

THEORIES ABOUT WAR—ENGLAND'S GREAT DEMOCRAT—JEWISH PROBLEMS

BERTRAND RUSSELL'S PLAN TO CURE WORLD ILLS

Human Instincts and Passions Must Be Changed Before the Ideal State Can Be Formed.

War as a Symptom

I WAS wondering whether the time would ever come when men would not be willing to fight in defense of those things they prized, when the doorbell rang. In a moment Doctor McFabre and his wife were shown in, and I put down the book I had been reading. It was bound in blood-red and had its title, "Why Men Fight," printed in large black letters on the cover. Mrs. McFabre's eye caught it before she was seated.

"Another horrid book in defense of war," she exclaimed. "When will they



BERTRAND RUSSELL

stop trying to make us believe that it is a fine thing for men to kill one another?" She picked up the volume and noted the name of the author.

"Bertrand Russell," she read. "I suppose they call him 'Bertie.' Think of a man with such a name telling us we ought to fight."

"Do you know who 'Bertie' is?" I asked. "No, I never heard of him."

"You might be interested in finding out," and I handed her a copy of the English "Who's Who."

While she was looking for his name Doctor McFabre, who found time from his pastoral duties to read the current news, remarked:

"I understand Russell was to come over here as a lecturer in Harvard. Do you know whether he has arrived?"

"The English authorities refused to give him his passports after he had been removed from his lectureship in Trinity College, Cambridge, for preaching pacifism and opposition to the war. I suppose he is still in England, keeping a discreet silence. You know that he smuggled out of the country a plea to President Wilson

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the butler that they are expected. The butler admits them. They are received in the spirit in which they enter, and the young man is astounded when Pierrette takes her seat beside him at the table, and still more perplexed when his own sister, for whom he had been searching for days, takes her place beside Robin Hood. There are two love stories running through the tale and the explanation of all the complications comes at the end, simply and suddenly, so that one lays down the book with a sense of satisfaction. No one who wishes to be charmed out of himself or herself for an hour or so should neglect to read the story.

"Why, he'll be an earl some day!" exclaimed Mrs. McFabre, looking up from the book, "and he married Alya Smith, of Philadelphia, in 1894. I have heard of her and of her father, Pearsall Smith. He went to London to live years ago. Mr. Russell's grandfather was Lord John Russell, who was Prime Minister and he has written a lot of stupid books. Here's one, 'Foundations of Geometry,' and another, 'Principles of Mathematics,' and some more about philosophy. I don't see how a man interested in such things can defend war."

"But he doesn't," remarked her husband. "He's opposed to the use of force."

"Then I think I'd like him. I'll take back what I said about 'Bertie.'"

"I don't think you would like him," I remarked. "He thinks that the customs of society and its moral standards should be so changed that no disgrace would attach to an unmarried woman with a child. Indeed, he thinks that society ought to be so reorganized that this might happen."

"The beast!" was her only comment.

"The title of his book does not do it full justice," I continued. "Mr. Russell believes that society is out of joint; that it needs reorganizing from top to bottom on a different plan; that our system of education, our marriage customs, our method of holding property and our religion are in as bad state as our method of conducting our governments. War, he says, is the product of instinct and passion and that reason, as it is preached by traditional moralists, is too negative, too little living, to make a good life. It is not by reason alone," he says, "that wars can be prevented, but by a positive life of impulses and passions antagonistic to those that lead to war. It is the life of impulse that needs to be changed, not only the life of conscious thought."

"He apparently looks for something like that which we theologians call a new birth," remarked Doctor McFabre.

"Yes, something like that. But I am not surprised that the English silenced him. He is like a man who should rush up to a surgeon trying to save the life of a police officer bleeding from a severed artery and force him to listen to a discussion of the theory of the circulation of the blood. Such a discussion is proper enough under other circumstances, but theory has to wait on the immediate practical task.

Russell in this book says that nothing that England or France or Germany can win is worth the cost of the war in money and blood. Why not let Germany have what it wants? he asks, and live in peace. If Napoleon had been permitted to dominate Europe the world would have been better off, and he suggests that a Pax Germanica brought about by the consent of the other nations would be better than any other outcome of the struggle. Let England give Germany some of her colonies and let Germany exercise military control over the whole world, while the non-German States were permitted a certain autonomy in their private and local affairs."

"He evidently does not understand the age in which he lives and has little comprehension of human nature," said the doctor.

"Well, what would you expect from a man who had devoted himself to writing books on mathematics, which have no more relation to life than theology has to religion? And philosophy? The student of philosophy deals in abstractions and spins fine threads out of his brain which he weaves into a fabric of gossamer too thin to protect a man from the chill winds of everyday life."

"What is the use of such a book as 'Why Men Fight?'" Mrs. McFabre asked.

"It makes men think. Russell repeats the old platitude which has survived because it is true, that there is nothing so vital as thought. Plant an idea in the world and it will come to fruition. It may take centuries, but the result is certain. He has been planting seed. Whether its fruitage will be weeds or good grain no one can tell. His is but one of many voices which have been expressing discontent with existing conditions. Discontent is healthy. It is a sign of life and a harbinger of progress. When we are discontented enough with settling international disputes by war, then comes the peace of God will come. It has not yet come because the way to it passes all human understanding."

"Doctor, would you like to read the book?"

"I would, indeed."

"It is well worth reading, whether you agree with Russell or not, for he is a sincere man, honestly seeking after the truth and willing to be a martyr to his conception of it."

GEORGE W. DOUGLAS.

WHY MEN FIGHT. A method of abolishing the international duel. By Bertrand Russell. As a Fellow of the Royal Society. Lecturer at Trinity College, Cambridge. New York: The Century Company. \$1.50.

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THE JEWISH RACE PROBLEM IS COMPLICATED BY RELIGIOUS ISSUES

Sydney Nyburg Has Written a Searching Study of the Conflict Between the Rich Reformed and the Poor Orthodox Sons of Abraham

THREE per cent of the population of America is Jewish. The 3,000,000 descendants of Abraham here are about equal in number to the population of the United States when the Constitution was adopted. Next to Russia, this is the strongest center of Judaism in the world. Russia has 6,000,000 Jews. There are 1,700,000 in Poland, 1,200,000 in Austria, 300,000 in Hungary, 600,000 in Germany, 230,000 in the United Kingdom and 100,000 in France. There are as many Jews in Philadelphia as in London, and there are more in New York than in any other city.

The prejudice of the Christian races, continuing over a period of centuries, has forced the Jews into a most peculiar position. They live among us, but they are not of us. They have their own social life and their own practices, in the business world the men and women come into contact with the rest of us, but they are unknown in the social world. And this is so in spite of all our pretensions of democracy and social equality. Yet, when we think of the race problem in America, it never occurs to us that the Jews present such a problem or that the Jews themselves have any problems the solution of which perplexes their best thinkers.

One cannot read "The Chosen People," Sydney L. Nyburg's new novel, without getting the impression that the author has not yet confronted America and without coming to a better understanding of the race which gave to us our religion. Mr. Nyburg is a Baltimore lawyer, who published his first book, "The Final Verdict," in 1915, when he was thirty-four years old. It was followed by "The Conquest" last year. His work has exhibited him as a serious-minded man, not content with the mere telling of a story. "The Chosen People" is a searching study of the conflict between the orthodox and the reformers, of sympathy between the Jews of German descent, who have acquired wealth and assumed social position within their own community, and the Russian Jews, who have fled from persecution to find liberty in America. The German Jew is the employer and the Russian Jew is the employee. The "have nots" among the Jews are as bitter against those who have as among any other race. And the orthodox Russian Jews feel the same hostility to the reformed Jews that the conservative Protestant Jews feel toward a few years ago toward such liberals as the late Doctor Briggs, of the Union Theological Seminary.

Mr. Nyburg has made his tale revolve around the attempt of a young liberal-minded rabbi in Baltimore to arouse the rich and comfortable German Jews of his congregation to a realization of the meaning of their faith and to bring about a feeling of sympathy and co-operation between the employer and the employee, in a common obligation of loyalty to a common social and religious heritage. The book will be enlightening to Jew and Gentile alike, for it reveals the Jews to themselves and compels the thinking Gentiles to consider issues which most of them have ignored. Running through the narrative is an interesting love story with some unusual complications, but this is embroidery on the solid fabric of a serious economic and sociological study. The book is likely

to have a large sale in Baltimore because of its discussion of local conditions, and because of its popular merit it ought to be in demand in every city where there is an considerable number of Jews.

As the book is produced however, there is a considerable amount of material which is not particularly good. Mr. Nyburg's style lacks ease and flexibility. It is as hard as an amateur dry point etching, and is more suitable for a legal document than for a work of fiction. Although style can be cultivated, it is fundamentally a matter of temperament. If Mr. Nyburg's manner represents his temperament he would do well to make a determined effort to soften it somewhat before he writes another book.

W. D.

THE CHOSEN PEOPLE. By Sydney L. Nyburg, author of "The Conquest." \$1.40. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company.



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