

**POLITICS AND PERSONALITIES.** By the Right  
Hon. G. W. E. Russell. Scribner; \$2.25.

The book itself is thoroughly engaging. It is one of those comfortable books which one can take up at odd moments with the assurance that they will prove good moments—a book genial without loss of seriousness, thoughtful without being profound, and (grateful virtue) contemporary without being harrowing. The politics that

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Mr. Russell is concerned with his current English politics, the personalities are mostly present-day political personalities—both judged from the vantage of a man read in history and reared in the society of the high Victorians. Everywhere the author is sure-tempered; everywhere he is shrewd and humane; everywhere he sees Britishly. His analysis of the duties of representatives, where conscience and constituency are at odds ("M. P. or Delegate?"); his reasoned assertion of the political influence of the British monarch ("The Whigs and the Constitution"); his characterization of John Bull as a type that is passing ("John Bull in Ireland")—these are samples of topics that exact attention; and with them such judgments as, "England remains the most religious country in Europe"; "the true spring of oratory is the old Holy Well of Romance"—said, concerning "Demagogues," with Lloyd George in the category; or, "the pitifullest and meanest outcry which can be uttered is the outcry of the well-to-do classes against expenditure on the instruction of the poor."

But, after all, it is not the book, it is the author that stirs the imagination. Is he, as a type, doomed to pass along with old John Bull? The propertied Liberal, political both by nature and opportunity; the aristocrat, unostentatious but family-conscious; the Oxford man, who moves in the classics without apparatus and remembers Jowett; the churchman, familiar with the problems of the mind and capable of setting his own intelligent appraisal upon the thing we call science ("The Dark Side of Science")—combine such qualities with humor and humanity, honor and chivalry, all sanely proportioned, and you will limn such a portrait as Mr. Russell all unconsciously draws of himself in his essays, rich in reminiscence but awake to the present hour. No one need expect to find in "Politics and Personalities" solutions for the great political problems of the near future, nor are they likely to be solved by men of its author's type: the times are cataclysmic, and experience cast in Victorian moulds cannot be their measure. But it is not the least poignant of our qualms to fear lest the cataclysm shall have swept from the future the possibility of perpetuating this same fine type of the political man.