NEW BOOKS

LIFE OF LORD OXFORD AND ASQUITH. By J. A. Spender and Cyril Asquith. Two Vols. London. Hutchinson & Co. 1932.

For those whose interest in British public affairs goes back to the beginning of the century and beyond, this is a pivotal biography. As early as 1896, Lord Rosebery was hoping that Asquith would very soon take his place. A generation later he was still in the forefront of the battle. To use his own words, Asquith was Prime Minister "for a longer consecutive time than anyone during the last one hundred years, and for a still longer time leader of the Liberal party". Most of his contemporaries in politics served in one or other of his cabinets, and their careers interlock with his by way of intimacy, rivalry, or intrigue. Thus, to write his *Life* implies continuous cross-reference to the other *Lives* that have lined our book-shelves so plentifully in the last decade or two, an editorial detail which the authors have not overlooked.

Lord Oxford and Asquith is fortunate in his biographers. It would seem that he had resolved not to have his *Life* written, but was over-persuaded by his political intimate, Mr. Spender, although "by this time he had destroyed much valuable material and seriously embarrassed the task of his biographers". The plan of joint authorship has worked well. Each contributes certain chapters, duly initialled, but the two are "jointly and severally responsible for the whole book". In general, Cyril Asquith has written of the early years and the intimacies of home life and personal character; Mr. Spender, of the years of triumphant Liberalism from 1906 on, and of its debacle after the Great War.

In style and treatment both authors write in the best modern manner. The narrative of Mr. Spender is lucid, well-marshalled and restrained; the delineation of the father by the son, clear-cut and faithful in its light and shade, a portrait that the subject himself would have approved. It is not, of course, to be expected that the authors have produced a definitive biography. They live too near the times they depict, and were too closely linked with the great Liberal leader to pronounce lastly on his every word and deed. But one may safely say that the salient features of his personality and the broad lines of his political career, as set forth in the present volumes, will be assumed in any evaluation of his place in history that posterity may finally adopt.

Like his lifelong friend, Lord Grey of Falloden, Asquith was quintessentially an Englishman, though with a difference. Grey derived from the green and pleasant countryside, and a distinguished county family. Asquith was a product of the industrial North and the Nonconformist chapel. His forebears adhered to a minor sect of Congregationalism, the "very dissidence of dissent". But the death of his father left the family in straitened circumstances, and sent him at the age of ten to the City of London School. Thereafter his

formative influences are to be found in the larger life of the metropolis. The winning of a classical scholarship brought him to Balliol under Jowett, where he took his place with distinction. He entered eagerly into the intellectual life around him and, among the many honours that came his way, he probably esteemed most highly his election to the presidency of the Oxford Union. The award of a fellowship enabled him to study for the Bar and, incidentally, to subsist for long years, waiting for clients to turn up. Meantime, he eked out his slender resources by hack work of various kinds. He lectured on law, and taught economics in University Extension. He wrote leading articles for the *Economist* and was a regular contributor to the *Spectator*, invaluable training for his later battles with Chamberlain and Tariff Reform. On the professional side, he "devilled" for the Attorney General's "devil", and at last attracted the attention of the Attorney General himself, the later Lord James of Hereford, who assigned to him the preparation of a memorandum on the Parliamentary Oath at the time of the Bradlaugh incident, when Gladstone found it necessary to introduce the Affirmation Bill. From that time professional success was assured. An early friendship with Haldane, another rising barrister, drew him into politics and in 1886, at the age of thirty-four, he was elected to parliament as the member for East Fife, a constituency which he represented without break for thirty-two years.

The great opportunity came in 1889, and found him prepared. The Parnell Commission and the Pigott forgeries were convulsing British politics, and in the famous trial Sir Charles Russell handed over to him the cross-examination of the editor of *The Times*. "When Asquith sat down, to be overwhelmed with praise by his leader, he was, so far as the Bar was concerned, a made man. His practice jumped a dozen rungs, and within a year he took silk with a confidence which was fully justified by the event" (I, 62). Thereafter the *cursus honorum* of public life lay before him, leading to the chieftainship of his party and the highest office in the State.

Once in the way of political preferment, Asquith went straight on the quarter-deck. His maiden speech won unqualified acceptance:

> The House was impressed by its argumentative cogency and literary finish, and hardly less by the authoritative tone with which it was delivered. Here was no fumbling novice or promising amateur, but a seasoned fighter, sure, with an assurance which usually experience alone can beget, of his case, his audience, and himself. It was often said of Asquith afterward that he was never a member of the rank and file. From the start he assumed the manner of a front bencher, and the House accepted him at his own valuation. (I, 56).

Asquith's public career might conceivably be dramatized in five Acts. In the first, as Home Secretary in Gladstone's last cabinet, he is being singled out as the coming leader, "a Liberal without prefix or suffix". In the second Act, as Chancellor of the Exchequer in the famous ministry of 1905, his star is ascending, with the great issue between Commons and Lords about to be joined. He is the "sledge hammer" of his party, and fast taking his place among the most competent holders of his high office. In Haldane's opinion, his second budget speech was "in the first rank, worthy to stand with the great performances of the great Chancellors". Act Three brings him to

supreme power as Prime Minister, and with it the crowning achievement of his career, the passage of the Parliament Act, definitely establishing the supremacy of the Commons. But at the moment of triumph begins the decline. The fourth Act re-opens the Home Rule struggle which, before it ends in failure, exhausts Asquith's parliamentary resource, as it has worsted every statesman fated to deal with it. In the fifth Act comes the war, with the inevitable "catastrophe" for the "hero", in conformity with the accepted canon of dramatic art.

A comment or two on this outline. As already intimated, the Parliament Act will doubtless be considered Asquith's masterpiece. No other statesman of his time could have carried it through. His intellectual equipment, training and tact and sympathy with the Crown brought the titanic struggle to a successful consummation, and gave him a niche beside the authors of the Bill of Rights and the Reform Bill of 1832. But his very success in the Parliament Act held within it the seeds of failure when he took up the Irish settlement. For the opponents of that measure had resolved on methods lying outside the Constitution and, before Home Rule was on the statute book, the issue had undergone complete change. For this, Asquith's political history and temperament may have been in part responsible. In early days he was a member of Rosebery's Liberal League and, in spite of his complete understanding with Redmond, it is doubtful if the rank and file of the Irish party ever considered him as wholly in sympathy with their cause. In a memorandum recording a conversation with the king in 1909, during the budget crisis, with reference to a possible dissolution of the House at the time, there is this significant passage: "The outcome of an election fought under such conditions was not unlikely to be a very small majority either way between the British parties, with the decisive vote in critical matters left to the Irish; a very undesirable state of things"—the actual situation created by the two elections in 1910.

But it was the war and the baffling play of forces it brought in its train that broke Asquith and left him disillusioned. In the crisis that brought about the second Coalition, he lost his moorings and was unable to ride out the storm. His biographers leave us in no doubt as to their opinion of the transaction:

> Asquith, it must be admitted, had nothing like the skill and accomplishments of his opponents on this occasion. . .Mr. Bonar Law told his friend Lord Beaverbrook, who reports it in his book, that Asquith said to him, when he declined to serve in a Bonar Law Government: "I have no feeling of hostility. You have treated me with complete straightforwardness throughout". Whatever may have been said at the moment, it would be idle to pretend that this was Asquith's considered view of these transactions. He never concealed from his friends that he considered himself to have been seriously misled about material facts, or minced words in characterizing the parts played by some of the performers on this scene". (II, 273).

It is difficult, however, to escape the conclusion that, whatever chicane may have been employed in the displacement of Asquith by Lloyd George, the change lay in the logic of events. Considerations more fundamental than personal prestige entered into the situation. The World War was *sui generis*. In its dimensions it went beyond

all precedent, and shifted its base from the actual war zone to the home front. Whole peoples had to be roused to the highest level of efficiency and kept there until victory was won. Such a task called for daemonic energy and popular appeal and, above all, for the gift of imagination, qualities which the instinct of the people found in Lloyd George, endowed, as Keynes puts it, "with almost medium-like sensibility, and with six or seven senses not available to ordinary men". It was just these qualities that Asquith lacked. As a lawyer, his biographers note, "he could not play down to a jury", and in public life "would not descend to explanations, or edit or dramatize himself for public consumption". Most commendable in the classical days of English public life, but wholly unsuited for the "high pressure salesmanship" needed to win a world war. It will be remembered, too, that in 1916 Asquith was sixty-four. He had held the premiership continuously for nearly nine years "in circumstances of unexampled strain", and was ill at ease as head of the first Coalition. In a letter to John Redmond in May, 1915, he expresses his feelings. "Nothing but the most compelling sense of public duty", he writes, "could have induced me to be where I am, and surrounded as I am, cut off as I am to-day". (II, 169). By contrast, his rival was at the zenith of his powers. At two critical moments of the war he had been chosen by Asquith himself for what were at the time the most crucial posts—the Ministry of Munitions and the War Office. For the latter position Asquith admitted that Lloyd George's claim was undeniable as one "who had been more closely associated with the conduct of the war than any other civilian Minister". And in the end the pragmatic test of victory fully justified the accession of the great War Minister to supreme control.

As one closes these volumes, the personality of the last Liberal premier stands out finely chiselled and complete. There was no "twilight of dubiety" about Asquith, and there is none about the picture his biographers have drawn of him. Intellect dominated in his make-up, an energetic, practical intelligence, admirably cast for affairs, but strangely limited on the speculative side. It was not for nothing that he had sat at the feet of Jowett:

> The young man had no more respect than his mentor for the "fugitive and cloistered virtue" which "slinks out of the race" and shrinks from the "dust and heat"...A further bond of sympathy between them was the strongly practical bent which they shared. Asquith recoiled from ideology, and had no taste for speculation. He was keenly interested in the workability of institutions: hardly at all in their abstract symmetry or perfection. Jowett, similarly, disclosed in later life a capacity for pure business for which a life dedicated to the study of Platonism and theology had hardly prepared the world. (I, 36).

Did not Asquith himself once speak of "the *effortless* superiority of Balliol men"?

Along with this aristocratic intellect went a marked reserve, doubtless intensified by his early years of struggle. "A certain quality blent of shyness, pride and even arrogance veiled him from the public gaze". Conscious of his own abilities, he never sought preferment. The world had to come to him with its gifts, which he accepted only on his own terms. "To thrust, or lobby, or intrigue, or conciliate

powerful enemies whom he did not respect would have been to abjure his own nature". But what the world did not know so much about was the warmth of his emotions, and loyalty to his principles and friends. Though he was immersed in the party quarrels that centred around Harcourt, Rosebery and Campbell-Bannerman, all bore testimony to his personal integrity throughout the sorry squabbles. Harcourt "had every reason to rely on his good faith", and Rosebery from the first "greatly valued the warmth of his heart". In his political warfare the same direct methods appear. He neither sapped nor mined, but brought the heavy artillery of his powerful intelligence to bear upon the enemy's position, and broke down his defences by sheer weight of frontal attack.

Asquith has been called the "last of the Romans", a characterization which his *gravitas* and the classical style of his oratory make peculiarly apt. And if there be such things as Dialogues of the Dead, one can fancy his holding sympathetic converse with some of the stoic figures whose losing fight for principles lit up the expiring days of the ancient Republic. But, Roman or not, Asquith stands forth an authentic Englishman, who worthily takes his place in the national gallery as an eminent parliamentarian and a great man.

H. F. M.

THE LIFE OF JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN. By J. L. Garvin. Volume I, 1836-1885. Macmillan & Co. 1932.

Mr. Garvin is, first and foremost, a journalist, as readers of *The Observer* know to their joy, and readers of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* to their sorrow. But in biography one gains more by the merits and loses less by the faults of the journalist than in most other forms of literature, and this book on Joseph Chamberlain is fascinating.

It is only Volume I of a work that promises to be of portentous length, and whose prospectus has elicited from *Punch* the characteristic comment that probably no writer could have made it any longer. A biography in five large volumes is suggestive of an age with either fewer books or more abundant leisure than we enjoy,—light reading perhaps, as Macaulay once said, for the ante-diluvians, but rather exacting since the days of man's years have been shortened to three score years and ten. And yet few who have read this first section would be ready, I think, to point out any great part of it which they would wish to have omitted. Perhaps the protracted account of the Chamberlain ancestry is a demand on patience, with little obvious profit. But in general the attention does not flag, and if—in Dogberry's words—there is any considerable tediousness yet to be bestowed, Mr. Garvin must be reserving it for future volumes.

It is a high merit of the book that the central figure is kept central. The author had to refer to many national and world movements, but he does not, like too many biographers, make this a pretext for writing general history. It is a single person whom he has undertaken to portray to his readers; all else is subordinate to sketching those features

as they were, and especially to preserving their genuine expression. Like a painter with his brush, or a sculptor with his chisel, he has tried to make posterity know Joseph Chamberlain as the Chamberlain circle knew him, in habits and moods, in methods of work, in special talents, in master purposes. The success of this kind of effort depends, of course, not only on the skill of the artist to reproduce, but on his insight into the original on which he works. Chamberlain's character has been very variously read, by persons all of whom had good opportunities to study it. But it is at least a very vivid and life-like figure that Mr. Garvin has drawn, and the reader will lay down the book feeling that an unforgettable addition has been made to his gallery of acquaintance.

This volume deals with "the Radical phase"—from the boyhood and young manhood spent in the screw industry at Birmingham, contriving judicious combinations and acquisition of rival patents, down to the great political breach with Gladstone in 1885. Whether in factory or in parliament, in the policies of a municipal council or in the exchanges of diplomacy, it is a radical world-mender that is drawn. Many a Dominion observer who came to know Chamberlain first as Colonial Secretary in a Conservative Government will discover to his amazement in this book what a violent revolutionary he had been in the first dozen years of his parliamentary career. His public life began with a furious campaign in the late sixties of last century to secure a system of national education in schools at once compulsory, free, and—above all—undenominational. The bitter fight waged by this Unitarian screw-manufacturer in Birmingham against the traditions and prestige of the Established Church is described with picturesque effectiveness. The following chapter sets before us the record of the great Chamberlain mayoralty, the reshaping of the city of Birmingham at the direction of one to whom the slums, the mortality, the inefficiency of civic departments had become intolerable, and whose judicious courage in municipal finance was not only rewarded a hundred fold, but set a pattern for other English mayors to emulate within the limits of their capacity. Mr. Garvin's powers are at their very best, and the book reaches perhaps its most instructive quality, in this chapter entitled "The Great Citizen in Action."

But the spirit of the reformer thus aroused, and gratified by magnificent success, at once went further. It is given to but few men to have accumulated at the age of thirty-seven such a fortune in private business as to enable them to devote the rest of their lives to public service, and it is given to still fewer to accept such an opportunity when it comes. Mr. Garvin explains how municipal politics had been but a practising ground for wider politics, and how the organization of the screw industry supplied a hint for the organization of a country-wide Radical movement. Chamberlain's enemies said that he was Americanizing British public life by the establishment of a "machine"; but it may well be that it was the experience of business rather than the imitation of an external model that gave the inspiring idea. Anyhow, the system became an immense, an exasperating success, and the master organizer was in request all over the country where the Radical forces had to be prepared for battle. In those

days it was the slogan of "Free Land, Free Schools, Free Church" that resounded from platform after platform. And it is needless to say that conflict with the ancient governing class became fiercer as proposals for change became more daring. To how many who first knew him a generation ago will it seem credible that Chamberlain in the eighties used on the platform such words as these:

> Lord Salisbury constitutes himself the spokesman of a class—of the class to which he himself belongs, who toil not neither do they spin, whose fortunes, as in his case, have originated in grants made in times gone by for the services which courtiers rendered kings, and have since grown and increased while they have slept by levying an increased share on all that other men have done by toil and labour to add to the general wealth and prosperity of the country.

Still more alarming was the passage in which he addressed those who had met to celebrate the jubilee of John Bright. He compared their gathering to the one shortly before, when the Tsar of Russia was crowned:

> Your demonstrations on Monday lacked nearly all the elements which constituted the great pomp of the Russian coronation. The pomp and the circumstance were wanting. No public money was expended. No military display accompanied Mr. Bright. The brilliant uniforms, the crowds of high officials, the representatives of Royalty—they were absent—and nobody missed them.

These last words, from a Cabinet Minister, were of the sort which stirred wrath in an exalted quarter, and Gladstone had much trouble to frame a duteous reply to urgent messages.

Mr. Garvin follows the stages of his hero's development through conflict after conflict, especially when he became President of the Board of Trade, and rendered such notable service in legislation against angry vested interests as was seen, for example, in the requirement of "the Plimsoll Line" against overloading of ships. But no brief summary could convey to the reader what a treat is in store for him in these vivid, impressive pages descriptive of a great personality grappling with great issues.

Seldom of late has the first part of a *Life* so whetted one's interest for what is yet to come. One eagerly awaits the later volumes, which will show how Chamberlain the Radical, who had been so offensive to the scruples of Queen Victoria, became Chamberlain the Conservative so dear to the Carlton Club, passing through the short transition period humorously called "Liberal Unionist" whose very name now exists only for the political antiquary. It will have to tell how the preacher of "the unauthorized programme" and the doctrine of "Ransom" came to bid the British workman forget "three acres and a cow" that he might "learn to think imperially"; how the Liberal of the eighties came to mock the Liberals of fifteen years later as "friends of every country but their own"; how the satirist to whom the House of Lords had been "a mere branch of the Tory caucus, a mere instrument of the Tory domination" came to extol the same House as a venerable and stately safeguard of England's liberties; how, finally, a wild and whirling leap carried the champion of "free breakfast-table", as uncompromising as either Cobden or Bright, into a protectionist apostolate fit for Leo Maxse and *The National Review*.

But it is the picture of such sensational, such Protean transformations which gives peculiar zest to a political biography, and though it will tax even Mr. Garvin's powers to explain this whole series as "evolution rather than revolution", he will come as near to success if he tries it as the nature of the case allows. One is at least certain that he has material fit for his best biographic artistry in the later stages of that wonderful career—such a blend of administrative strength, political ingenuity, the eloquence of debate which could overpower enemies in the House, and the genius for friendship which could make a political enemy into a personal friend. It does not surprise one to learn that this first Volume has captivated the imagination of Mr. Winston Churchill, whose tribute has appeared in *The Daily Mail*, and to whom—it is fair to guess—the subject and the treatment are alike congenial. For Chamberlain's extraordinary talent he has no doubt the intimate appreciation of one whose own gifts are not very dissimilar; while to such facility of political change he has naturally less than the usual sensitiveness.

This volume has a few slips, some at least of which should be corrected before it is reprinted. It was not at the head of a bishop (p. 123) that Jenny Geddes's stool was flung, and our language does not include any such word as "disaffinity". Mr. Garvin has a fancy for some curious forms. Though "disrespected" (p. 180) and "riposted" are alike objectionable, one must acknowledge that others sinned in these cases before him. But "disaffinity" seems to be his own invention, and it is of peculiar ungainliness.

H. L. S.

SONGS AND BALLADS FROM NOVA SCOTIA. Collected by Helen Creighton. J. M. Dent & Sons. Pp. xxii, 334.

The ballad may be called literature before letters. It is the composition of the folk, composed, recited or sung, and handed down in oral tradition. Only by accident does it come to be written down, when it arouses the interest of a collector like Scott. Such a collection as *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* is a revelation to the literary world of the unsuspected beauty of folk poetry. Its favourite themes are tragic, lost battles, romantic love and the supernatural. Treated with simplicity and directness, these themes have strange power to charm. The classical work on the subject is *English and Scottish Ballads*, by the Harvard scholar, Francis James Child.

Both Child and Gummere assumed that the ballad was a closed chapter in the history of literature; but eager investigators have discovered it as a living form in primitive communities, such as the Scotch-Irish mountaineers in the Southern States. Nova Scotia also has made its contribution to this fascinating study. The first was Professor Roy McKenzie's survey of Pictou County as a field of folk-poetry in *The Quest of the Ballad*. Since its appearance, the ballads McKenzie collected have been carefully printed with music and notes by the Harvard University Press. Inspired by McKenzie's engaging tale of his questing, Dr. Max MacOdrum, while yet an undergraduate,

made a collection of ballads extant in Hants County, about Admiral Rock. This collection has not been printed, but it has been typed, and it is carefully preserved in Dalhousie College.

Now Miss Helen Creighton has discovered a third "pocket" of this precious material, at our own door, in the small community of fisher folk on Devil's Island at the mouth of Halifax Harbour. They have been given a most attractive dress by the publishers; print, paper, press-work, binding leave nothing to be desired. The end-paper design deserves mention for the ingenuity displayed in piecing together the characters of the different ballads into a harmonious whole; and also the highly characteristic pen-drawing by Mr. R. Wilcox which forms the frontispiece. It is a book for the collector as well as for the scholar. The latter's needs have been considered in the notes. Miss Creighton tells the story of her quest, with no little charm.

Miss Creighton's collection includes 150 "old songs," which may be described as both ancient and modern. There are sailors' chanties which have their home everywhere, as might be expected in a fishing community, songs of wrecks and disasters at sea, lumbermen's songs, songs of local murders and tragedies of lost children, songs of terrible crime like the *Saladin* mutiny. A good many come from Ireland, like "The Croppy Boy" and "Willy Riley". Several relate the encounter of a girl in man's attire with her lover. Some few are distinctly "literary", like "Tacking a Full-rigged Ship off Shore", or have literary reminiscence, like "Bay of Biscay Oh," which begins with the first line of Martin Parker's lyric, "You gentlemen of England." The old songs in this collection therefore vary greatly in value.

For the serious student of the ballad, the most valuable material will be found in the first eleven pages. Here are genuine antiques, variants of which are included in Child's monumental work. Think of the amateur's marvellous luck in finding a real Robin Hood ballad living on into the nineteenth century, and "The Jew's Daughter," and "The Farmer's Curst Wife," and "Lady Barnard and Little Musgrove!" But the greatest treasure of all is the riddle ballad with which the collection begins. It represents, perhaps, the very oldest form of the ballad. There are riddles extant in Anglo-Saxon. MacOdrum unearthed "The Babes In the Wood", and McKenzie "Captain Wedderburn's Courtship." Who knows what literary treasure-trove may yet be made, when the province is systematically explored?

ARCHIBALD MACMECHAN.

PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECTS OF MODERN SCIENCE. By C. E. M. Joad. London. Allen and Unwin. Toronto. Thomas Nelson and Sons. 1932. Pp. 344. $3.50.

To the unphilosophical, philosophic distinctions frequently appear to be mere quibbling. Consequently, Mr. Joad will not be surprised at the cool welcome accorded his book by some of the scientific critics. Sometimes his purpose has been misunderstood. It is not his intention

to teach physics to the physicist. But when Professor Eddington remarks that the stuff out of which things are made is probably "mind-stuff", he speaks no longer as a physicist. When Sir James Jeans maintains that the universe is more like a great thought than a great machine, he too has turned philosopher. Such statements are to be judged by philosophical standards, and for Mr. Joad this means that they are to be considered in the light of that form of pluralistic realism which is for him the most satisfactory world-view.

Readers of this REVIEW will scarcely be interested in a mere catalogue of the technical arguments with which Mr. Joad assaults these famous scientists together with Mr. Bertrand Russell. The general trend of the argument, however, may be briefly indicated. The scientist, as such, has achieved his immense success because he has insisted upon regarding objective facts with strict impartiality. Instead of prescribing to things what they must be, he has been content to discover what things are. In science the attainment of this impartiality has been slow and difficult, but it is still harder to achieve it in philosophy. It is not surprising, then, that the scientist who turns to philosophy should lose something of his scientific temper. "Sir James Jeans and Professor Eddington have striven to present the reality at the back of things, not only as worthy of man's admiration, but as friendly and even akin to his nature." (p. 339). This, Mr. Joad believes, rests on a false theory of knowledge, and springs from an ego-centric temper of mind which seeks to liken reality to the self, and in so doing degrades both the known and the self that knows it. The scientist has remembered his wishes, but he has forgotten his science. His results tell us more about the scientist than about the universe; their value is psychological rather than metaphysical. "Seen in the wider perspective of philosophy, the theories of the universe sponsored by modern physics have an appearance of triviality, making the universe smaller by assimilating it to the nature and subordinating it to the wishes of man." (p. 341). Thus, paradoxically, it is philosophy that steps in to rehabilitate the method of science, and it is the philosopher and not the scientist who is prepared to believe that science can tell us something about the nature of an objective world. Meanwhile, Mr. Joad has raised many of the persistent problems of philosophy, and criticism will centre round his theories of perception and value.

Admirers of Jeans and Eddington will be interested to see what a modern realist makes of their world-picture. They will find the writing always lucid and frequently eloquent.

F. HILTON PAGE.

ASPECTS OF SHAKESPEARE, being British Academy Lectures. By L. Abercrombie, E. K. Chambers, H. Granville-Barker, W. W. Greg, E. Legouis, A. W. Pollard, C. F. E. Spurgeon, A. Thorndike and J. D. Wilson.

The full title of this compilation, which represents the nine lectures given before the British Academy from 1923 to 1931, is sufficient information for the serious student, who needs merely to know that the familiar grey pamphlets are now bound together in convenient

and permanent form. The subjects treated, following the order of authors as given above, are as follows: The Foundations of Shakespeare's Text; Disintegration; From *Henry V* to *Hamlet;* The Bacchic Element; Shakespeare in America; Principles of Emendation; The Elizabethan Shakespeare; A Plea for the Liberty of Interpreting; and Iterative Imagery. The range of subject and treatment would provide material for an additional paper on the relative values of critical theories and the right method of approach. The writers of the papers deal faithfully if kindly with each other, and perhaps less kindly with unrepresented critics like the late J. M. Robertson, who might naturally speak for himself elsewhere. Each accepts for himself, in his own way, a favourable answer to Mr. Abercrombie's plea for liberty of interpreting, though the results run all the way from a scientific endeavour to establish what Shakespeare actually wrote and meant, to free speculation on what his words, or something like them, may be made to mean to us. No one of the writers seems willing to accept the name of distintegrationist for himself; Mr. Dover Wilson, allying himself to the school of "would he had blotted a thousand", still accepts Shakespeare as in the main the author of the plays we know, with all his imperfections on his head; and Mr. Abercrombie, for all his liberties, gives welcome to Mr. Alexander's contention that the *Henry VI* trilogy, usually regarded as the greatest farrago of the entire canon, is entirely by Shakespeare. To this reviewer the most useful papers are those of Mr. Granville-Barker and Mr. Dover Wilson. But here is variety to suit every taste, and occasion and authorship speak for the authoritative competence of every paper.

C. L. B.

CONFLICTS OF PRINCIPLE. By A. Lawrence Lowell. Harvard University Press, 1932. Pp. 161. Price $1.50.

President Lowell modestly describes his little book as a footnote to Aristotle. It is essentially a modern elaboration of Aristotle's thesis of the Mean. Neither the individual nor society can be guided by rule-of-thumb deductions from first principles. In almost every situation in life not one first principle but two or more conflicting principles may apply. The problem of right living is to discover how far each applies, to find the "mean" between these conflicting principles. This is the case in many questions of public policy,—in economic policy between protection and free trade, in politics between government by consent and government by force, in race relations between segregation and association of races, in the interpretation of law between the concept of law as a command and law as a rule of social utility, in the punishment of crime between the reform of the criminal and the protection of society, in educational policy between culture and utility as an end, and between pleasure and discipline as a method. In personal conduct the same problem of discovering the mean occurs, as for example, between patriotism and humanitarianism.

This little book is the rare fruit of scholarship and practical administration which Aristotle himself would have valued highly.

It is at once the apologia of a great university president and the matured philosophy of a life-long student of politics. Fundamentalists in morals, economics, law, politics, education, or kindred fields of thought will no doubt find this book rank heresy. But fundamentalism and the scientific spirit were never happy bed-fellows.

It is perhaps unnecessary to add that *Conflicts of Principle*, like all President Lowell's books, is marked by classic simplicity and precision of style.

ROBERT A. MACKAY.

CANADIAN LANDSCAPE PAINTERS. By Albert H. Robson. The Ryerson Press, Toronto. With 75 Illustrations in Full Colour.

The romance of the development of Canadian Landscape Painting is of necessity only hinted at in this volume, so full is it of information. Here are suggestions for a series of books of thrilling adventure.

To speak of men of our own generation:—Mr. J. W. Beatty, R.C.A., who trekked into the wilds for his inspiration, and set the pace for still younger men, he himself following Paul Kane, the pioneer artist.

Robert Holmes, R.C.A., who trod in Daniel Fowler's footsteps fifty years later, and left us his lovely flower studies, and peeps into forest treasure houses.

The heroism of Bruce Blair, who lost over two hundred paintings through a wreck off Antigonish, and then set himself to paint better if possible.

The Arctic sketching journeys of Laurens Harris, and of A. Y. Jackson, R.C.A., resulting in invaluable records, remind one that the race of the Vikings is still virile.

Tom Thomson, the woodsman and guide and supremely pioneer artist of the latest purely Canadian Art Movement, is an inspiration.

No life is without romance, but the artist with the child-like spirit of ever fresh adventure is always fascinating, and in this volume by Mr. Albert H. Robson there are many stimulations given to the quiet mind and the seeing eye. The great unfoldment is the climax of his theme. The efforts of the older artists are all attempts towards the fuller vision which came with the influx of keen young commercial artists from the "Old Country" with Design at their fingertips; and here in this clear atmosphere of brilliant sunshine they found that even as in Greece of old, design of form, of pattern, of sunlight juxtaposing pattern of dark; pattern of glorious yellow maple against the spruce and pine; pattern of blue and green lake waters against the snowy hills or nestling amid the forest slopes, gave pictures, played their own peculiar eye music. It is pattern—not pattern isolated or even balanced within a given area, but balanced pattern linked rhythmically again and again.

This Pattern, Balance, and Rhythm are no accidental trinity in the works of the later Canadian Landscape Artists. Their work is epic.

In the "pattern, balance and rhythm" is seen the universal. The same basic at-one-ment is found in life and the universe in all their manifestations, and the seeing eye of the artist detects its presence from man and his activities down to the very lie of the landscape as clearly stated as in a drama. Nowhere are geographical conditions more favorable for the unmistakable recognition of this wondrous unity, meeting and satisfying every possible artistic yearning. We see it in ocean and rock and fishing village, in forest solitudes with lake and sky and mountain grandeur of the solemn land, in moods varying from September gales to gently slumbering of sunny slopes of the Laurentians, and in Winter's brilliant dignity of blue and rose shadows, and dark green trees at one with sleigh and homes half buried by the sun-kissed snow.

This rich volume, containing 75 coloured reproductions of specimens of landscape paintings in chronological order, is a very timely addition to the Art Literature of Canada, and all who love Canada should own it, and feel the thrill of proud possession of its artist fraternity.

The richness of information crowded into so small a space of necessity must involve omissions which will certainly be supplied in later and more detailed volumes. Mr. Robson has done good work.

ELIZABETH S. NUTT.

SIR EDMUND WALKER. By G. P. De T. Glazebrook. Oxford University Press.

This is the story of a man who left school at the age of twelve, went into the world and, by constant study and singleness of purpose, won for himself recognition and esteem as one of Canada's most distinguished citizens.

To a people absorbed in pioneering and the struggle for material advancement, the politician and the business man supply tangible evidence of their importance; and the great men of Canada have, with few exceptions, established their claims to distinction in the business world or the stormy field of Canadian politics. Sir Edmund Walker took no part in politics and, though he served more than fifty years as an officer in the Canadian Bank of Commerce and played an important part in Canadian business and financial development, his claim to remembrance is more securely based on his contributions to the cultural life of Canada. His versatility and almost instinctive appreciation of the aesthetic led him to a careful study of Art, and he became a discriminating critic of painting. The National Art Gallery is a monument to his efforts to encourage in Canada the growth of a national Art; the Mendelssohn choir could hardly have achieved its present eminence without his untiring support; and the University of Toronto owes its existence and present standing largely to Sir Edmund's struggles on its behalf. It was fortunate for Canada that in the period

of her most rapid growth there should come a man who was able to exert a ponderable influence where it was most needed.

The author has shown wise discrimination in the use of his material. Excerpts from letters and diaries reveal the variety and extent of Sir Edmund's interests, his liberality of opinion and his readiness to identify himself with every movement that tended to advance education or to promote interest in the Arts. So far as possible the author has followed the chronological order, and the book reveals the steady development of a gifted mind faced with serious handicaps. The work is well planned and possesses unity, an attribute not always found in biographies. It should rank high in any estimate of Canadian biography.

G. G. CAMPBELL.

KAMONGO. By Homer W. Smith. The Viking Press, New York, 1932. Pp. 167. $2.00.

It is unusual to find a scientist expressing in print his *raison d'etre*. It is more unusual to have it garbed in such attractive clothes as Dr. Smith has designed, cut and sewn. This is the story of a biological adventure, and it tells the tale of a search for specimens of the lung fish, *Kamongo*, in Central Africa. The tale is interesting for its own sake, essentially true, and told in a remarkably fascinating style. But it presents also the outlook of a biologist toward his work and the world in which he lives. No philosophic school is advocated other than the mechanistic, and that only as it helps in answering the great question of the meaning of life. The reviewer ventures to suggest that the mental outlook here stated is one common to many scientific workers throughout the world. "Life is like a whirlpool in many ways. . . an eddy in the Second Law of Thermodynamics". "There is no goal to evolution except that life shall go on living".

E. G. Y.

THE MAGYAR MUSE. An Anthology of Hungarian Poetry, 1400—1932. Edited and Translated by Watson Kirkconnell, M.A. Kanadai Magyar Ujsag Press. 1933.

The fate of the translator of verse is often a hard one. There are few literary tasks more difficult than that of turning the poetry which represents the peculiar genius of one people into the language of a race differing from it in customs, modes of expression, and cultural development. Professor Kirkconnell is himself a poet, so he has the first essential for success in his arduous undertaking, and not a few of the poems he here offers us retain both vigour and charm in their English dress. Yet it is possible that his work will be less highly valued by the lover of poetry than by the student of the history of that deeply interesting people who for so long have inhabited the Hungarian plain. To all such, this volume will be an invaluable revelation of the intellectual and emotional life of the Magyar race.

E. R.

THE GREAT VICTORIANS. Edited by H. G. and Hugh Massingham. Ivor Nichols & Watson. London.

This book contains forty biographical and critical essays by as many different authors on the most prominent, and in the editors' opinion the most typical, figures of Queen Victoria's reign; the aim being to show how such figures appear to competent judges of the present generation. The personalities dealt with include statesmen, philosophers, men of science, social reformers, religious leaders, novelists, artists and poets. With such a variety of subjects and so many authors, it is inevitable that the essays should differ much in value, but in general they maintain a high level as regards both their literary style and the degree of critical insight shown. Among the best are Lord Ponsonby's paper on Gladstone, Chesterton's on Dickens, and Rose Macaulay's on Charlotte Bronte. If the idea still lingers among our young folk that the lives and thoughts of the men and women of the nineteenth century can now safely be ignored, this volume may help to undeceive them.

E. R.

BREAKING INTO PRINT. By F. Fraser Bond, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York, 1933. Pp. 221. $2.00.

This is an introduction to modern newspaper technique for students and professional beginners. Professor Bond knows his subject from both the practical and the didactic sides, having been a member of the editorial staff of the *New York Times* and being now Professor of Journalism in Columbia University. Without any pretence at making journalism either literary or academic, this textbook gives a readable and workmanlike account of the means by which a reporter can make the most of his opportunities. The treatment is helpful and practical, rules and principles are illustrated by excellent samples of actual journalistic writing and enlivened by some good stories.

C. L. B.

FOREIGN POLICY FROM A BACK BENCH. By T. P. Conwell-Evans. Oxford University Press, 1932. Pp. 185. Price $2.25.

This is a study in the formation of foreign policy based on the papers of Lord Noel-Buxton who, as Mr. Buxton, M.P., was an active member of the left wing of the Liberal Party in its halcyon days before the Great War. Mr. Buxton was the centre of an internationally-minded group of journalists, public and professional men who endeavoured to develop an enlightened public opinion on foreign affairs and to bring an autocratic Foreign Office under popular control. As the Balkan Committee, this group was active in the Near Eastern question from 1903 to the Balkan wars; following the Agadir crisis,

they laboured in the cause of Anglo-German understanding; during the war as the Union for Democratic Control of Foreign Policy they sought to bring about peace in 1916 through the mediation of President Wilson; and at the close of the war they vainly fought for an impartial and just settlement.

The narrative is a rather disheartening record of the failure of reason and intelligence against the forces of unreason and the inertia and unintelligence of Governments. Mr. Conwell-Evans notes that there is to-day less support among the intellectuals for the belief in democratic control of foreign policy, and that men of Lord Buxton's type place their hopes upon the League of Nations, which the author thinks is a far more effective brake upon headlong foreign ventures of Governments. While this book adds little new evidence to the official records of pre-war diplomacy, it is valuable as a "back-stage" view of British diplomacy before the war.

ROBERT A. MACKAY.

THE CAMBRIDGE MISCELLANY: I. THE SMALL YEARS. By Frank Kendon. VI. SMALL TALK AT WREYLAND. By Cecil Torr. Cambridge University Press, Toronto. The Macmillan Company of Canada, Limited. Pp. c. 200.

These two works, which attracted much attention when first published, have been included in the recently established series of neat and inexpensive books known as the Cambridge Miscellanies. Each book, by reason of both format and content, may be termed a companionable volume, of the kind to slip in one's pocket to beguile a journey or to welcome as bedside reading at the journey's end. The matters treated are discursive, and in themselves often trivial, but the style of each is delightful and serves, with the personality of the author, to provide a thread of unity and continuity.

Mr. Kendon, writing as a young man, recalls in simple prose the simple experiences and recollections of childhood with faithfulness and charm. He will renew the youth of many readers. Mr. Torr, nearing the end of a long life, gives a casual stream of gossip, reminiscence, and out-of-the-way information as it might be expected from a cultured West County squire with an interest in books and men, and more than the usual insight. He recalls Praed's Vicar—

> Beginning with the laws that keep
> The planets in their radiant courses,
> And ending with some precept deep
> For sinking eels or shoeing horses.

Both Mr. Kendon and Mr. Torr write simply of simple matters without becoming banal. The low price—especially for the Cambridge Press—and the convenience of these books suggest that they might be employed as models of prose for students to many of whom they would offer a welcome change from the dullish urbanities of Addison.

C. L. B.

CREATIVE MIND. By C. Spearman, 153 pages. In the Contemporary Library of Psychology. Nisbet, and Cambridge University Press.

This book is a member of a series designed to keep alike the student and the general public who may be interested in the subject abreast of its current advances. The theme treated is the processes by which the mind arrives at the new ideas it applies in its various kinds of creative activity, from the ordinary sorts of every-day conduct to the great discoveries of science and the achievements of the artistic imagination. Included in the latter are the baffling triumphs of genius; for these, the author contends, while surpassing in power and range, are of the same stuff and move by the same paths as the efforts of less endowed persons.

Naturally, the subject-matter suffers somewhat from the compression necessary to get it into a book of this size, but Professor Spearman, as we should expect from one of his reputation, gives us an interesting, thought-provoking discussion. He reduces the idea-forming activities of the mind to some very simple laws, and then proceeds to provide an illuminating application of them in the spheres of pictorial art, the other fine arts, scientific invention and discovery, and behaviour. So far we may travel in his company and be sure that, if he has not reached the ultimate truth, he is at least upon the right road. Indeed his explanations ought to be of some practical value to those wishing consciously to make the best use of their mental powers in some sphere of creation. However, when he goes on in his last chapter to hint that all knowledge may be merely a species of creative activity, we may be pardoned for not following him so far, as it is difficult to see how, on these premises, he would avoid the conclusion of solipsism. Yet, it is only fair to add that he refers us to Aveling, *The Psychological Approach to Reality*, to find out how this somewhat appalling result may be averted.

A. K. GRIFFIN.