IN BRIEF REVIEW

WE cannot suppress a little gasp of fear that intrudes upon our pleasurable anticipation of a new volume of Stephen Leacock. What if this one shouldn't be funny? True, there are now enough square inches of his humor in print to assure him a permanent niche in the same gallery that boasts Mark Twain and Artemus Ward, but, as lovers regard love, so we cling to a hope that his funniness will last forever. With the author's present excursions into "The Garden of Folly" (Dodd, Mead) this hope has been strengthened. If there is any aspect of human folly that he does not flip like a pancake and do to a turn in this book, we cannot, at the moment, recall it. In "The Secrets of Success", he analyzes those vastly exciting tracts that appear in the advertising pages of our magazines with a coupon attached. His discussions of the human mind and the human body are riotous parodies on the modern development in the fields of psychology and health. When he surveys, dramatically, the wonderful things Big Business men are doing to our colleges and churches, a thought provoking irony goes hand in hand with foolishness. And in his "Letters to the New Rulers" we seem to hear, under the tinkle of bells and the smacking of bladders, the resonant voice of a Jeremiah. "For it appears", he says, "that our poor humanity, its head still singing with the cruel buffeting of the war, is incapable of moving forward, and can only stagger round in a circle." Yes, Leacock is still funny — with a difference.

The idyllic aspect of traveling through Europe with three spirited youngsters would, we fear, be lost on most American parents. Yet with her characteristic courage and gaiety, Cornelia Stratton Parker has made another idyl of her varied and amusing experiences in "Ports and Happy Places" (Boni, Liveright). This fat volume, with its excellent photographs and its delightful excerpts from the boys' diaries, is as much a human treatise on education as it is a thoroughly charming travel book. We have a very frank envy of these children who tramped with their mother, rucksacks on backs, through tiny, picturesque hamlets of Central Europe that a tourist seldom finds. And we have an equally covetous longing to be in her shoes when, surrounded by her stalwart sons, she guided them, filled with honest wonder, through the beauty that lies in paint and canvas in the great galleries of Italy. We are aware that Mr. and Mrs. Babbitt, hearing of her experiment, will probably chant in chorus the refrain, "A democratic education in America is good enough for my children", so long has the idea of an "imported education" stood in their minds for affectation and artificial standards. They need only to read this book, however, to realize that the Parkers represent the best kind of democracy that grows on American soil, as well as an artistocracy of intelligence and understanding as rare as orchids. The publishers have dedicated it to parents "who believe that travel is an essential element in the education of children". We should like to rededicate it to all American mothers and fathers who, though able to provide such vision-widening experience for their offspring, still hold tenaciously to a bigoted America *über alles* habit of thinking.

"International Law and Some Current Illusions" is a title which may deceive some into thinking that Macmillan's have persuaded so distinguished a specialist as John Bassett Moore into popularizing his specialty. Not so. The contents are the writings of Dr. Moore over a period of some ten years. The fact that some of these writings precede the Great War does not render them out of date; in fact one of the fallacies referred to is that "circumstances alter cases" in the sense that violations of international law alter that law. The fundamental principles of jurisprudence remain permanent despite the actions of those who carry it out, interpret it, or transgress it, Dr. Moore contends. Three articles in the book possess great documentary interest — those on "Contraband of War", on "The Permanent Court of International Justice", and on "Rules of Warfare relating to Aircraft and Radio". As a member of the Permanent Court Dr. Moore is particularly fitted to speak, and the article on "International Arbitration" is a particularly pertinent reminder, to advocates and adversaries of this body, of its firm roots in prewar days. Two essays in the volume relate to the codification of existing law and the teaching of its principles. In the final article, "Relativity", it is interesting to note that Dr. Moore's remarks on the radio and jazz parallel some less temperate disparagement by Matthew Arnold on the cultural benefits of the tenth wonder of his day — the railroad.

Breathes there an author with critical faculties so dead as to sanction the survival of *everything* that he has given to print? The firm of Pascal Covici answers in the affirmative with "Et Cetera — a Scrap-Book for Collectors". In this finely bound and strictly limited edition the ephemera in prose and verse from a host of famous and near-famous pens are disinterred from forgotten graves and, most unwisely, brought to light again. With the possible exceptions of "Emperor of Micamaca" by Paul Eldridge; Lafcadio Hearn's "Chemise of Margarita Pareja"; the five translations from Verlaine and Baudelaire by Wilbur Underwood; and Richard Middleton's "District Visitor", there is nothing among these fugitive pieces of such merit as to warrant so sumptuous a resurrection. The contents page is opulent with promising names: Richard Aldington, Stephen Crane, Hergesheimer, Arthur Machen, Kipling, Maurice Hewlett, Carl Van Vechten, and George Moore are among the better known of these collected worthies. But the indefatigable Vincent Starrett, when editing this compilation, evidently overlooked the fact that a contents page should be an indication, rather than a vindication, of the pages that are to follow. For this new mausoleum of old bones I would suggest a more pertinent title: "Nomenes et Præterea Nihil".

The charm and vividness of the substance of Ralph Nevill's "Unconventional Memories" is proof against his heavy, awkward style (betraying in its frequent ablative absolute constructions a long tutelage to the classics) and his somewhat puerile method of organization. Mr. Nevill traces no more subtle connection between the quaint incidents of sporting life at Oxford, or the colorful glimpses of life in old Persia or Madrid that his diplomatic career afforded him, than that they happened in the same place or at the same time. Nevertheless, he has known which memories to select from his varied store; and despite artistic handicaps the color and charm and romance

of the material undeniably emerges, enlivened by the engaging frankness with which Mr. Nevill describes contemporary celebrities and methods of diplomacy.

Reprinted from its first issue in 1916, Francis Neilson's "A Strong Man's House" (Huebsch) now has nothing to recommend it save its merit as a novel (which postwar test of the "literature" in war books it passes well). Primarily propaganda of an Englishman seemingly more or less expatriate and bent on obstructing the prosecution of his country's "Cause", its incendiary idealism now seems — not surprisingly — vain, negligible. There is of course no obstruction of war when it's *on* — no essential obstructing of our further preparations for war when it's *off*. To outlaw war by the sheer force of the legislative will of our tiny national minorities possessing even an iota of spiritual integrity, would seem sanity's only solution. These are the notions *not* stressed in this volume, however, which is too optimistic of the future. All assumption to the effect that we and our immediate descendants will have, as generations, any more sense than the little that has so far been displayed in the matter of our private and national material interests, fails to take into account the brutish conservatism of biological processes! Wolves become sheep only through stern restraint!

Columnists, we know, are accustomed to lard their lean days with the fat of others' works, and we would be the last to suggest that they leave off this practice and write all the stuff themselves. Two heads — or a dozen, for that matter — are better than one when it comes to catching the play of wit and humor on the prism of public life. But in the matter of a columnist's book we are inclined to the view that it is of greater moment to preserve the spirit and temper of the man than the evanescent topical comment of his followers, which only grows weaker and less funny as time goes on. By including in Bert Leston Taylor's delightful prose and verse sallies on "The So-Called Human Race" (Knopf) a lot of second rate gags that have by this time worn as thin as a Ford joke the publishers have, it seems to us, given permanence to a type of humor that merits only the vast oblivion of a newspaper column. We should hate to see such pieces as B. L. T.'s "Gilded Fairy Tales", "Alice in Cartoonland", or variations of the London busman story as told by George Meredith, Henry James, and Arnold Bennett, buried in this same columnar darkness. It is scarcely probable that his nicely turned and lightly flavored verse, whether included in a book or not, will ever be forgotten. We can imagine that, scattered over the land, there are many yellowed clippings reposing in the desks of his admirers that will serve as reminders of a rare and witty man for years to come. Perhaps we are unduly carping, but we have a notion that B. L. T. would rather be remembered for these light verse and prose pieces than for his animadversions on the matrimonial susceptibility of Irene V. Smackem and Mr. Kissinger.

Frank Waterman Stearns, we hear, was instrumental in circularizing "thousands upon thousands of copies" of Coolidge's "Have Faith in Massachusetts". No doubt the President's worthy backer will find equally good campaign publicity in Horace Green's "The Life of Calvin Coolidge" (Duffield). Written in knowledge and sympathy and couched in unpretentious

colloquial language, Mr. Green's study takes Coolidge from boyhood days in Vermont to March, 1924, in the White House, by way of Amherst College, the Massachusetts legislature, Northampton mayoralty, state senate, lieutenant governorship, state governorship, and vice presidency. The fable of "Coolidge Luck" is not overlooked, nor does the biographer seek to brush aside the glum, taciturn, uninspiring exterior, considered so characteristic. A full chapter is given to the Boston police strike and another to the "oil scandal", the end of which is not yet. Mr. Green, an ardent Coolidge "rooter", restrained and unprejudiced, presents a convincing picture of one who has a record of past achievement, who promises much for the future, and yet remains "so far, quite unsolved".

Dr. William A. White's testimony at the Leopold-Loeb murder trial made his name familiar to thousands who would never have heard of him as the head of St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington or as the author of "An Introduction to the Study of the Mind" (Nervous and Mental Disease Publishing Co.). The book is an indication of the extent to which recent investigations into one particular field have changed the nature of the general science of psychology. Greenwich Village Freudianism has given that particular field a bad name. Less than ten years ago, when the writer was following an elementary course in general psychology, the logical but lifeless subject matter of the course bore little relation to the vital and interesting matter which enthralled his friends who were studying abnormal psychology. Yet it is precisely abnormal psychology which forms the analytic basis of Dr. White's exposition. Genetic psychology, the mentality of the child and the savage, furnishes the synthetic basis. Dr. White's presentation is not that of a trained writer. He is sometimes ungrammatical, often awkward. But his meaning is clear. The science he introduces is a far more human one than the old psychology used to be.

It isn't every day that one can conscientiously review a book from its jacket. But this is one of the days. Referring to James Cassidy's (E. M. Story's) "A Study of Browning's 'The Ring and the Book'", Houghton Mifflin tell us kindly: "Many must have wished to be able to appreciate this great narrative poem by a master singer — and a master story-teller. . . . This book tells in clear and vivid words" the *story* of Browning's story. Here are some of its "clear and vivid" words: "So, British Public, who may like me yet, my story, — the transmutation of the facts of the old yellow book, — teaches, or offers you one lesson . . ." Often and often cast in unconscious blank verse and other bumptious metres that purport to be prose, this unreadable hodgepodge (of which, nevertheless, we have read a large portion) bears much the same relation to its masterpiece that illustrations do to lyric poetry by someone else than Riley! But — there are more lovers of Browning than of Blake, Becquer, say, or Beddoes. And — as Lincoln has well counseled: If you like this sort of thing, this is the sort of thing that you would like.

As a nation, we forget quickly. Our humanitarian sympathies ooze away, our indignation sputters and goes out, and, almost before the smoke of a great tragedy like the Smyrna disaster has cleared away, we are busy about other concerns. "The Great Betrayal" (McBride) of the Christian minorities

in the Near East is now history, and, as history, tends to become more a matter of record than action. In Edward Hale Bierstadt's carefully compiled chronicle of the events that led up to the tragedy, in his accurate selection of statistics and his sound weighing of accusations, we have a graphic portrayal of the whole problem, as well as a sweeping condemnation of the attitude of indifference on the part of both the American government and the American people toward the nations we promised to protect. It is nothing new to be told that our foreign policy is absurd and inconsistent, that our commercialism in the Near East clashes harshly with our avowed humanitarianism. The author shows how, on the one hand, we have been building up in this region educational and philanthropic projects worth millions of dollars, while on the other hand we have allowed Turkish concessionaire interests to still our protests against outrages that have destroyed the humanitarian progress of centuries. This book cannot bring to life the thousands who died miserably in Smyrna, nor restore to their homes those who were driven into the interior. But it can and will shed a light on American imperialism that serves to illuminate certain powerful hands working for economic control in the Near East.

Frank Weitenkampf has revised and enlarged his "American Graphic Art" (Macmillan), first published twelve years ago. The new edition covers in a most readable and thorough manner every branch of the graphic arts from the earliest engraving in the seventeenth century colonies through the development of our present day revival in etching. Dr. Weitenkampf writes very interestingly on contemporary influences and movements, such as "lithography as a business and as an art", and gives an account of the activities of our painter-gravers during the period of the Great War. He includes an important bibliography and numerous well chosen reproductions which make this new edition a valuable record.

"Introduction to Modern Philosophy" by C. E. M. Joad (Oxford) is a textbook designed to summarize recent philosophical developments briefly and lucidly for the benefit of the student and the general reader. It covers the fields of modern realism, pragmatism, and neo-idealism; it deals at some length with the doctrines of Bertrand Russell, Bergson, and William James; it endeavors to elucidate rather than to criticize, but of course one cannot but have intimations of the author's own point of view. On the whole, the book is written as simply and as clearly as its somewhat involved subject matter permits, and should fulfil excellently its purpose as "a short but comprehensive account of the most important developments in Modern Philosophy".

"The London of Dickens" by Walter Dexter (Dutton) is simply a literary Baedeker. Dickens enthusiasts will delight in it, for who, loving the tales of the great Londoner, can escape the fascination of the city? Mr. Dexter's careful work in supplying itineraries for fifteen sentimental rambles, supplying chapter and verse references from the novels for streets, inns, arches, "mewses", old shops, courts, and curiosities, is an ample demonstration of the reality and accuracy of the local color which Dickens so richly provided. Also the book, which is neatly written with some humor and liberal quotation but slight literary design, is a convenient geographical summary of the work of Dickens.

"The New Vision in the German Arts" by Herman George Scheffauer (Huebsch) is a genuinely thrilling exposition of Expressionism. By well chosen and brilliantly developed particularizations the author illuminates, without directly defining, this modern artistic tendency. His tutelage is dependable and enthusiastic, and rouses a warm interest. He describes the products of arts other than literature with such skill that their nature and effect are clearly and vitally impressed on the reader. Here and there hyperbole and the exclamatory style defeat their object of vividness; but on the whole the book is glowingly lucid. It is instructive and finely animated; and the splendidly limned facts that form a novel synthesis are so many spurs to speculative and even creative thought.

"The Blue Lion and Other Essays" by Robert Lynd (Doran) is a book determinedly, correctly, even happily pleasant. It holds the mild delight of a stroll through quiet surroundings endeared by familiarity; birds are charmingly commented on, and one's scope of appreciativeness is slightly enlarged. Contentment runs on, calm and muted (Mr. Lynd never shouts nor chatters); and one thinks, "But this is really too easy!" Such a conclusion — false and envious as it is — should, however, serve to give point to one's drowsy approval of an irreproachable minor essayist. There is exemplary restraint in his equability; if he wanders objectless, it is still a restful privilege to accompany him; and he has perfected the manner of his beginnings and timed his endings to a nicety.

Llewelyn Powys's "Black Laughter" (Harcourt, Brace) is irritating. The recorded impressions and reactions lack spontaneity; the author is continually straining for his effects; anything which would tend to destroy the artistic symmetry of his periods, he has carefully omitted. Mr. Powys has a receptive nature, but his impressions are emasculated and distorted by preconceived ideas. An imaginative, fearful child will people a house he believes to be haunted with headless ghosts, and will hear their unearthly footsteps. So it is with Mr. Powys and Africa — the Dark Continent: "that sinister land". At one time Mr. Powys thought himself in love with a Kiyuyu maiden. He planned to marry her. Her father was delighted. But the maiden did not love Mr. Powys and — in one of the few passages in the book which support Mr. Powys's contention that he did not strive for literary quality — one reads that he "never again looked into the provocative eyes of this rare hamadryad of the African forest". Therein the reader is cheated and Mr. Powys lost his chance of making "Black Laughter" a best seller.

W. H. R. Rivers's "Social Organization" (Knopf) is the first volume of a series which is to be known as "The History of Civilization". The editor's initial choice is a happy one, for Rivers's contribution to the science of ethnology will be admitted, some day, to have been invaluable. Ethnology, in common with those sciences which borrow their terminology from the vocabulary of everyday life, finds itself hampered by the loose and inexact value given each word by the individual worker. "Caste, family, clan, descent, tribe" — all these and many others have been used *à tors et à travers* for a multitude of different things. Rivers labored incessantly to make of ethnology an exact science. In this volume he has cleared away all the inaccuracies and loose ends and has laid the founda-

tions of sociological sciences upon bed rock. He has defined, classified, explained. Nothing is left to chance, nothing is vague. With a directness almost French in its exactness and singleness of meaning, he gives a vivid interpretation of primitive society and of its relationship to our modern, more complicated cultural life. Rivers attached to kinship and social organization an importance to which many other ethnologists were blind — because it was too big a factor for them to grasp. Yet the vital importance of kinship terms and the clue they offer to the whole inner life of a people is inescapable after reading this volume. W. J. Perry, who edited the book from Rivers's lecture notes, deserves particular mention. He has done his work thoroughly and well. The index is comprehensive; there are no more misprints than one expects nowadays.

The anonymous writer of "Behind the Scenes in Politics" (Dutton) is described on the jacket as an experienced campaign manager who has helped to make senators, governors, and even presidents. He describes himself as an ex-Progressive and thereby gives further basis for a surmise on his identity. What is less easy to guess is why so distinguished a person should write such a book, and why, having consented to its publication, he should have felt it necessary to leave off his name. The contents are as innocuous as they are unimportant. The stories attached to celebrated names are harmless anecdotes; where the incident is more striking the man concerned is as anonymous as the author.

Arthur M. Hind's "The Etchings of D. Y. Cameron" (Halton and Truscott Smith) is in reality not a book but a bound portfolio of nearly perfect facsimile reproductions of the artist's plates. The text by Mr. Hind comprises a brief biography of Cameron and rather dry descriptive data on the reproduced prints. Of course as a catalogue of the best of Cameron's etchings the volume has value, and the publishers have added one more beautifully illustrated book to their list; but to the average print enthusiast a more personal note concerning the etcher in the text would have been welcome.

The outstanding feature of the third and final volume of "The Outline of Literature" (Putnam) is a characteristic and entertaining appraisal of Dickens and Thackeray by G. K. Chesterton. In every one of Dickens's types, he says, there is originality in the detail even where there is comparative dulness in the design. "Commonplace comedy is full of drunkards; but there never was but one drunkard inspired by Heaven to ask Mrs. Todgers for her ideal of a wooden leg; it is full of jealous husbands, but there never was but one voice that could greet a guest at breakfast by saying 'Serpent!' in the deep and hollow tones of Mr. Pott." Thackeray is disposed of with a barbed shot: "He had the fundamental assumption that the English gentleman is the standard of all things; and he may have seen men and cities, but he had never seen citizens." One chapter summarizes French literature of the nineteenth century; another is devoted to the great New England writers, Hawthorne, Emerson, Lowell, etc. All the others deal with British writers from Scott to the close of the century. Like its predecessors, this volume is profusely illustrated with a wealth of beautiful and well chosen pictures, many in color, comprising portraits, places, characters, and scenes associated with the lives and works of the authors mentioned in the text.