen card.

It is easy, of course, for the subject to control his respiration, but less possible (perhaps impossible?) to alter one's blood pressure at will. Among a group of people who were deliberately trying to fool the machine, its findings, in the hands of an experienced operator, seemed to me remarkably successful. I myself was elated to beat the machine on the first test, but it showed me up on the second. Where the subject gives himself away is usually the unconscious relaxation of blood pressure after he supposes the crucial question is past. Whether the record of the machine

could ever be accepted as legal evidence I cannot surmise, but I have no doubt that intelligently used it might well help to verify a moot presumption. I was amused, about a year ago, by a newspaper story from Chicago about a young couple who were married with the Lie Detector recording their palpitations while the judge read the ceremony. According to the A. P. story at that time:

The bride's heart—but not the bridegroom's—nearly stopped when the judge asked the bridegroom, "Do you take this woman?" and also, when he said, "I pronounce you man and wife."

The bridegroom's blood pressure rapidly and steadily decreased during the ceremony, while the bride's steadily rose.

Except in the rental library departments, the book business was in that now familiar condition described as "very quiet." But friends in the trade were not taking it lying down. All seemed hopeful that spring, and Roosevelt, and beer, might mean improvement. Marshall Field's enormous book department has been enlarged yet again. At Carson Pirie's the book department is printing a lively little house-organ of its own, named (for the store's Scottish ancestry) *The Thistle Leaf*, to apprise its customers of the latest book news. The renting of jig-saw puzzles has been a useful help in all book departments—indeed that painful pastime has



CHICAGO RIVER.

From "All about Chicago" (Houghton Mifflin).

been so accurate a symbol of the whole economic world lately that historians may look back on 1932-33 as the Jig-Saw Age. —Ben Abramson of the Argus Bookshop had been amusing himself to print an enormous cut-rate circular in the size and style of a newspaper, celebrating his tenth anniversary. Mr. Kroch, the famous bookseller on Michigan Avenue, whose literary enthusiasm extends over many countries and languages, was alert with plans for his International Book Store at the World's Fair. For this he intends a catalogue whose first printing will be 100,000 copies. From a high terrace of the Tavern Club, where Mr. Krock took Colatine and me to lunch, we were surprised to see Admiral Byrd's polar ship lying moored under huge buildings in the green backwater of the Chicago River. Small and old-fashioned, waiting for the spring (to be towed down to the Fair Grounds), she also seemed an emblem of Trade.

Thanks to Ben Abramson I had a chance to meet Chicago's two literary cops—detectives John Howe and Bill Drury of the gangster squad. They took me riding in a police car on their afternoon round, hunting for trouble. I had expected at least a vehicle with armored panels and bullet-proof glass; but no, just an ordinary stock sedan, quite indistinguishable from any other, with radio concealed in the roof. It was a clear Saturday afternoon—"a swell day for a getaway," remarked Bill Drury, explaining that this was a likely time for pay-roll bandits. "I thought you didn't have pay-rolls in Chicago any more," said the visitor uneasily. As Bill and John are well known to most Chicago torpedoes, there was an uncomfortable expectation of something coming through the window at any moment. Bill and John, sitting in the front seat, had two revolvers apiece

and another—a very big one—lay close to hand on the floor of the car. Ben, sitting with me in the rear, regaled me with anecdotes of a recent occasion when one of this intrepid pair took several gunmen into camp single-handed. They are not assigned to any definite beat but cruise ad lib with hearts of controversy. Fortunately the general business syncope seemed to apply to crime also. The radio above us, which droned out messages now and then, did not report anything near enough or important enough for Bill and John to consider. "Car 173, Car 173," the voice would say, calling the particular police-car nearest the emergency, "1618 West 18th Street, 1618 West 18th Street, a man impersonating himself as a police officer." Or, "Car 152, Car 152, 5528 West Harrison Street, 5528 West Harrison Street, a reckless driver." I think Bill and John were just a little ashamed that so promising an afternoon turned up nothing sanguinary for the tenderfoot. When a call came through "Man in a restaurant leaves without paying his lunch" they feared I would think Chicago was going soft. We went out along the lake shore, and then diligently pursued all Chicago's more dangerous regions, but everywhere was complete calm. They showed me the old Desplaines Street police station, where (if I understood right) the friendly veteran in charge is a brother of Mick Collins, the Irish patriot. That forbidding old place, with its medieval-looking cells in the basement, was almost empty save for some pathetic old wastrels to whom the good-natured cops give charitable shelter. They have a warm room behind the cell-tier where harmless bums can wash their clothes and have bread and coffee.

Bill and John pointed out the garage where the Valentine's Day massacre took place a few years ago (there's a bookstore next door to it). One gang of racketeers stood a rival gang against the wall and mowed them down with machine guns. They showed the police monument in Union Park, site of the Haymarket riots, and many historic spots where either gangster or cop had taken it, but the bang of an unexpected blow-out (on another car) was the only nerve-shock. "You needn't jump," they said; "if one hits you, you probably won't hear it." These men, who have a record of unshaken coolness and valor, are great readers, especially of poetry; one of their good memories is of having taken John Drinkwater on the same tour. Among the many paradoxes of Chicago I know none more complete than to ride round the town looking for bullets while John and Bill, with eyes constantly watchful, talk about Robinson Jeffers and Edna Millay and John Masefield.

As John Howe was hanging up his smart brown overcoat at lunch, before we went riding, I noticed a hole in it, and thought he must have torn it on a nail. It wasn't a nail, but a bullet-hole, where he had fired from his pocket.

RANDOM RECOLLECTIONS:—Curious musky and perfumed smell of the elevators in the old Congress Hotel, traditional stopping place of book salesmen in Chicago. . . . The tunnel from the Congress to the Auditorium Hotel; it runs under the street and is much used by bookmen, the meals at the other end being cheaper. . . . The romantic Balloon Room of the Congress is now the Joseph Urban Room. . . . Philip Guedalla, lecturing in the Middle West, looks the part better than most of us; with fur coat and cane. . . . Ben Abramson eases the pressure on a bookseller's feet with elastic-sided shoes. . . . The names of cars on the Colorado Limited: *Island Charm*, *Prairie Lawn*, *Lambeth*, *Marcus Daly*. . . . Howard Vincent O'Brien's little kennel in the Chicago *Daily News* office made me almost homesick for old newspaper days.

(To be continued)

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

According to *John o'London's Weekly* a forest composed of trees presented by living authors is being built up on the estate of M. Lugné-Poë, the French actor-dramatist, near Avignon. Bernard Shaw has sent an oak tree, M. Maeterlinck two yew trees, and Gerhardt Hauptmann two pine trees.

HERE AND THERE ABOUT THE WORLD

Sailors' Tales

BOWSPRIT ASHORE. By ALEXANDER H. BONE. With woodcuts by FRED A. BONE and an introduction by H. M. TOMLINSON. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1933. \$2.50.

Reviewed by ALFRED F. LOOMIS

HM. TOMLINSON who writes the introduction to "Bowsprit Ashore," deplores the tendency of modern sailors to follow each long passage with a long book. He rakes the ad-writers for the steamship companies who in the earning of their daily bread wax lyric over far-off islands that they have never seen. He fulminates against the gadgets of modern steamships. By these gracious stages he works himself up to delivering the reader into the hands of a sailor "whose business, once on a time, took him around Cape Horn as though it were the mulberry bush."

Perhaps I should have read the introduction last—if at all. As it happened I was left in an antagonistic frame of mind (for steamship ads need not be read by the literati, and gadgets may appear romantic to a later generation, and young sailors sometimes spin grand tales) from which I did not wholly recover until I was half way through the book. There I encountered the ancient, land-ridden Scot to whom Bone, the traveler, recounts the highlights of each recent voyage to "furren" parts. I learned how eagerly the old man listened to each new tale of the sailors' life, and how painstakingly if mistakenly he rolled under his tongue such outlandish names as Guayaquil and Torre dell' Annunziata. And I realized that I, like the aged Scot, had become increasingly interested in the reminiscences of a sailor. Restored to enjoyment of the printed word, I read on with the soothed feeling that it was not printed but that the youngest of the literary Bones had chocked me off on the chart-room settee and was telling me. He told me of boarding masters, of loading rice at Calcutta, of the tragic death of a Chinese sailor whose mangled body was "interned" to the popping of firecrackers in scandalized Germany, of Mother Grant, the villainous crimp of Astoria, and of a score other persons and experiences that only a sailor could tell. He left me thanking him and stammering that I was honored to have made his acquaintance and that I hoped some day that I would be permitted to take somebody else up to the bridge to hear his reminiscences.

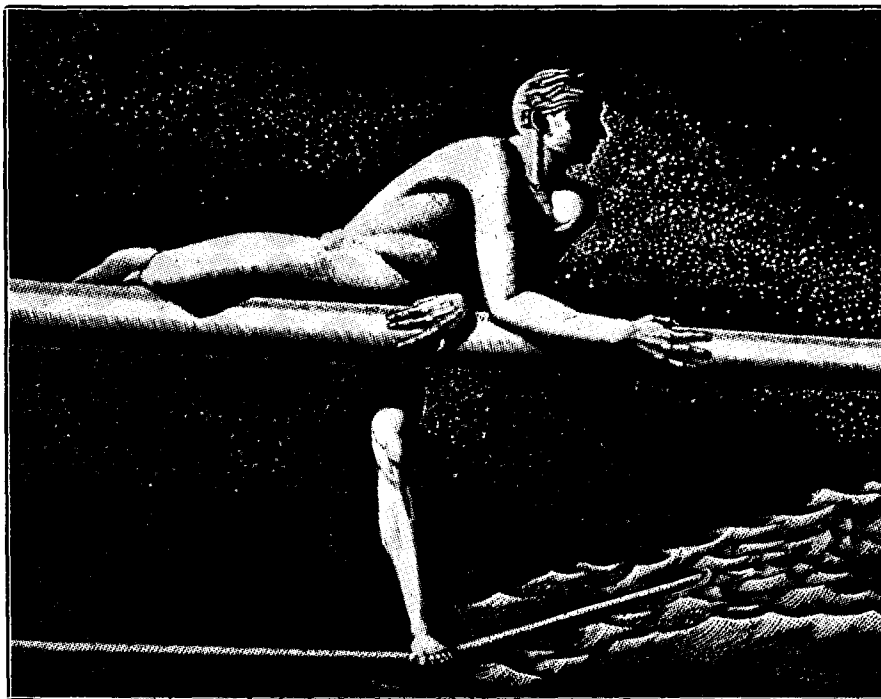
Fortunately, there is not as much formality in Mr. Bone's avocation as there is in his vocation. I do not have to ask permission to recommend his book. I may advise that with no other formality than the crossing of a bookseller's hand with silver many spirited, amusing, and entertaining tales of the sea and sailors will be found in "Bowsprit Ashore."

Desert Crossroads

CARAVAN CITIES. By M. ROSTOVZEFF. Translated by D. and T. TALBOT RICE. New York: Oxford University Press. 1933. \$4.50.

Reviewed by ARTHUR DARBY NOCK

WE have all in our time felt the thrill of Flecker's picture of the merchants riding forth at evening from the wells, and most of us have wondered how through the centuries East and West exchanged their products across the desert. This brilliant book gives some fascinating chapters from the story. It opens with a brief but illuminating sketch of trade from early days, which reveals a surprising vigor and complexity of commercial life, and proceeds to a more detailed consideration of the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Professor Rostovtzeff shows how large a part the desire to control and develop these highways of business played in the determination of statecraft, and how clearly their fortunes can be traced in the growth and decay of four cities, Petra, Jerash, Palmyra, and Dura. He gives a vivid account of the extant remains of each of these, and illustrates it by a series of good photographs, many of which are due to the skill of his wife.



THE BOWSPRIT. BY ROCKWELL KENT.
From "Contemporary American Prints" (American Art Dealers Association).

There must be few, if any, who can read this book without finding their historical perspective greatly changed. It makes us see the issues between Ptolemies and Seleucids as turning not merely on prestige and "the flag stuck on a heap of bones" but on the domination of the vital arteries of commerce. We see the key position of semi-independent Petra, as later of semi-independent Palmyra. We see the effects of the varied fortunes of Judaism in the decay of Greek city life in Transjordan at the time of the Maccabee success and in its expansion after the fall of Jerusalem. There is something suggestive of the rise of the Hansa league in the rise of the semi-independent states just mentioned from financial power to political power. The desert routes produced peculiar political conditions. They created also religious phenomena of a special kind. The world of the Semite of the desert, as for the Semite of Mesopotamia, derived its character from the antithesis of the city or oasis and the sand—the small inhabited area protected by its gods and laws and the intervening spaces tenanted by evil spirits.

The spade has brought this world back to life. Dura, from which much of the most important material is drawn, was a mere name till 1920. Now it is difficult to imagine how any idea of the interplay of Greek and Oriental culture in the Euphrates was ever drawn without what we have learned from this site. The excavations begun by M. Cumont and continued by Yale under the direction of Professor Rostovtzeff have been fruitful as few others in the annals of archaeology, and it is sincerely to be hoped that the stringency of the moment will not involve any suspension of this vital work.

"Caravan Cities" cannot be too highly commended to the attention of the general public and of specialists alike. It is written in a most lucid and interesting manner, with no unnecessary technicalities and nowhere reads like a translation. One wish may be expressed for the new edition which it should surely soon reach, and that is that a larger map including the coast of Arabia and giving the ancient and modern place names should be supplied on a folder at the end instead of the inadequate one on the second page.

Is Paradise Enow?

HAWAII AND ITS RACE PROBLEM. By WILLIAM ATHERTON DUPUY. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office. 1933. \$1.

THE conclusion of Mr. DuPuy in regard to Hawaii's race problem is that there isn't any problem—at least in the sense in which the phrase is generally used by continental newspapers. As Mr. DuPuy was executive assistant to Secretary of Interior Wilbur and made his investigation after the un-

fortunate notoriety which came to the islands a year or two ago, his view may be accepted as more or less official.

The ultimate American in Hawaii, he suggests, will probably be "about one-third Japanese, one-fifth Filipino, one-tenth Hawaiian, one-twelfth Chinese, one-fifteenth 'Anglo-Saxon,' with a sprinkling of Korean, Puerto Rican, and what not. He will be about as swarthy as a Sicilian, straight-haired, stocky, physically fit, industrious, efficient, athletic, vain, dressy, given to gambling. His women will be known around the world for a peculiar beauty found nowhere else."

Although the professional Nordics may gnash their tusks at this prospect, Mr. DuPuy regards it with optimistic equanimity. Careful examinations made by specialists at the University of Hawaii refute, he says, the old theory that unions of unlike races produce inferior individuals. He gives all sorts of interesting examples both of the extraordinary aptitude of the various peasant stocks for American education and of the successful merging of the representatives of different stocks in the general scheme of things. It all sounds like the Garden of Eden.

An Excellent Handbook

THE BIRDS OF MINNESOTA. By THOMAS S. ROBERTS. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 1932.

Reviewed by SAMUEL SCOVILLE, JR.

IN my boyhood days bird books were rare as ivory-billed woodpeckers. Young birdists were nourished on John Burroughs's "Wake Robin," Cone's ponderous "Key to the Birds of North America," or Langille's "Our Birds and their Haunts," a fascinating book even to this day. A favored few had access to the plates of Audubon and Wilson but we of the common herd had to depend upon descriptions or woodcuts.

Now comes a two volume edition of the "Birds of Minnesota," prepared by Dr. Thomas S. Roberts, Professor of Ornithology at the University of Minnesota, and illustrated with ninety-two color plates by Major Allan Brooks, George Miksch Sutton, Walter Aloise Weber, Frances Lee Jaques, and Walter John Breckenridge, including one plate of the bobwhite—his last—by the late Louis Agassiz Fuertes. Besides these color plates there are no less than two hundred and ninety-eight text illustrations, showing the habitat, nests, and eggs of different birds. No one but a field ornithologist can realize what an enormous amount of time and patience is required to secure such photographs as the one showing the sandhill crane—that wariest of birds—on her nest or a pileated woodpecker at her nesting-hole, or a sapsucker caught in the act of killing a mountain ash.

It is interesting to compare the technique and methods of the different illustrators, all of whose work is reproduced

in color. Breckenridge's page of plovers with the golden, the black-bellied, piping, semi-palmated, and killdeer, is an exquisite bit of work. Jaques is spectacular in his pictures of the extinct whooping crane, the sandhill, and the great-blue heron, while Weber's page of grouse chicks is revealing as a study in detail.

With the small birds, Major Brooks is easily the leader of the quintet. His frontispiece in the second volume of a family of ruby-throated humming-birds feeding, quite appropriately from blossoms of the jewel-weed, is one of the most exquisite bird paintings which have ever appeared. Not even Fuertes, the old master, can surpass the Major's method. Besides a photographic attention to the smallest detail, there is a life in the pose which makes his birds seem about to fly out from the page.

It seems invidious to make any criticisms of such illustrations and the only one that this reviewer will venture is in regard to certain titles, where either the artists or the editor had a bad spell, "juvenile" appearing as "juvinal" in several places.

Outside of the illustrations, which are easily the best which have ever appeared in any American book on birds, the letterpress is packed with a wealth of information and interesting detail, the results not only of Dr. Robert's own extensive observations, but culled from the notes of a long line of scientists and observers. The abridged bibliography of Minnesota ornithology which is part of the last volume, covers some fifty pages and includes several hundred titles, from the "Voyages of Peter Esprit Rodisson from 1632 to 1684" to Chapman's "Handbook of Birds of Eastern North America, Second Revised Edition, 1932."

Dr. Robert's masterpiece contains a number of birds of the Middle West rarely seen in our Eastern States, such as the Arkansas king-bird, Clark's nutcracker, Townsend's solitaire, Bell's vireo, Kirtland's warbler, the palm warbler, the yellow-headed blackbird, Brewster's blackbird, besides a wealth of Western sparrows, such as Baird's, Leconte's, Nelson's and the dickcissel, lark-bunting, and lark-sparrow. In fact, armed with a pair of good bird-glasses and "Birds of Minnesota" an observer can cover this country almost to the Pacific slope without finding any undescribed or unpictured bird.

Ornithology now awaits "Birds of the North" and "Birds of the Southwest" to complete a library of books on birds, which will cover all of the United States, outside of its territorial possessions. Speed the day when either or both of these books appear.

In the meantime, "Birds of Minnesota" is the best book on birds for both amateur observers and scientific ornithologists which has appeared in America.

Since Armageddon

EUROPE SINCE THE WAR. By J. HAMPDEN JACKSON. With a Special Introduction by the Author for the American Edition. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1933. \$1.25.

THIS book is almost a model of its kind. It is impartial, understanding, and extraordinarily brilliant in its selection of significant detail. One usually suspects authors who claim complete objectivity, or publishers who claim this virtue for their authors, but Mr. Jackson's primer of European history since Versailles almost convinces one that an utterly "above the battle" book can be written. The author's forte is sympathetic exposition. When he is writing about the achievements of the February or October Russian revolutions, it might be the voice of Trotsky speaking. The discussion of Fascism, on the other hand, is all that a Mussolini sympathizer could wish. Mr. Jackson presents facts in the light of aims. Most astounding is his encompassing of the French point of view as well as the German; mutually exclusive attitudes are subsumed in Mr. Jackson's book under a larger synthesis that has thoroughly explored and ingested the whole. This would make Mr. Jackson a bad politician, of course, but "Europe Since the War" is the winner thereby.