BOOKS AND AUTHORS — REVIEWS AND COMMENT

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LITERARY CRITICISM AND BOOK NEWS

The Growing Literature of the World War—A Great American Statesman: John Hay—The High Cost of Living.

MORE WAR BOOKS.

It is growing increasingly difficult to keep pace in these columns with the books on the war that continue to pour from the presses. Many of them are booming rhetoric, and nothing more—inflamed patriotism, shouting at the top of its lungs, ignoring or disregarding facts. Others are of serious value, among the best of them being those published before the outbreak of hostilities, when judgment was yet unobscured and the vision clear. Of these is the late Professor J. A. Cramb's "Germany and England" (E. P. Dutton & Co.), already reviewed here, and now issued in a new edition with a preface by the Hon. Joseph H. Choate, who warns us Americans that the price of our own peace is the increase of our navy and the military training of our youth. A new edition of Bernhardi's "Germany and the Next War" (Longmans, Green & Co.) passed into its sixtieth thousand before the day of its publication; and we are reminded that Elmer Roberts's "Monarchical Socialism in Germany" (Charles Scribner's Sons) is one of the best studies of what Germany has achieved in peace by adopting Socialist economic doctrines and carrying them to success under efficient, honest, thoroughly organized paternalism. Surveying all the literature issued since the first of August, one perceives that England alone of all the nations at war has found time and men to write and publish books about it. France is silent; so, it appears, is Austria. Germany has done some pamphleteering, but nothing more. Russia has never been in the habit of explaining or justifying her course of action.

*Among the latest books published, first place must be given to the work of an American, Mr. Simonds's chronicle of and commentary upon the strategy and major tactics of the first phase of the war, which, according to him, ended with the fall of Antwerp. His book consists mainly of the articles contributed by him from day to day to the editorial page of an evening newspaper in this city, but he has revised and amplified them, and added considerable new material. In dealing with a war of unprecedented magnitude, whose battle lines lie at opposite ends of the continent, whose skirmishers circle the globe, he has managed throughout to be clear to the attentive reader. He does not neglect what naval warfare there has been thus far; occasionally he looks into the future, though never far—he will not prophesy—and with it all he provides an introductory chapter on the immediate causes of the conflict. One is inclined to believe, however, that the Slav issue in Austria-Hungary is not so sharply drawn as he makes it out to be. It is certain, for instance, that the Bohemian Slavs will have none of Russia, and that the Croatians will not make common cause with the Serbs—several factors entering into the question here and elsewhere in Austro-Hungarian Slavdom which have been ignored thus far. Again, had Mr. Simonds kept back his book a few days longer, he would have omitted that reference of his to the "loyalty" of the Boers. England, it is likely, must face the fact that in South Africa she has an Alsace-Lorraine of her own. De Wet's rising may be suppressed as Maritz's has been—for the moment. But the Boers, the descendants of free men since the days when their forefathers drove Spain out of the Low Countries, are not likely ever to be content with liberty without the independence of which England has deprived them. They are of the breed that never forgets. They are brethren to the Belgians, to whose heroism, patriotism and endurance Mr. Simonds pays so glowing a tribute in his closing pages.

†Dr. Von Mach, an American of German birth and a graduate of Harvard, seeks to pour oil on the turbulent wave of American public opinion. He brackets Professor Usher with Bernhardi as representing nothing of German thought and inspiration except the extreme pan-German minority, and introduces us to still another publicist of the Fatherland hitherto unknown to us, Paul Rohrbach, the author of "Der Deutsche Gedanke in der Welt," published in 1912. Rohrbach, it appears, sought to bring his countrymen to a more purposeful realization of their moral responsibilities; his is "a book of peace and moral justice." Still, he judged England's attitude toward the empire by the many immoderate speeches and articles of her public men and journals, chief among them the "Saturday Review's" famous "Germany must be destroyed." We are bidden to observe that England herself has not lacked her Bernhardis. First among them Dr. Mach names the late General Homer Lea, author of "The Day of the Saxon," who, it may be pointed out, was an American.

As for American public opinion, the author is convinced that it seeks to be fair, but is not sufficiently informed on the German side. And no wonder, he adds, quoting Rohrbach: "Many people possess a vivid picture of what the English and the French people have done for the culture of the world, while few have any similar feeling toward Germany." It is to enlighten us that Dr. Mach has written this book, which devotes a chapter to Germany's past, and another to Alsace-Lorraine, wherein is emphasized the fact that the country was German from the times of Charlemagne until France took it and held it. There is also a defence of the Kaiser as first in peace, and first in war only by stress of circumstance; a consideration of the New Empire and all it has come to stand for through forty-four years of peaceful development; an explanation of its relations to Continental Europe, a chapter on Germany and England, quoted from Rohrbach; and the statement that a citizen army is far less of a militarism than is, for instance, Russia. Germany, according to Dr. Mach, did not desire this war. What she wanted was peace to develop her commerce and industry, a fair opportunity to continue to grow and to contribute to the world's civilization. And she did not, she does not, want to add to her territories new lands of unwilling peoples. Dr. Mach's book is an attempt to place the German case before American public opinion; an attempt, be it added, more moderate in tone than most of the statements we have had thus far from either side.

‡The apparent rapidity of Russia's mobilization has been one of the surprises of the war. Mr. Simonds comments upon it in his book. As a matter of fact, Russia began her mobilization as long ago as last April, under the pretext of a "trial mobilization" on an unprecedented scale. This explanation was officially given out at the time, and much commented upon in the German and Austro-Hungarian press. Indeed, it was the first cause of the tension that grew through the summer and broke with the double assassination at Sarajevo. Mr. Henderson, an American, and the author of an excellent "Short History of Germany," opens his admirably illustrated new book with a chapter of excerpts from the German press dealing with the real purpose behind this "trial mobilization" on a war footing, a contribution to the history of the immediate causes of the conflict thus far but little known here. His description of Germany's fighting machine is brief yet comprehensive; his chapter on naval strategy and tactics especially deserves notice. §"The German Army from Within" is a book of petty enmity; "The Russian Army from Within" is a pleasantly written little sketch, in which the individual Russian soldier is more to the fore than the "machine."

¶Mr. Morris's book will be found of great use for the ready acquisition of a serviceable general knowledge of the war, its origins, and the warlike strength of the nations involved. It presents a maximum of facts, and presents them in good narrative form. The author does not go deeply into speculations concerning hidden causes, the right and the wrong of it; he strives for impartiality, and, on the whole, achieves it. He devotes much space to the development of Europe during the nineteenth century, takes in the enlarged scope of international politics caused by the rise of Japan and the opening up of China, but is most informing in his chapters on Pan-Slavism and Pan-Germanism, the strength and resources of the nations at war, their rulers and leaders, the cost of armed peace and the methods of modern warfare. This is one of the first of the books prepared in anticipation of a sudden demand for general information, and as such it is a creditable piece of work. There is an abundance of illustrations.

*THE GREAT WAR. The First Phase: From the Assassination of the Archduke to the Fall of Antwerp. By Frank H. Simonds. 12mo, pp. 258. Mitchell Kennerley.

†WHAT GERMANY WANTS. By Edmund von Mach. 12mo, pp. 157. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.

‡GERMANY'S FIGHTING MACHINE. By Ernest F. Henderson. With many illustrations. 8vo, pp. 97. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co.

§THE RUSSIAN ARMY FROM WITHIN. By W. Barnes Stevens. 12mo, pp. 180. THE GERMAN ARMY FROM WITHIN. By a British officer who has served in it. 32mo, pp. 192. George H. Doran Co.

¶ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF CONFLICT BETWEEN THE NATIONS OF EUROPE. The Causes and Issues of the Great War. By Charles Morris. Illustrated. 8vo, pp. 464. Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company.

RIDGELY HOUSE, DOVER, DEL. (FROM "COLONIAL MANSIONS OF MARYLAND AND DELAWARE"; J.B. LIPPINCOTT CO.)

THE COST OF LIVING

Two Recent Studies of a Burning Problem.

REDUCING THE COST OF LIVING. By Scott Nearing, Ph. D. 12mo, pp. 242. Philadelphia: George W. Jacobs & Co.

WHY THE DOLLAR IS SHRINKING. A Study of the High Cost of Living. By Irving Fisher. 8vo, pp. 233. The Macmillan Company.

Of the two books before us dealing with a world-wide question, Mr. Nearing's is the more popular one; Professor Fisher's, as was to be expected from his earlier books and the standing they have given him, is addressed rather to students of economics. The two are worth reading in connection with each other, for Mr. Nearing advocates the very popular explanations and some of the fallacies which, according to Professor Fisher, do not go to the root of the matter. "Reducing the Cost of Living" takes into account the individual, the social and the political—or call it administrative—phases of the problem; "Why the Dollar Is Shrinking"—and the dollar has shrunk to two-thirds of its value since 1896—deals with its financial aspect.

Mr. Nearing has a happy knack of pithy expression. "Malthus was wrong in predicting immediate disaster from overcrowding, although evidently he was right in predicting the encroachments of population on the food supply." "The family under a thousand dollars is interested in changing prices rather than changing standards; the well-to-do see the cost of living problem as a problem of getting the largest possible number of goods and services in return for the income they spend." Moreover, with them, there is the question of social position—of "belonging." "The new family status—the family as a buyer rather than a seller"—these are phrases that tell, and so is this:

> The burden of servants is carried by masters and mistresses. There are instances, numerous enough, in which a mistress would expend less effort in doing work herself than she expends in the supervision of her servants. To such persons the hiring of an additional servant always signifies the assumption of an additional burden.

The remedies Mr. Nearing offers cover the field of causes he indicates. They are individual—simple living, back to the soil, sound domestic economy; social, industrial, economic—the latter in connection with legislative regulation. The book is representative of modern tendencies in popular socio-political opinion.

Professor Fisher undertakes to state as simply as possible the general principles that fix the scale of prices, and to show the manner in which they apply to the high cost of living. These principles—they are not new—he states as follows: The volume of money in circulation; its velocity of circulation; the volume of bank deposits subject to check; its velocity, and the volume of trade. The remedy he proposes, and to which he will devote a future book, is the "standardization of the dollar," the establishment, that is, of a unit which shall be as unvariable as the units of length and weight. This he proposes to do by compensating for every fall in the purchasing power of gold by adding to the weight of gold in the dollar. This "would get rid of the present fixed price of gold and allow new supplies of gold to lower the price of gold instead of as at present raising the price of goods."

In his discussion of popular explanations of the high cost of living the author makes some telling points—many of them in direct answer to Mr. Nearing's book. Of the rising cost of labor—that is, of labor unions—as a factor in the situation he observes, for instance, that labor unions existed before 1896 in a period of falling prices; and that, anyhow, any effect due to labor unions in the last eighteen years would be confined to the United States, England and a few other countries, but could in no way be held responsible for the rise of prices in India. As a matter of fact, he points out, the actual cost of production to-day, in terms of labor, is lower than it was eighteen years ago, since we must not measure the cost of production simply, without taking into account the loss in the purchasing power of the dollar.

The book has a timely postscript dealing with the probable effect of the war upon the cost of living. Prices will go up, of course, in Europe, but more after the war than during its progress. While hostilities continue the rise will probably be less rapid in England than in the other countries; the level may even fall. But after peace is concluded the increase of the cost of living in England will be more rapid than on the Continent. As for us, the rise will be less pronounced.

ONE OF OUR DIPLOMATS

A Brief Account of a Distinguished Career.

JOHN HAY, AUTHOR AND STATESMAN. By Lorenzo Sears. With portrait. 12mo, pp. 156. Dodd, Mead & Co.

"It is singular but not entirely exceptional," says Mr. Sears, "that John Hay and his career should have received no extended treatment within a decade after his death." To supply the lack, at least provisorily, he has written this little volume, which is in no sense a full-fledged biography, but which contains at least a suggestion of the man himself, and a connected account of his activities and services. One questions, however, the truth of the author's remark that "not many will recall the administrations during which he served, and above all what he accomplished for his country and the world by his masterly diplomacy." As a matter of fact, John Hay, the statesman, is far more widely remembered by his countrymen, and with far better reason, than is the author of "Jim Bludso" and "Little Breeches," of the anonymous "Breadwinners," and even, one is almost justified in saying, the co-author of the life of Lincoln. These products of his pen now serve chiefly to link John Hay worthily to the brilliant literary tradition of our diplomatic service. His work as a statesman lives after him.

As our ambassador to the Court of St James's during the Spanish war, as our Secretary of State during the turbulent opening up of China, it fell to John Hay's share to introduce the United States to Europe and the East as a new power in world politics. He rose to the serious demands of his task with dignity, and with an ability that commanded respect from the very first. No shirtsleeves statesman he, but a polished diplomat, who had served his apprenticeship to "the profession" in Paris, Vienna and Madrid. "Suaviter in modo," he proved, as in the case of China, that the ideals for which this country stands in international relations may be made the most enduringly successful Realpolitik as well. Mr. Sears may be right, after all; the durability, the increasing importance of John Hay's conduct of our foreign affairs will perhaps not be seen in their full significance until the lapse of another decade.

That fortune conspired to furnish and equip the man for his opportunity and the country's service is not the least interesting phase of his career. The descendant of a Scotch soldier of fortune who settled in Virginia in the middle of the eighteenth century with his German-French wife, counting among his ancestors Revolutionary soldiers and professional men, linked to New England through his mother, John Hay met Lincoln at the threshold of life, in his uncle's law office at Springfield. Thereafter Hay's progress is one of uninterrupted steps upward on the ladder of his career. If, shortly after his marriage, he retired with the intention of devoting himself to business, he was called back from his planned obscurity with no loss of valuable time for so young a man. His service on The Tribune under his friend, Whitelaw Reid, was not a digression, but still another step forward, for his editorials on foreign affairs in its columns served to direct an even wider attention to his ability, knowledge and experience. Mr. Sears deals only very briefly with this episode in Hay's life, but this was perhaps unavoidable—it may be true to scale from an outsider's point of view when one takes into consideration the slender proportions of this biographical sketch.

Until the definitive biography of John Hay appears—it is already being written by William Roscoe Thayer—this well-written little book will fully serve its laudable purpose of bringing to Americans a realization of the qualities of John Hay, the statesman, and of the share he took in securing for the United States the mighty and beneficent influence it exercises to-day in the councils of the great powers, in the shaping of the future of the nations.

COLONIAL MANSIONS

A Voyage of Discovery Among Ancestral Homes.

COLONIAL MANSIONS OF MARYLAND AND DELAWARE. By John Martin Hammond. With 65 illustrations. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.

Here is a stately and a beautiful book, its stateliness and beauty those of the architecture of our forefathers reproduced from photographs of exceptional quality, a book which will delight the amateur and the connoisseur, all lovers of art—and which should prove rich in suggestion to architects and to those about to build. The author declares that he has for many years been a "collector of old houses" within easy travelling distance of his Baltimore home; but, he adds, the collector of old homes in that vicinity must possess as much enthusiasm and perseverance as the collector of old furniture. "Fully one-half the places which he visits because of hearsay will be found to be without interest; again, he will be surprised to discover how little is known about them even in the immediate neighborhood in which they have stood so long." Mr. Hammond has, indeed, made a series of voyages of discovery in unknown and often inaccessible places, and brought back rich spoils to add to the more familiar ones that New England and Virginia have yielded.

The Colonial survivals of Delaware show unmistakable Dutch influences; they are less pretentious in size than the houses of neighboring Maryland, but in charm they rival them. Again, the Maryland Colonial home invariably had its wing for the house servants—a characteristic of the planting, slave-keeping community. It is rarely met with in Delaware. In both states brick is the prevalent material, not wood as in New England, and here Mr. Hammond has a few words to say concerning the omnipresent tradition of imported bricks:

> Of nearly every old house that one visits it is proudly asserted that the bricks were brought over from England. This is a tradition that seems to have no settled home. It can be heard in Maryland, Pennsylvania and Georgia, yet there is not a single bill of lading recorded in Maryland which shows bricks as an item of import. . . . It would seem that as a rule the popular tradition of imported brick is without foundation, though one hesitates to contravene a general opinion so well established. But the colonies needed more important things from England than brick, and there was good clay in this country. It is probable that the planters as a class were their own brickmakers.

The text is not merely descriptive. It reproduces to a certain extent the life of the time of the builders and early occupants of these houses, and enters widely into genealogical ramifications. One other feature of the illustrations deserves notice, the attention paid in them to architectural detail, especially to doorways, stairways, cupboards and carving.

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