

Spain Now Sends Us a Philosopher Who Sees a Hopeless World

The Confessions of a Cynic

Pio Baroja Contrasted With Blasco Ibanez in H. L. Mencken's Introduction

THE latest volume in Mr. Knopf's interesting Free Lance series to come to our desk is Pio Baroja's Youth and Egotism, translated from the Spanish by Jacob S. Fassett jr. and Frances L. Phillips and issued under the editorial chaperonage of H. L. Mencken. Baroja, according to his gifted sponsor, "stands for the modern Spanish mind at its most enlightened. He is the Spaniard of education and worldly wisdom, detached from the medieval imbecilities of the old régime and yet aloof from the worse follies of the demagogues who now rage in the country."

Comparing Baroja with Blasco Ibanez, Mr. Mencken writes that "Blasco is almost the typical Socialist—iconoclastic, oratorical, sentimental, theatrical—a fervent advocate of all sorts-of lofty causes, eagerly responsive to the shibboleths of the hour. Baroja is the analyst, the critic, almost the cynic. If he leans toward any definite doctrine at all it is toward the doctrine that the essential ills of man are incurable, that all the remedies proposed are as bad as the disease, that it is almost a waste of time to bother about humanity in general. . . . He is, one fancies, a bit disgusted and a bit despairing. But if it is despair it is surely not the despair of one who has shirked the trial."

Philosophy and Autobiography Turning from Mr. Mencken's convenient preface to the book itself, we discover a strange confusion of philosophy and autobiography—a thing of shreds and patches. Baroja started to write a little history of his career and the little history grew up into an *apologia pro sua vita*. The predominant note is one of unseemly cynicism. Baroja is weary. He has tried all of our social and political panaceas and found them worthless. He has sought relief from the welter of life by retiring to his Basque hills. Here he will lead the existence of an author whose works are sufficiently profitable to keep him from want. Physician and baker in turn, he took up the writer's craft as a last resort and succeeded almost immediately.

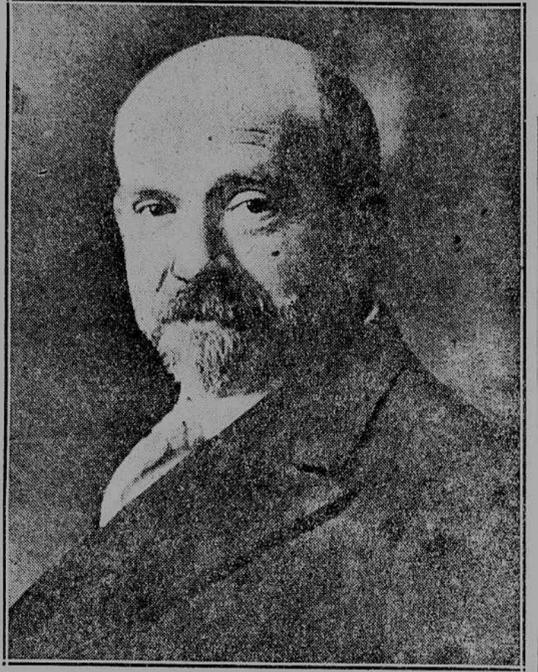
Some will be irritated by the smugness which seems to have grown out of Baroja's rebellion. "If I can't have my way I won't play" is his evasion of problems that he cannot conquer. Here and there he emits a tub-thumping platitude (as some one has said) like "I do not pretend to taste, but I am sincere; nor do I endeavor to be consistent. Consistency does not interest me." Dulcinea used to write this as "I don't know much about art, but I know what I like." But, take him as a whole, Baroja is an independent—a solitary independent who belongs to no

Upstarts, grandiloquent and at the same time unctuous, a general in a Salvation Army of Art, or a monk who is a devotee of an aesthetic Doctrine which has been drawn up by a Congress of Tourists."

No Use for Bohemia

Radicals of the parlor, back or front, will find little encouragement from Baroja. "Bohemia," he says, "is not only false, it is contemptible. It suggests to me a minor Christian sect, of the most inconsequential degree, nicely calculated for the convenience of hangers-on at cafés." He admits frankly that "push over the working-man" annoys him; his creed is to "take what I can that I want, and when I do not take it, it is because I cannot get it."

There is more egotism than youth in Baroja's book, but it is a worthwhile addition to the Free Lance series. Whether you will agree with



PIO BAROJA, the latest Spanish writer to win an American hearing. His Youth and Egotism has just been published by Alfred A. Knopf

malice is so keen that it very nearly causes him to appear intelligent," and "No one reads in San Sebastian. They run over the society news and then drop the paper for fear their brains will begin to smoke." (By the way, translators ought to watch their grammar. Here is something for the benefit of the disciples of John Ruskin: "He impresses me as the Prince of

Roads to Social Progress

Professor Binder Sees Health as Supreme Factor in Development of Civilization

HEALTH has been the most important factor in the development of civilization, in the opinion of Rudolph H. Binder, professor of sociology at New York University, who sets forth various interesting theories of social progress in two books, Health and Social Progress and Major Social Problems (published by Prentice-Hall, Inc.). Professor Binder's definition of health may be summed up as follows:

By health is meant not physical strength, but correct, sound structure. A person may be said to be healthy when he is, except incidentally, unconscious of his body. This definition may seem strange at first sight, but it implies all the elements which enter into a full description of health. It means the state of the body which enables it to perform every function which can reasonably be expected of it, to accommodate itself to each ordinary task, and to be equal to some exertion without painful sense of fatigue; it means self-control, a balance between organs and organism, so as to produce a coordinated whole, well equipped for action.

The author traces the intimate relation between health and disease and the rise and fall of ancient civilizations. The origins of these civilizations are to be looked for in regions which are distinctly healthful. Professor Binder ascribes the fall of Greece and Rome to the invasion of malaria which devitalized the peoples of these countries.

The conquest of disease in the tropics, according to Professor Binder, is peculiarly imperative at the present time because these regions offer a most promising outlet for the steadily increasing population of the world. With the equatorial countries made generally inhabitable, the gloomy prophecies of Malthus could be laughed at indefinitely.

The author vindicates the genius, as a type, from Lombroso's charge of degeneracy. He shows that there are two kinds of geniuses, those who draw upon imagination and those who depend upon observation. Briefly, the distinction between them is that one is the artistic type, the other the scientific type. Lombroso confines himself to a study of the artistic or philosophic type of genius and charges all geniuses with degeneracy. Professor Binder, on the other hand, asserts that while some of the artistic type may be degenerate, those of the highest grade are normal—a condition which holds good for all the scientists.

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Richelieu's France

A History of the France of the Seventeenth Century

THE great sweep of the history of France is the clearest mirror of the political development of Europe. Historians have recognized the need of a new presentation and study of that history, for the last half century has succeeded in evolving a theory of social evolution at variance with the ideas of the old school men. Under the general title, The National History of France, there is now being published in this country a translation of a series, of which the fifth volume, The Seventeenth Century, by Jacques Boulenger (Putnam's), is now before us.

France is the true epitome of Europe, for she easily has maintained a recognized facility in adopting new constitutions and political theories, and has created a literature and an art that interpret, with classical ease and beauty of form, the tendencies of years. No century in her dramatic and romantic story is richer in significance than the seventeenth, and it is this epoch, that of Louis XIII and Louis XIV, that this book covers.

One has but to take this volume in hand seriously, reading its chapters with a mind open to illumination and explanation, to get the meaning of the drift of the years from 1600 to 1700, when France is concerned. One by one the outstanding figures of Paris, and Paris was then France even more than to-day, move from the wings and tread the stage. Richelieu, handling men as puppets, is revealed in a new and almost startlingly realistic fashion, not as a mere manipulator of state treasures, nor as administrator, but as the defender of France against foreign plot and threat. Mazarin, Condé, Turenne, and that strange image of a man, Luxembourg—vide Macaulay on Luxembourg and William of Orange—take their parts and we feel that we perceive and comprehend them.

Woven in with the masculine fabric of the era is that remarkable thread of the influence of women at court, Marie de Medicis, Mme. de Montepan, Mme. de Maintenon, and all the rest of that glittering feminine galaxy are introduced, given their parts and bowed off the stage. Their influence was a factor often decisive in matters of state, and especially in the development and routine of court life. Without them Versailles would have been a place of hollow glory. They aided Louis XIV in the spending of huge bags of gold, and right here we catch the faint, suppressed cry of the suffering poor of France who did not play, as Boulenger says in speaking of the riot of royal play and happiness: "The common folk were the only people who did not play; they paid instead, as usual." In all this inequality and blindness to realities lay the seeds of 1793.

This volume ends with a critical estimate of the men of the seventeenth century who had so great a part in the creation of a distinctively French literature, Moliere, La Fontaine, Racine, Bossuet, Fenelon.

We have not seen the other volumes in this series, The National History of France, but if this one is a type of the excellence of its brethren, then we have at last a complete story of France written in accordance with the demands of the twentieth century student of the development of civilization.

A Wordsworth Anthology Alfred A. Knopf announces the publication of Wordsworth: An Anthology. The volume, arranged with a preface by T. J. Golden-Sanderson, is an exceptionally beautiful piece of book-making. The edition for the United States is limited to 250 copies.

Woman Triumphant

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Civil War Letters

Naval Problems of the Union Revealed in Fox's Correspondence with Farragut and Du Pont

THE Naval History Society has added a ninth volume to its already important list of works on American marine records. In the Confidential Correspondence of Gustavus V. Fox, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, 1861-'65, Vol. I, edited by Robert M. Thompson and Richard Wainwright, there is a storehouse of valuable data, much of it an inside story of naval matters during the opening years of the Civil War. No library on the dramatic struggle between the North and the South will be complete in actually necessary volumes without this book. We look forward to the appearance of Volume II, which will carry on the series of letters to 1865 and the close of the war.

These letters are human documents, reflecting the lights and shadows of the Civil War, as seen on the sea, and revealing the minds and hearts of loyal, plain-spoken men. Fox must have been a singularly wholesome fellow, a man to trust and to serve faithfully. His letters to his wife, in this book, are rich in solicitude and tender regard. But it is in his correspondence with Du Pont and Farragut that we find the give and take of men worried by departmental restrictions and searching for marine methods that would help to crush the Confederacy. Especially illuminating are Fox's letters that tell of his abortive effort to relieve Sumter in April, 1861, and his correspondence with Du Pont relative to ordnance and ships, and the planning and handling of coastal operations. Du Pont was an outspoken old chap and didn't hesitate to say a thing or two when urged by the stress of events. Letters usually make dry reading. Those in this volume are as interesting, as full of color, as the old ocean itself.

Published by THE CENTURY CO., New York City

New York and Her Harbor

Surveyor Rush Describes Growth of Port and Suggests Possible Improvements

THE growth of New York as a port of exit and entry in trade gives a theme of engrossing interest, not only for the man busied in commercial life, but even for him who loves a fascinating story of civic progress. Thomas E. Rush, Surveyor of the Port of New York, in his The Port of New York (Doubleday, Page), gives what may well be called a complete record of the development of the city's magnificent waterway and waterfront from the far-off days of few ships and few docks down to this twentieth century era of huge undertakings conducted by rail and by ships at sea.

Very properly, The Port of New York begins with a brief but adequate account of the days of discovery, of Verrazano, Gomez and Hudson, and leads us on, still visioning the mighty future ahead, through the days of the development of the city's magnificent waterway and waterfront from the far-off days of few ships and few docks down to this twentieth century era of huge undertakings conducted by rail and by ships at sea.

But it is in the pages that enable us to contemplate the present New York, her possibilities and her foolish retarding through neglect by commercial and political factors in government, that we find the real value of Surveyor Rush's book. It is plain that the immediate future must see a scrapping of old methods and a quick making use of means that will enable New York to meet the demands of a huge and ever-growing trade. There are thirty-six suggestions as to improvements in the chapter on "Port Improvements Still Needed." How obvious the value of having the Long Island Sound boats land their cargoes and passengers on the East River, saving sixty miles of travel a day and over 18,000 miles a year! How important that the Jersey cities adjacent to New York go on developing their meadows into regular ports, that the whole general port area may be better equipped to cope with the demands of a vast trade to come! And how sensi-

ble the idea of a vehicular tunnel under the Hudson River! Every loyal New Yorker, in fact every proud American, should read The Port of New York if he desires to keep abreast of the tide of national trade now setting in with broader sweep and deeper current. This book, so rich in history, in comment on present needs and in prediction of coming greatness, will answer many a question and enlarge one's vision of a great city's commercial primacy.

Doran Gets Educational Review Beginning with the September issue, 1920, Educational Review passes formally into the hands of George H. Doran Company, publishers, under the editorial supervision of Dr. Frank Pierrepont Graves, Dean of the School of Education in the University of Pennsylvania. The September issue contains four articles which will cause a stir in educational circles and give evidence of the progressive attitude of the new editor and the publishers. They are "Unification From the Standpoint of a University Teacher," W. C. Curtis, University of Missouri; "Teachers and Trade Unions," Arthur G. Lovejoy, Johns Hopkins; "The Organization of Teachers," James E. Russell, Teachers College, Columbia; "The American Federation of Teachers," Charles B. Stillman, president of the American Federation of Teachers.

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