

Literary News and Criticism

Mr. Gardner Murphy on the Negro Problem.

THE BASIS OF CERTAIN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC POLICY INVOLVED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOUTHERN STATES.

THE NEGRO PROBLEM: ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S SOLUTION.

A profoundly suggestive book upon Southern problems comes to us from the pen of a writer already favorably known as the author of a thoughtful work upon the South. Mr. Murphy is a philosopher, and a philosopher with a strong practical side. Possessing breadth of understanding, clarity of vision and well-pondered judgment, and master of a forcible and pleasing style, he is able to discuss world-old questions in their bearing upon present-day needs with convincing vigor and freshness. He has also sympathy in marked degree, and likewise consideration. The eternal problem of what to do with the negro in America is too often debated with sole regard for the comfort, interest and preferences of the white race. No such narrow handling of a familiar topic is that before us; he co-ordinates the cosmic forces of race as they make themselves felt upon the stage of the world; he is not afraid to essay the loftier flights of generalization, and he brings the weight of pitiless logic to bear upon the object of his argument until his point is driven home. And withal he does not appear so much the advocate as the idealist, the inspired dreamer, whose vision is not too remote to be attained, nor too exalted to be brought within the realm of concrete fact. Such a writer if not destined to be a leader of the masses is likely to be recognized as a leader of the leaders. He makes men think. He shapes the issues and so exercises a subtle and controlling influence.

The powers of the negro are not the powers of the white man, and the state can never make him aught but a negro, but it can accord him the economic support of the profounder social forces of security, opportunity and hope. While the South has much to correct, it is believed that she will never so far modify her feeling in reference to the validity of social differentiations as to minimize the significance of race. The feeling of race is not a mere prejudice, and to place race antipathies of social groups among children phenomena betrays a lack of familiarity with the complexities of race adjustment under the conditions of a democracy. A sane, righteous, whole-some solution is not advanced by a spurious catholicity of race. The individuality of the white race in all its finer and happier achievement is a thing too sacred, too indispensable to the service of the world to be delivered to the dragging pressure of an inferior group or to those self-corrupting antipathies that forever tempt it. The weaker races have also something individual, something peculiar to themselves which must be conserved in the interest of all.

The author has a very happy faculty of naming his chapters, and nothing better exemplifies his exceptional powers of condensation. In that entitled "The Indivisible Inheritance" he takes up the theme that however much the negro has suffered and endured and lost he has gained more. His fate has become so inextricably involved with that of a stronger group that the conditions controlling the life and fortunes of the one must also surround and advance the life and fortunes of the other. Some conditions of progress operate to the disadvantage of the weaker group, but on the whole the negro and his offspring have become the joint beneficiaries of our civil, educational and political heritage. The suffrage of the blacks has been sharply limited by law, but the very act of limitation has involved a narrowing of the basis of the whole electorate. Indiscriminate immunities were proclaimed for white men. Ruthless discriminations were pronounced against black men. Within less than ten years thousands of the wretched blacks under the amended constitutions have been admitted to the ballot, and in Alabama alone in the first Presidential election after the readjustment of the suffrage more than half of the adult white men did not qualify and vote. In spite of all that which the Southern majority declared should happen and which the Northern majority denounced as having happened has been achieved; many negroes have been admitted; many white men have been excluded.

Thus even political advantages are being brought to the weaker group, though among all common benefits the benefits of prerogative will come last. There is no arbitrary or legislative way to make those strong who are not strong, or to make those weak who are not weak. Those with the capacity for government will govern. The negro enjoys religious and civil freedom, but these were won for him, not by him. He has no past, no tradition, no history of great men to appeal to. The very law he now invokes has come up out of the suffering and patience of another social group. It is the flowering of the consciousness of another race; it is in its genius and expression the white man's law—made out of the texture of the white man's experience and shot through and through with the instinctive assumptions of a psychology to which the negro as a negro is largely alien. But the law is his. It is about his cradle. It is his heritage. At every point the negro receives, inherits, it is his to talk about the fine, old-time, literate negro. He and the paternalistic conditions of his environment are gone forever. We must train the negro through the churches and schools, but were there none of these the negro would share the heritage of every intellectual and moral asset of the country. We can no more make a bi-racial division of our civilization than of the sunshine and the seasons. Labor and freedom are indivisible.

Let us be the expression, so closely woven in the web of the thought, and withal so commanding the fiction, that it is difficult to give a due conception of this writer's work without excerpts too extended for these columns. He gives much weight to the integrity of the negro race, and points out that the old isolation of the negro's continent is a thing of the past. Whatever is the future of Africa, its significance and importance will not recede, and its increasing inclusion within the world consciousness of the modern world is as inevitable as any human event that we can now foresee. Says the author:

Not in this movement of closer inter-relationship solely from the side of civilization, eight years that he spent there, in relations with a court even then in bad repute. That his conduct in this matter stands in need of some defence is obvious in view of the fact that even Boccaccio, who revered him, was moved to protest, saying: "He has become the friend of that murderous and inhuman one, whom he was wont to call now Polyphemus, now the Cyclops; and not dragged, not compelled, but of his own free will, he has gone under the yoke of him, whose audacity, pride and tyranny he used indignantly to condemn." Modern criticism, seeing Erasmus in the long perspective of time can observe more amiably his sojourn within the dubious circle of the Visconti. It was the restless spirit in him that drove him to Milan. His mind needed to work in the stuff of life. His motive in subjecting himself to the influences deprecated by his friend was at bottom probably skin to that which had earlier led him to scale Mont Ventoux. He must always be making experiments. No doubt he made sacrifices at Milan. But he went as far as it is humanly possible to go toward proving that one may occasionally touch pitch without being defiled.

Certainly nothing in his Milanese period detracts from that charming and even lovable character which he showed to the world in the ordinary circumstances of his career. He is, indeed, always and everywhere, the most winning figure in that intellectual movement which presaged the Renaissance. It is in her feeling for his gracious traits, for the positive sweetness in his nature, as for the noble drift in his most characteristic ideas, that Miss Jerrold professes herself a truly sympathetic biographer. The author's care for the still air of delightful studies and for the company of an enlightening type will turn to this book.

Lord Curzon has recently stated in the debates upon the Eastern situation that all Asia, from the obscurity of its central plateau to the extremities of India, is suffering with a vague unrest (due in large measure to the result of the Japanese-Russian War), and that the lowest of its tribal groups has somehow learned that somewhere far to the northward there has been a great conflict, in which a dark race has been victorious over a white race. In the life of Africa, it is not necessary to have found a similar agitation; and yet, if such restlessness exists, it should be dispensed to find for it a somewhat broader basis. If the news of the victory of Japan has been a factor in these situations, there have been other factors also. Under the prodding of our divisions and redvisions of the "spheres of influence," of punitive expeditions and military explorations, the self-consciousness of a continent, even in its lowest depths, cannot forever sleep, nor can the relations of our international life be external merely. We cannot be busied with Africa as a geographical puzzle without entering into the life of the continent, and from commercial to military relations we advance even more directly, for the reason that it is not easy to trade where it is not possible to live. And inasmuch as others will enter or will wish to enter the market we attend, they too, will wish to protect their agents and their charter. Thus a national interest becomes a phase of international policy. A question of international policy becomes, however, under any representative government, a question of political support. Soon the issues brought into the foreground by the Kaiser serve to determine the alternations of party supremacy among the English and the issues presented by the American negro were frequently put men into office and out of office in the United States, so that what began as the intrusion of England into the affairs of Africa, and the Morocco defining the party history of France and thus the negro Congo is found to be alive and assertive within the career of Brussels and her King. A movement toward becoming a mere physical invasion has become, and will become increasingly, a whole and a part of social and political conditions.

This theme is developed with skill, and the author shows how the negro in America must be affected by the world movement in his own continent. Moreover, the race is feeling an increasing sense of solidarity. The educated negroes are keeping more closely than ever to themselves. The race is holding its own, and the best interests of both are improved by such a tendency. No question of intermingling can be considered, and so generally is this accepted that it is no longer discussed. Other phases of the problem receive a handling which is as astute as it is novel and sagacious. Its difficulties will yield to no immediate formula. Few of the great problems of human development have ever been finally "solved." The student can only point the way, discern tendencies, indicate pitfalls and utter words of encouragement and advice. Those lands, says the author, which are conscious of a great difficulty are not poor. It was through the struggle in one experience that the South negro lost her mastery, her mastery not over her nation, but over those opportunities for national leadership and for an uninterrupted eminence of service to which her capacities entitled her. It may be that through this same strange, waiting, baffling factor in her life her ascendancy in higher forms may again return—in forms not threatening the estate and dignity of labor, the pride of freedom, the instinct and custom of our age, but bestowed by a labor which she has freed and by an age and a democracy which in her service to their profoundest task she has supremely justified.

It is a striking contrast to turn from such thoughts so loftily expressed and so forcibly expounded to Mr. Pickett's advocacy of a wholesale removal of the American negroes to Africa. One hundred million dollars a year should be expended by the general government, and states and individuals might be expected to contribute to the cause. The ten million negroes themselves will seize the opportunity to start life anew in the continent from which they sprang. The author has gathered much valuable material to illustrate his argument and his statistics are well arranged. The familiar difficulties of the problem, the hardships of the negro and the various solutions are set forth at length. As a work of reference on the subject at the present day the volume has great value.

PETRARCH.

A Modern Mind in the Fourteenth Century.

FRANCESCO PETRARCA, POET AND HUMANIST. By Miss J. Jerrold. E. P. Dutton & Co., Octavo, pp. 21, 50c. E. P. Dutton & Co., N. Y.

Strictly speaking, there was no pressing need for the publication of this book. Mr. Hollway's Calthrop's volume on Petrarch, printed some two years ago, constitutes an adequate narrative of the poet's life for the general reader, and is, into the bargain, an unusually entertaining piece of work. But who shall blame the lover of letters who is urged by nothing more nor less than a warm sympathy for the great pioneer in Italian humanism to set forth his story anew? Miss Jerrold is such an enthusiast, and since she has made a creditable if not especially weighty book out of her studies, one may easily turn these pages in friendly mood.

Miss Jerrold speaks of her wish to present the twofold aspect of Petrarch as poet and humanist in such a way that the one should not obscure the other. Her purpose is laudable, and readers who do not possess Italian will be grateful for her generosity in English versions of many passages and complete poems. Nevertheless, even the most distinguished student of Petrarch's poetry, reading it simply and solely for his own sake, is perpetually turning to the man's personality, perpetually realizing him in his capacity as adventurer through the world of fourteenth century affairs, as well as through the domain of thought. His appeal for us is that of a peculiarly modern type, and this despite the fact that he was so profoundly bookish in his tastes. Bookishness, however, was not with him a trait excluding contact with the larger interests of mankind. On the contrary, this creature of reverie and insatiable literary acquisitiveness was absorbingly interested in the daily business of his fellow men, a practitioner of politics as well as of poetry. Experience, of whatever kind, was dear to him. It is a point explaining more than one episode in his career over which the too zealous biographer is disposed to grow more or less apologetic. Why did he make friends with Azzo da Correggio, a type of medieval violence? Surely it was not because he had lowered himself to the tyrant's moral level, but because in his intercourse with Azzo he touched one more phase of life, one more development in the vivid maudlin spectacle which was, after all, as dear to him as solitude amongst his books. The author of this volume is ill at ease, as so many of her predecessors have been, when it is time to accompany Petrarch to Milan and to deal with the

two years that he spent there, in relations with a court even then in bad repute. That his conduct in this matter stands in need of some defence is obvious in view of the fact that even Boccaccio, who revered him, was moved to protest, saying: "He has become the friend of that murderous and inhuman one, whom he was wont to call now Polyphemus, now the Cyclops; and not dragged, not compelled, but of his own free will, he has gone under the yoke of him, whose audacity, pride and tyranny he used indignantly to condemn." Modern criticism, seeing Erasmus in the long perspective of time can observe more amiably his sojourn within the dubious circle of the Visconti. It was the restless spirit in him that drove him to Milan. His mind needed to work in the stuff of life. His motive in subjecting himself to the influences deprecated by his friend was at bottom probably skin to that which had earlier led him to scale Mont Ventoux. He must always be making experiments. No doubt he made sacrifices at Milan. But he went as far as it is humanly possible to go toward proving that one may occasionally touch pitch without being defiled.

DAYS IN SICILY.

Two Records of Happy Saunterings.

DIVERSIONS IN SICILY. By Henry Festing Jones. 12mo, pp. 261. Illustrated by Charles Scribner's Sons.

SEKERS IN SICILY. Being a Quasi-Ferretone by Jane and every hand Done into the Vernacular by Elizabeth Bland and Anne Hoyt. Illustrated. 12mo, pp. 232. John Lane Company.

The Englishman who chats so agreeably concerning his diversions in Sicily is a traveller worth following. He is the most sympathetic of observers. He likes the Sicilians and has known how to win their confidence and affection. It could hardly be otherwise with so cheerful, courteous and large minded a visitor; even the coastguards fraternized with him and fed him on jokes and cold boiled artichokes. He describes briefly and with humor his excursions about the country; he offers effective glimpses of Sicilian romance, and he provides some particularly entertaining chapters on the marionette theatres. He is at pains to remove popular impressions which he considers erroneous; he is, for example, inclined to attribute the idea that Sicily is more dangerous than other countries "less to the frequency of crime there than to the operatic manner in which it is committed." As for Sicilian manners, he gives a most engaging account of them. He says in illustration: "A Frenchman, speaking of an Englishman to whom I had introduced him, said to me, 'He speaks French worse than you do.' Any Italian wishing to express a similar idea would have said, 'He speaks Italian, it is true, but not so well as you do.'" Our author talks poetry and music, Dante and Shakespeare, with his landlady's son, who waits on him at dinner, and with the master of a little wine shop, and many of his pleasant encounters are with humbler folk, those ardent and persistent patrons of the marionette theatre, the Facchini, porters, coachmen, shoeblacks and the like at Catania he writes:

It sometimes happens when travelling in Sicily that one has to spend half an hour, half a day, or it may be more, in company with one of these men. He is usually a delightful person, dignified, kind, courteous, full of fun and of a friendly, unassuming, being intrusive. During conversation one may perhaps ask him whether he can read and write; he will probably reply that at school he was taught both, and that he occupies with the luggage of the horses, to him very much, reading and writing are the higher mathematics are to many an English gentleman, the subjects were included in his youthful studies. He will have never been of the slightest use to him in earning his bread, he has forgotten how to read, and even if he could not read, he is too illiterate to be of any use to him. He is a man who has been out of doors all those years; the houses are for the women; the men live in the street. It is as though in England the cab drivers, rickshaw pullers, and shop boys were to spend evening after evening, month after month, looking on at a dramatized version of the "Ariadne" or "The Pacific Queen."

FRENCH TYPES.

Napoleon III and Some Others.

M. Etienne Lamy, in his latest work, "Au Service des Idées et des Lettres," published by the Librairie des Lettres, has collected some exceedingly pretty pictures, in the foregrounds of which figures men and women who have played leading parts in politics or in fashionable society. His portraits range from La Bruyere to Jules Simon. The most striking chapter is that in which M. Lamy

BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS.

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measure at least, to William De Morgan's success. Not that there is anything in common between his stories and "Margarita's Soul" beyond a certain degree of adaptation of method. The man of fifty whose recollections are set forth in this book is not only romantic; he is sentimental, with the wholesome, pleasing sentimentality of the old bachelor who has not turned crusty, whose unfulfilled love has in the course of the years become a cherished asset, the poetry and gentle consolation of his solitude, not its cross. His sweet melancholy is a luxury; indeed, he revels in it. But the title of the book is somewhat of a misnomer.

It is not the story of "Margarita's Soul," since the reader learns but little of its development till the end, when a climax reveals to him a woman beautiful in mind as in body. She was found wandering on Broadway, twenty years ago, an untutored savage—a blank leaf awaiting the script of her discoverer. He marries her, a child in mind, knowing nothing of the meaning of marriage, then engages a governess for her, who trains her as one trains an infant. The secret of her soul she guards; those watching her, certainly her biographer, receive but the faintest clues to its individuality, its growth, its emotional processes. Her mind is at best but placidly receptive to cultural impressions; the reader who chooses would be justified in opining that Margarita had no soul, only impulses, were it not for those closing chapters. Her brief career as an opera singer one may pass over; it is "in the air" just now. The story will only measure of popular success it may well attain to its treatment and setting, not to its subject, which is far from novel. But is not the old bachelor, in the narrating of the story, really more interested in his own hopeless love than in the soul of his object? Perhaps so. A Thackerayan touch of this kind is not uncharacteristic. One wonders, by the way, what Whistler would say, were he alive to-day, of the free use of his cherished butterfly made by the publishers in the decoration of this book?

BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

Talk of Things Present and to Come.

The first two volumes of Emerson's "Journals" are to be published next week. They cover the years 1820-'29. Their author began these records as a boy, and continued to set down his daily addition until the task was no longer within his powers. The intimate episodes of his life were confided to those journals as well as remarks on the men and women he knew. Ballads and nonsense verses also are to be found therein. Interesting portraits are to accompany the text.

THE MINISTRY.

Its Relation to Every-Day Life.

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY AND THE SOCIAL ORDER. Lectures delivered in the course of Pastoral Functions at Yale Divinity School. Edited by Charles S. Macfarland. 8vo, pp. vii, 283. Henry Rowley.

Eleven lectures in the course of pastoral functions at Yale Divinity School, delivered last year by various clergymen and other social workers, have been brought together in this volume. Besides urging the responsibility of the churches toward wage earners and toward the more neglected groups in society, some of the lectures give detailed attention to methods of approach that have already proved effective. In the chapters devoted to industrial organizations Mr. John Mitchell and Mr. Henry Sterling expound the principles of the trade unions. Dr. Macfarland's discussion of the part of the Church and the ministry in the realization of democracy is almost Franciscan in its emphasis. The Church of our generation has, he thinks, not always dared to eat with publicans and sinners, to invite them to her own table, and he inquires:

Shall she go on, gathering from the world for the sake of bread, or shall she give herself for the sake of the world? Shall she invite to her table not only the worthy but the needy? Let us no longer shut up the Kingdom of Heaven with the rusty keys of doctrine. Let us get absolutely rid of our lingering idea of the Christian Church as a collection of those who may thank God that they are not as other men are.

The essentials of a ministry to men are dealt with in the lecture by the Rev. Anson Phelps Stokes, Jr. In reviewing the history of mental healing Dr. George B. Cutter alludes to the Emmanuel movement, and says that when the excitement has died down the Church will be ready to delegate therapeutic activities to its members, the physicians. The concluding lecture is an impressive account by the Rev. Frederick Lynch of progress made in recent years toward the realization of international good will. So far have we come that Mr. Lynch is reminded of the unkempt mortal who for several Sundays in succession took a front seat in Mr. Spurgeon's tabernacle. When the pastor found occasion to speak to the tramp, the poor fellow, deeply touched, grasped Mr. Spurgeon's hand and said, with tears in his voice: "Mr. Spurgeon, I can't never tell you what your preaching has done for me. When I first came into this church I hated both God and the devil, and now," he added, "I love them both."

FRENCH TYPES.

Napoleon III and Some Others.

The letters which Lafcadio Hearn addressed from Japan to his friend, Professor Chamberlain, are to be published early next year in "The Atlantic."

In the new edition of Wesley's Journal no words but Wesley's have been inserted, the use of brackets distinguishing the new material from the old. Passages from the newly deciphered diaries will be interlarded by Wesley in the Journal. It appears

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BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS.

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That many versions of the Georgia Journal exist, the reason being found, as the latest editor says, in Wesley's habit of taking absent friends as well as different members of his family into his con-

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