

NEW BOOKS

THE DICTIONARY OF CANADIAN BIOGRAPHY. By W. Stewart Wallace, M. A., Librarian of the University of Toronto. Second edition. Revised and Enlarged. Toronto. The Macmillan Company of Canada, Limited. 1945. 2 vols. Pp. ix, 729.

This is a revised and enlarged edition of *The Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, which was published in 1926 and filled a long felt need as a book of reference on Canadian personages who had passed off the stage prior to that date. In this edition, such errors as had been called to the attention of Mr. Wallace have been corrected, and biographical sketches of noteworthy Canadians who have died since 1926, or who might have been included in the previous edition, have been added.

This work, as the author points out, differs from previous Canadian biographical dictionaries in that it excludes all living persons, but attempts to include all those who have made a contribution to Canadian history and whose names seemed most likely to be the object of enquiry. It also differs from them in attempting to deal objectively with the people concerned, while giving the fullest biographical details obtainable. Moreover, the word Canadian is intended to comprise the nine provinces of Canada, and the biographical sketches to include all people worthy of note in these nine provinces, whether they lived and worked before or after Confederation.

Obviously it was a heavy task for one man merely to compile information on the names when chosen, and extremely difficult to decide upon the names to choose: for many who were, or became, objects of enquiry had been ignored in previous compilations, or biographical details of them had to be sought in scattered and inadequate sources. It, therefore, would be ungrateful to criticize the selection which Mr. Wallace finally made or to suggest that the part of Canada in which he lives has received a disproportionate amount of attention. I am inclined to think that it was his special interest in the past, rather than sectionalism on his part, that has made certain obscure men in one section of Canada seem more important than some conspicuous figures in another section. Thus his interest in the fur-trade, to take only one example, has made him include two Donald McKays who made no conspicuous contribution to Canadian life, while ignoring the Nova Scotia-born Donald McKay, a world-famous designer of Clipper ships. On the other hand, it may be a reflection of local patriotism which led him to include Kreighoff for his work in Central Canada and to ignore Eagar and Valentine in Nova Scotia. Though not true in these instances, generally speaking one may say that our local historians are to blame for not having compiled biographies of their notables, in order that a work of this type should have adequate material from which selections of national importance could be made. This also accounts for certain inaccuracies in detail, such as the statement that the Hon. W. A. Henry died in Halifax (rather than Ottawa); but it does not justify the retention of the statement in the revised edition that the New Brunswick-born poet, Oliver Goldsmith, was born at Annapolis, N. S., since Mr. Wallace includes Father Myatt's "Autobiography of Oliver Goldsmith" in his list of authorities, and he states categorically that he was

On the whole, this *Dictionary*, though not entirely accurate nor all-inclusive, is a very creditable production and an invaluable first book of reference; and if all who use it report any errors they may find to the author, a third edition will be still more valuable.

D. C. H.

I CHOSE FREEDOM. *The Personal and Political Life of a Soviet Official.* By Victor Kravchenko. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1946.

This is a book of absorbing interest, round which from its first appearance it was certain that fierce propagandist conflict would rage—to confirm or to discredit its trustworthiness. It is a contribution to the most important controversy now agitating the international scene—controversy about the character of the U.S.S.R. Issues of vast consequence turn on the judgment which comes to prevail on that matter in the public opinion of the free world. Is the Soviet system as described by such writers as Mr. W. H. Chamberlin, Mr. Eustace Lyons, Mr. Max Eastman? On the other hand can we accept the picture of it as drawn by the Dean of Canterbury or Miss Anna Louise Strong? Propagandists of the contrasted sides must have received Mr. Kravchenko's book with a thrill. To the one side it brings powerful support for the cause they have to maintain; to the other it is no less formidable menace from the cause whose progress they fear. Here is no merely academic question on which those far away from the Russian scene can afford a serene detachment. It makes enormous difference, for our attitude to the present strain at the Peace Table between Mr. Molotov and Mr. Bevin or Mr. Byrnes, whether we are convinced by the one group or by the other about the essence of the Soviet system. In this book we get the story by an ex-Soviet official, who a little more than two years ago abandoned his job as Soviet Purchasing Agent in Washington, after fifteen years of service to the regime. If we accept his picture of his own experience and motives, we must think of him as driven to the step he took in April, 1944, by his revulsion from the barbarities and deceptions which the system required him to practise.

Mr. Kravchenko, professionally an engineer, came of a Russian family with intense revolutionary traditions, and when he entered the Communist Party (in 1929), he felt that this step was a logical development of the spirit which had nerved his father in revolt against the Tsardom. He held numerous important positions in subsequent years as an officer of the U.S.S.R., and apart from its account of his ultimate breach with the Moscow of Stalin and Molotov, his narrative casts most valuable light on Russian engineering development in the period between the two World Wars. It is interesting in the last degree to have such "inside" annotation of a record which, as set forth first by naive foreign detractors and next by foreign panegyrists of at least equal *naïveté*, had left us so often in a mood of impartial scepticism.

Revolutions come and go, but certain human relations are eternal, and in this book—as in the book by Alexander Barmine, *One Who*

Survived—there is much vivid portraiture of Russian common life, of the domestic values and contacts, the hopes and fears, the joys and sorrows of the multitude which constitutional upheaval even on the scale of 1917 could but slightly affect. From a writer of the kindred of Tolstoy and Turgeniev one might expect in such matters something of the spirit of *War and Peace* or of *Fathers and Sons*. Mr. Kravchenko does not in in this respect disappoint us. Though an engineer, *mirabile dictu*, he draws convincing pictures of life.

But—such is the compulsion of our sad time—the interest which must here dominate all else for contemporary readers is one of horror. If the U.S.S.R. is as there presented, what an outrage upon justice and honour and humanity itself does it seem to continue affectation of partnership with it in that re-ordering of the world which UNO has undertaken! We have here an account of the writer's change from early faith in the Soviet new order as guardian of the world's liberties, to his later conviction that there had arisen a tyranny in which what was worse among Nazis or Fascists had been reproduced. This change, which he would call his disillusionment, is presented as by no means abrupt, but as reached through many stages in which he kept checking his own impulses of revolt by reminders of the need for patience. How often did he reflect upon the element of excess inevitable in all revolutions, upon the duty of the well-judging at such a time to be very tolerant of those whom bitter memories have driven to the wild justice of revenge, and upon that "long view" on which the balance of ultimate benefit might abundantly justify these deplorable preliminaries! A mood, in short, like that of Coleridge towards such a scene as the September massacres in the French Revolution:

The Sun was rising, thought ye hid his light.

But such continuous postponement of criticism could not hold out for ever.

The decisive happenings for Mr. Kravchenko, according to his own record, were the "Purges", with accompanying "Confessions," which he was expected not merely to defend but to promote as a procedure of criminal justice. To him they constituted just a sequence of brutality and imposture, perpetrated by tyrants in constant alarm for the precarious character of their own hold upon power. His mind went back to ghastly scenes in Ukraina, soon after he had joined the Communist Party, when the project of Collective Farms had been fulfilled at the cost of vast multitudes starved to death, to make sure of advertizing value for the First Five-Year Plan. The reader will stop often, as he scans these pages, to ask "Is it possible that such things were really done?" Such a book as Mr. Kravchenko's ought surely to elicit from those who have the repute of the U.S.S.R. in their guardianship a genuine reply, other than the usual meaningless vituperation about capitalist lies, about the reactionaries of counter-revolution, or about British and American imperialism. Most sincerely do we wish it might prove possible to reject not merely under abusive rhetoric, but on rational grounds, such pictures as a long series of critics, American and British, with previous record of high trust-

worthiness and intimate knowledge of Soviet Russia on the spot, gave us of fraud and cruelty in her present system. The famine in Ukraina, during those years when tourist visitors were most suggestively excluded for reasons which Mr. Chamberlin or Mr. Eastman has no difficulty in assigning, but which make one's blood run cold as one reads of them in cold print, should be explained to us—if it can be explained—with all its accompaniments, by some credible and not disgraceful account. The "Confessions," too, of which it is not too much to say that the official picture is simply ridiculous, ought to be explained to us by some alternative we can credit, if we are not to accept the horrible, but coherent, account by Mr. Max Eastman, which Mr. Kravchenko's incidents so painfully illustrate. Unfortunately, the doings of "the Soviet Bloc" in Conference have drawn from Mr. Bevin and Mr. Byrnes many a comment of contemptuous denunciation, whose spirit is like that of the pages in *I Chose Freedom*. Will not the Publicity Department of the U.S.S.R. assist us, by rational means, to escape from a view of Soviet doings as shown in a book such as this, which is full of sombre discouragement for the world outlook of UNO?

Here is a single example. Mr. Kravchenko tells of that fateful summer, 1939, when the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact was signed, and of the terrific shock less than two years later when the German partner in that arrangement launched without warning an airplane attack on Russia. He describes the mood of those intervening years, of which he is ashamed to record that he allowed himself to be a promoter. "On June 20," he writes, "two days before the invasion, I had addressed a political meeting of workers and employees on 'the imperialist war'. My talk followed the prescribed line. Germany, I repeated, was eager for peace despite its great victories, but British imperialists, backed up by American finance, insisted on prolonging the war." Two days later, the "Party Line" for speakers had, naturally, to be changed. Next, for readers and listeners abroad, it was boasted that, thanks to the "Purges," there were no traitors in Russia. Unlike nearly all other countries overrun by German armies, Russia had no inside collaborators with the enemy, for such "Trotskyites" had been liquidated. Mr. Kravchenko has his comment on this:

Several years later, in America, I was to hear the amazing nonsense—apparently accepted even by intelligent Americans—that "There was no Fifth Column in Russia" because the blood purges had wisely eradicated all "traitors" in advance. I read this obscene absurdity in a strange, half-literate book by Former Ambassador Joseph Davies, in the frivolous writings of others who pass as experts on the subject despite a profound ignorance of the nature of Stalin's policies and regime. I could only marvel at the success of this childish propaganda evidently exported by Moscow.

I say "exported", because inside Russia the government took the very opposite tack. It insisted that our nation was rotten with fifth columnists. From the first day the press, radio and speechmakers howled for the lives of teeming internal enemies . . . In the initial period, at least, we had the distinct impression that the Kremlin was no less frightened of its own subjects than of the invaders.

What is the truth about it? Is it so that the whole force of the Soviet propaganda machine before Russia entered the war was directed to blacken the character of British and Americans for the exaltation

of the Nazis, and that the utmost effort was made by Soviet industry to furnish Hitler with all he needed? Also that "Fifth Column" in Russia, so far from being negligible, was the Government's chief anxiety?

These are matters of plain, demonstrable truth or falsehood. Will Soviet spokesmen continue to let judgment on them go by default, in favour of writers such as Mr. Kravchenko, because the only forthcoming replies are in terms of personal vilification? This book should serve a most valuable purpose as challenge to "the other side" to produce its answer, if it has an answer to produce.

H. L. S.

AN ENGLISH LIBRARY: AN ANNOTATED LIST OF 1300 CLASSICS.
By F. S. Smith. Pp. 96. Macmillan Co. of Canada. Cloth,
70c; paper, 20c

This is a very useful guide for the private individual or for the librarian of a small school. No living authors are included. There are some strange omissions: the new edition of Wordsworth's Letters is not there nor is the Kittredge edition of Shakespeare, of the collected works or of the individual plays; nor Dobree's edition of Chesterfield. All of James Joyce is on this list except *Finnegan's Wake*; of Darwin, only *Journal of Researches* is there. The present century has produced better biographies of Burns than Lockhart's first published in 1828; Snyder's, and perhaps Mrs. Carswell's, should have been included. For Surrey and Wyatt, we have only a volume containing selections from both; this should have been replaced by Padelford's edition of Surrey, and Tillyard's Wyatt. Lillo's *George Barnwell* is recorded as out of print; I think Ginn's edition is still available; in any case, it is in Stevens's *Types of English Drama*. Still, a short bibliography can never be complete, and any omissions are more than made up for by the delightful annotations.

B. M.

ACTION STATIONS. By Joseph Twomlow-Britt. Henry Harrison,
New York, Pp. 45. \$2.00

This is not a long poem, but rather a series of short lyric or descriptive verses giving the moods of a sailor from enlistment until the death of a friend. The writer tries many metres, some more successfully than others; there is little attempt at delicacy of finish or of poetic treatment. Yet by the very immediacy of the emotions expressed, by the naturalness of writing, the reader is stirred. Subtle in neither thought nor treatment, *Action Stations* reads quickly and at times movingly.

B. M.

THE LITTLE MAGAZINE: A HISTORY AND A BIBLIOGRAPHY. By F. J. Hoffman, Charles Allen, and C. F. Ulrich. Princeton Univ. Press. Pp. 44. \$3.75.

The present volume will prove indispensable to all students of the 20th century literary scene in the United States. The work falls into two parts: first a detailed history of the "little," or more properly the advanced guard, magazine, and second a descriptive chronology of the various magazines. Then follows a full bibliography of books and articles on the subject; finally, the volume is well indexed.

Commercial magazines are not experimental. They want writers who are already well known, and who artistically, morally, and politically are safe. This has always been true, but the defect was aggravated in the first decades of the present century by the immaturity of taste in the United States. So it happened that enthusiasts, fanatics, and others from time to time began magazines to give new writers an opportunity to see themselves in print—a very important factor in the development of any writer—and to force upon the American public new artistic and intellectual developments. There was much nonsense, and there was much posing, in advance guard magazines, but all of them served to broaden the literary field by breaking down old prejudices and boundaries. Many a "discovery" turned out to be a "dud", but not all the seeds that Nature scatters with a lavish hand develop into plants and trees. Too often, we imagine that the poets who have survived from the past were the only writers in the past. These authors write with knowledge and at times with humour. The result is a very commendable book, that breaks new ground for the general reader.

B. M.

OAK LEAVES AND LAVENDER. By Sean O'Casey. Macmillan Co. of Canada. Pp. 163. \$2.00

Mr. O'Casey's latest play adds little to his stature as a dramatist. It is the story of a country house in the south of England during the Battle of Britain. The play opens with a prelude of 18th century figures dancing and chatting in ghostly fashion. Then we come into the robust life of Britain in her hour of struggle. There is a smell of lavender about the house, a sign that death will come. We have a mixed group of people—the lady of the manor, her son, her Irish butler, his son, land girls, etc.—so that the dramatist is able to look from many points of view. The trouble with most of the characters is that they are distorted and slab-sided; the most convincing are the Irish butler, his son, and one of the land girls who is of the earth earthy. The best speeches are in the mouth of the Irish butler, well in the O'Casey tradition with rich, poetic, vigorous prose. There is the old joke, oft repeated, that the Irish have done all the great fighting in the world; how O'Casey will reconcile this nationalistic view with Russia's new claims to be the world's saviour will be a test of the dramatist's Communism. The deaths finally come, and there is a rather sentimental forecast of another generation of Irish.

B. M.

ENGLISH LITERATURE AT THE CLOSE OF THE MIDDLE AGES. (Oxford History of English Literature, Vol. 11, Pt. 2). By E. K. Chambers. Clarke, Irwin.

ENGLISH LITERATURE IN THE EARLIER SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. (Oxford History of English Literature, Vol. V) By Douglas Bush. Clarke, Irwin.

Almost forty years ago, the Cambridge University Press began publication of its monumental *Cambridge History of English Literature* in 14 volumes. In the intervening years research has added many pebbles and some good-sized rocks to the scholarly pile, and reputations have gone up and down like stocks on the world markets. Now the Oxford University Press has begun publication of a history of English literature in 12 volumes.

Sir Edmund Chambers was the fitting choice for a volume that covers mediaeval drama, the carol and 15th century lyric, popular narrative poetry and the ballad, and Sir Thomas Malory, for he has devoted a long life to these subjects. Here we find the same cool, astringent scholarship that has made his books on the mediaeval and Elizabethan stages and Shakespeare so sane and valuable. Never does Sir Edmund allow enthusiasm to run away with judgment, nor on the other hand does he permit annoyance or ridicule to colour disagreement with another scholar's finding. If he has to advance a theory of his own, he does so quietly, almost tentatively. The chapter on mediaeval drama naturally has to cover the whole field, not just the fifteenth century; it is a model of clarity and concision. The study of the carol is also admirable. On the question of communal and individual origins of the ballad, Sir Edmund keeps a nice balance. Perhaps the arrangement of the whole history has excluded the subject from this volume, but a work on the 15th century without chapters on Lydgate and his pedestrian fellows and the so-called Scottish Chaucerians seems a truncated study; it may be, however, that discussion of the "courtly" poets has been assigned to the volume on Chaucer and his contemporaries.

Of all periods of English history and literature, the first half of the seventeenth century is the most important for the present day. In that period the roots of modern civilization were planted, and many of our current problems are very similar to those faced by poets and thinkers in the 17th century. The careful reader of Professor Bush's volume will come away with not only a deep knowledge of the early 17th century, but many ideas about the present century. Of course, any history of literature suffers from the same defect as a patriotic poem on the British Empire, which has to mention every little possession, sometimes at the expense of the larger Dominions—if Quebec will still allow us to use that term. Every minor poetaster and essayist must be mentioned, if not praised. Professor Bush has met this difficulty very well, and the volume can stand as a sort of reference dictionary of names in the 17th century. Despite this necessity, the author has managed to adopt a certain point of view on his subject. He sees the great tradition of Western civilization as Christian humanism, that is, a combination of "right reason" from the Greeks and faith from the Jews and Christians. The Renais-

sance and Reformation, however, began to change this tradition: on the one hand, we have the beginnings of science and the emphasis on natural man; and on the other, the revived doctrine of the total depravity of man. More, Erasmus, Spenser, and Milton represent the older humanistic tradition for the 16th and early 17th centuries. Writers are brought into touch with this tradition and judged accordingly. On the whole it is a good standard, even though Professor Bush, in his enthusiasm for Christian humanism, does not always see that it was a limited theory about man and that its defects have been explored, if not always corrected, by our modern approach to the nature of man. Professor Bush can admire John Donne this side of idolatry, and so he has much good sense for those who exalted Donne unduly in the period between the two wars. The chapter on Milton is very fine; it is a pity, however, one of our greatest Milton scholars has not yet found time to write a book on Milton. The chapters on the background of the age, and on political, scientific, and religious thought are admirable.

Professor Bush has the gift of enlivening his style with humour and sly remarks. Again, his comparisons are often most illuminating; for example, "To Puritan extremists the Anglican appeal to ecclesiastical tradition and the beauty of order meant as little as the sacred abstractions of Burke meant to Paine; and to many Anglicans and Presbyterians the sectaries were what Paine was to Theodore Roosevelt." However, occasionally, as on p. 84, the comparison will mean little to the average reader: "But if Drummond was in part a Jacobean—or half-Elizabethan—Stanley, a bookish artist whom we identify with graceful translation and imitation, his borrowings from diverse poets did receive the transforming and unifying impress of his own lucid decorative instinct and reflective melancholy." To throw light on Drummond by way of Stanley is coming dangerously close to deserving Dr. Johnson's rebuke: "Why discuss the relative merits of a louse and a flea?" Again, the second half of page 88 is almost a riot of references and allusions from H. G. Wells to Erasmus Darwin. Such excesses can be overlooked, however, as the fruit of a very luxuriant knowledge of English literature. The present reviewer has not yet comprehended the sentence beginning at line 14 on p. 235; something seems to have dropped out. Line 12, p. 388, contains a bad printing error.

Both volumes have admirable bibliographies, and Professor Bush has also supplied for his volume an invaluable set of chronological tables. If future volumes keep to the standard set by Sir Edmund Chambers and Professor Bush, the Oxford History will mark an epoch in English studies.

B. M.

TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT IN CANADA: The Autonomy Question in the Old North-West Territories. By C. Cecil Lingard. The University of Toronto Press. 1946. Pp. xi, 69. 4 maps.

This volume presents a sequel to earlier constitutional struggles in British North America. It reveals anew the evolution from political tutelage, with its concomitant economic and financial difficulties, to local autonomy—in this case, provincial autonomy in Alberta and Saskatchewan, *minus* control of crown lands—and points to the time when Canadian provinces were all to exercise control over their public domain. In his introduction, Dr. Lingard adumbrates the background of the movement for provincial status in the North-West Territories, from the acquisition by Canada of Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory in 1870 to the attainment of responsible government by the local legislature in 1897. In succeeding chapters, he analyzes the sequence of events which culminated in the creation of two new Canadian provinces—Alberta and Saskatchewan—in 1905.

While it may be true that the main theme is similar in many respects to that of other times, nevertheless the circumstances may be said to give their distinguishing colour and discriminating effect. Financial difficulties gave rise in the territories to a unanimous demand for provincial status. An increasing influx of immigrants, who required schools, roads and bridges, and whose land improvements served to enhance the value of areas which had been granted by the Dominion to railway companies and on much of which no taxes were paid, and the absence of a satisfactory basis for annual subsidies from the Dominion, resulted in annual pilgrimages to Ottawa. At the outset, in the demand for provincial status, the question of the number of provinces was the only matter on which there was the smallest diversity of opinion in the Territories. Would a few additions to the powers of a governing body which had been administering the region efficiently from Regina for more than twenty years really result in an overshadowing province which would upset the balance of Confederation? Other factors which formed part of this question included the expressed desire of the people of the Territories for one province, hope in Manitoba for expansion westward and northward, and the growing rivalry over the location of the capital of the proposed new province.

The constitutional issues, moreover, focussed attention on provincial rights in relation to crown lands and education. Did the success of the Dominion's immigration and settlement policy necessitate the retention by the Dominion of control of the public domain? Would not such a retention signify the withholding of "the first corollary of responsible government?" While the territorial claim was based upon the fact that the four original provinces and British Columbia retained the ownership of their lands on entering Confederation, and was opposed to the terms granted to Manitoba in this connection, could the difference in terms be justified by the "mere abstract proposition" that the former "were already sovereignties" in possession of their lands, whereas the new provinces had never had the ownership of their lands? No doubt it was a stronger argu-

ment to say that the vesting in the Dominion government of the ownership and administration of the public domain was based "on the highest grounds of policy," and that that was designed to be a guarantee of the Dominion land settlement plan of free homesteads pledged to the world as an inducement to immigration.

The educational provisions in the Autonomy Bills caused another controversy over provincial rights and a crisis within the Dominion government. This controversy was exacerbated because of the view that the school clause of the Autonomy Bills would revive "in all its sweep and power" the legislation of 1875, which initiated separate schools in the Territories. Since that year, however, separation had been "administered out" of the school system and was now distinct in name only.

Dr. Lingard recounts the negotiations which led up to the final terms for the new provinces, and describes the reception of these terms by the North-West. Inasmuch as the acts differed in some important respects from the terms for which the Territory government contended, it might seem surprising (as Lingard states) that widespread dissatisfaction was not the result. But the united front of territorial days was gone, the majority were indifferent, and the practical western people who had received fairly generous financial terms, including a guaranteed and increasing income, seemed to be more interested in dollar bills than in autonomy bills. They were, moreover, in general satisfied with the existing educational system. And crop and business conditions were favourable.

In his well documented book, which contains many useful footnotes, Dr. Lingard supplements the contribution of F. W. G. Haultain, the leader of the all-party government in the Territories from the time the demand for provincial autonomy became articulate there until the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan were formed and their old government gave way to party government. At the same time, the author gives due regard to the efforts of Sifton and other western leaders, as well as to the aims and policies of Laurier and Borden and their parties.

C. B. FERGUSON

CANADIAN REPRESENTATION ABROAD. By H. Gordon Skilling. The Ryerson Press, Toronto, 1945. Pp. xx, 359.

In this volume, issued under the auspices of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, Dr. Skilling, a Canadian who has done graduate work in England and is now Assistant Professor of Political Science in the University of Wisconsin, has given the first comprehensive account of the evolution of Canadian representation abroad that has yet appeared. Beginning with the emigration agents, who were our first representatives abroad, he continues with an account of the duties and status of the commercial agents and trade commissioners, and then proceeds to describe the evolution and status of the High Commissioner to Great Britain. In the fourth chapter, he discusses the almost surreptitious origin of the Department of External

Affairs in 1909, and the various developments that took place in that department during the First World War and the subsequent representation of Canada in the League of Nations. In the fifth chapter, he tells of early proposals for diplomatic representation at Washington, the attitude of the different parties towards such a proposal, the difficulty of defining the status of a Canadian Minister in relation to the British Ambassador, and the final appointment of a Minister in 1927. He devotes a whole chapter to the expansion of the diplomatic service between 1928 and 1944, another to War-time Representation 1939-45, and concludes with a summary of the whole story, which emphasizes the cautious day-by-day opportunism in the evolution of Canada's machinery for representation abroad. In this summary, as well as throughout the volume, Canadian statesmen of both parties are seen to be reluctant to formulate any general theory of abstract rights, but inclined to be content with meeting each specific need in a practical way.

In tracing this expanding diplomatic service from small and tentative beginnings, and showing in considerable detail the debates and misgivings, both national and imperial, which accompanied each step in the process, Dr. Skilling has provided a valuable handbook for voter, representative and student alike.

D. C. H.

TWENTIETH CENTURY ENGLISH. Edited by W. S. Knickerbocker.
New York: The Philosophical Library. Pp. 460.

This volume consists of thirty-six essays by American scholars and teachers. To review it adequately would require several pages; as most of the essays are worthy of discussion. Perhaps the best review would be merely to say that every person teaching English from the primary grades to graduate schools should read the book carefully.

No one, least of all teachers, is satisfied with the results of the English courses in schools and colleges. For this book, teaching English includes not merely appreciation of masterpieces, but character building, training in thought, and, above all, the problem of communication. The semanticists are well represented in the volume; there is no doubt that they have produced new and valuable data on the art of communication, and their stress on the symbol in life and thought processes is all to the good. Sometimes, however, the ordinary reader grows weary of the far-fetched claims of what the study of semantics can do for all our personal, national, and international problems, and even more weary of their professional jargon, on which no two semanticists seemingly agree. It is true that communication depends on both writer and reader, and that words must have the same symbolic values for both, or the communication will fail; but to say that a word never has the same meaning twice, while true theoretically, has little value practically in such an extreme form. "Parents, It is Your Fault" is a fine essay, placing on the parents the blame for the present decay of reading. "The Calamities of Betty" should be

read by everyone interested in juvenile delinquency; "bibliotherapy" has a real future. "On Bokes for to Rede" and "You Can't Write Writing" are very stimulating, as indeed are most of the essays. I have only one fault to find with the book as a whole: no essayist seems to realize that our fundamental problem is the need for more teachers of English, so that children may get much practice in writing and speaking. That is the chief remedy for our present poor results.

B. M.

MARCO POLO: A Drama in Four Acts. By Laurence Dakin. Fal-mouth Publishing House, Portland, Me. Pp. 54. \$2.00.

In an age when poetry in the grand romantic style is very rare, it is a pleasure to welcome another poetic drama by the former Nova Scotian, Mr. Laurence Dakin. This is the story of Marco Polo and Golden Bells, daughter of the great Kubla Khan. The texture of the blank verse is rich and varied, and the whole drama is shot through with most exquisite lyrics. Here is one sung by Golden Bells:

In the chill loud breeze
The leaves rattle and fall,
The butterfly hides its wings,
And I hold to my hat.

At the end of the lake,
Like a flake of white snow,
A heron looks at the water
And waits for winter.

The emotion of the central characters is beautifully handled; the closing lines of the drama will illustrate this quality, as well as the handling of the blank verse:

My Golden-Bells would sleep. Now she will rest,
And in the lap of slumber curl in peace,
While ring on ring of liquid silence folds
Around her eyelids like half open buds.
This love, this yearning I in dewy warmth,
The tender and the balm of kisses rain,
In closer union and close over us
As I now closer press in this strange calm.
Close, closer, closer as you bade me press
Before you slept, ere while you sleep—Hush, hush,
Brown little Golden-Bells would rest, would sleep.
My Golden-Bells will sleep.

The sleep is the sleep of death. Romance has not entirely departed from poetry.

B. M.

NAVAL CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS NO. 6

STARBOARD: The word is derived from the old Saxon "steeraboard" or "steerboard"—an oar shipped at the right hand side of the ship's stern to act as a rudder. In to-day's Navy Starboard indicates that side of the ship on the right hand of a sailor who stands on board facing the bow. It is the opposite of Port, formerly Larboard.



In The Best Of Tradition It's Always

Player's Please

MILD or MEDIUM
CORK TIP and PLAIN

PROPHETS AND PEOPLES By Hans Kohn. The Macmillan Company in Canada, 1946. \$3.25.

The title of this book furnishes us with no hint as to its contents. Prophets may belong to any age. But as we begin to read, we find that the subject-matter is of the highest importance and that the treatment reveals one who is thoroughly qualified to deal with the pressing questions of nationalism. Dr. Kohn is Professor of History in Smith College, and delivered these lectures at North Western University in Evanston, Illinois. He selects five leading countries of Europe to illustrate his contention that the ideas of nationalism varied according to the special genius of each people. He chooses a representative thinker from each nation, and these become his five Prophets. He starts with England, which he regards as the guiding star for the progressive development of freedom among all nations, and he gives a valuable analysis of John Stuart Mill as the most powerful and radical force in the 19th century.

His lecture on France is a study of Michelet and of his *History of the French Revolution*, which is a noble example of the passion of the writer both for the freedom of the people and for the rights of the State. Chapter 3 deals with Mazzini as the intellectual Prophet of Young Italy. "Unlike the German patriots, Mazzini never separated national independence and unity from individual liberty. Fatherland and liberty were equally dear to him, they were intimately and indissolubly connected in his mind." The 4th lecture introduces Treitschke, who along with Bismarck "firmly and finally established in nineteenth century Germany the cult of might and of the hero." By his glorification of the will-to-power Treitschke led his nation into ruin. He was a false prophet. The work closes with an appreciation of Dostoievsky, whose novel *The Brothers Karamazov* provides the best material on the national ideals of the mysterious Russian people.

Some readers may be surprised that there is no separate chapter on the United States; but the constant references to the accomplishments of America reveal the depths of Dr. Kohn's admiration for this people who unite with all other English-speaking peoples in the cultivation of individual freedom along with the defence of the common good of the State. This book is rich in lessons for our present day, and not the least to be benefited by its study would be our own Canadian leaders. Perhaps the best tribute to the book is the fact that it awakens a desire to turn to other works by this competent and broad-minded student of modern history.

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