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HOW IT SEEMS IN WASHINGTON

"Behind the Mirrors," a Brilliant Discussion of American Problems

IT WOULD be extremely difficult for the man who had the wit to do it to refrain from writing a notice of the anonymous "Behind the Mirrors" (G. P. Putnam's Sons) in the manner of the book itself. That manner is mercilessly cynical. Nothing is sacred. The weaknesses and follies of public men are exposed and reputations are sacrificed for the sake of making an epigram. At the same time all bark and pretense are bunched up and held up to ridicule. No man can write in this way without making himself vulnerable. He sacrifices poise and judicial temper on the altar of sensation and, heading the procession, he swings a thrashing, exciting foil edgers rather than savory incense.

Far be it from me to attempt to write a notice of the book in its own manner. I shall content myself with trying to relate to it in my own way. My first reaction to it as a journalistic reviewer was a feeling of pride that there is in Washington a newspaper correspondent who could produce such a work. It is admitted that it was written by a Washington correspondent.

The book is one of the most brilliant pieces of writing on political and social America that has appeared within my memory. There is no other word to describe it, for the book scintillates and condescends and for the first four chapters at least it is written with a crisp and a sweep that carry the reader along like a ship on the current of the Niagara rapids.

THESE five chapters are devoted to a discussion of the development of government in America. They are the result of intelligent observation and profound study not only of American institutions, but of the institutions of the rest of the world. No scholar could have written them. They could have been produced by no dry-as-dust digger into the records. The man who wrote them has used his thinking apparatus to good purpose in assembling his facts and he has acquired the power of expressing himself in a way to challenge attention.

He starts by commenting on President Harding, and then he goes on to Washington, when instead of urging that Congress establish daylight-saving time he urges that the people get up an hour earlier and thus allow "God's time" to remain undisturbed. Then he says: "I cannot better describe his political consciousness, the means of the political consciousness of the typical American, than by saying that it consisted three governments—the government of the clock, the government of the clock winders and the government of those who lived by the clock as religiously minded by the government by the clock he means the government of Progress; that is, government which follows the natural and orderly evolution of society governed by the clock winders is government by business, and the third government which follows the lead of the clock winders is the government in Washington.

He discusses these three forms of government in their order. The first century was government by Progress with a capital P. Every one had faith in the writing out of the democratic experiment here. All that was necessary was to let it alone and everything would come out all right. The interference of man was hardly necessary. But the great war broke out and destroyed the illusion that things would adjust themselves happily for the benefit of the human race. The author remarks that "all the fanatics watching for the indication that the engine to meet the needs of civilization had been granted; but it never was." He continues: "I do not write this to suggest that men, especially American men, have ceased to believe in progress. They would be fools if they had. I write to suggest that they have ceased to believe."

BLESSED (!) PEACEMAKERS IN TARBELL ANALYSIS He M. Tarbell has turned out a keen and readable book in "Peacemakers: Blessed and Obedient" (Macmillan & Co.). Its value is as a piece of high-class journalism—editorial reporting it might be called. The scope, intent and mood of it are expressed in the subtitle, "Observations, Reflections and Interpretations at an International Conference."

Mr. Tarbell is one of the foremost of American writers and journalists. Involved through the vicissitudes of his speech, she was studying the personages at first hand, and now in a series of coordinated sketches records the personal impressions made upon her acute faculty of observation, and her reactions to diplomats making diplomacy in the act.

NEW BOOKS Fiction MY ALASKAN IDYLL, by H. M. Munroe. A romance of fact that has been withstanding the test of time. A. F. Knopf & Co. A. F. Knopf & Co. A. F. Knopf & Co.



CHARLES E. RUSSELL Who has written a book about the Philippines

U. S. IN THE PHILIPPINES

Chas. Edward Russell's "The Outlook" Unconsciously Supports General Wood If General Wood failed to cable a word of thanks to Charles Edward Russell on the appearance of the latter's latest book, "The Outlook for the Philippines" (The Century Company), he overlooked something he should have done. For in the midst of the pro and con debating that followed the publication of the Wood-Forbes Commission's report on the question of immediate independence for the islands there has been no stronger upholder of the Wood view than Mr. Russell. And this, despite the fact that "The Outlook for the Philippines" is avowedly a plea for immediate independence.

But Mr. Russell in his argument is trapped by the fact that he is above all one of the world's best reporters. When he starts out to tell of something, be it the condition of a land or of an industry, a war or even a convention, there is little that escapes his eagle eye and his enlightening pen. And his study of the islands is another case in point. He starts out boldly with the conclusion that the Philippines deserve independence and then seeks to build up his case by a series of facts and figures that he follows naturally. He agrees with General Wood in practically all conditions of the islands. It is in the conclusion only that they differ.

THE HEAD OF THE HOUSE OF COOMBE Each, cloth, per copy \$2.00. Leather, per copy \$2.50 Publishers FREDERICK A. STOKES COMPANY New York

"A NOVEL OF CHARACTER" "A story genuinely interesting and absolutely worth while."—The New York World. "A fine piece of work. . . . A thoughtful appraisal of life and its underlying philosophy."—The New York Herald.

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MARK SULLIVAN ON THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE Mark Sullivan, who reported the Washington Conference for the New York Evening Post, has revised his daily letters and put them in a book published by Doubleday, Page & Co. under the title of "The Great Adventure at Washington."

GENTLE JULIA By BOOTH TARKINGTON A TEST VOTE of subscribers to The Outlook for the best living author gave first choice to Booth Tarkington.

The Mother of All Living By ROBERT KEABLE Author of "Simon Called Peter" the most widely discussed book of the day Julie's homeland, Africa, is the fascinating background of this powerful novel. Mr. Keable drives home his point with the same forceful presentment of fundamental emotions, the same vivid world-painting, the same utter truthfulness that distinguished his "Simon Called Peter."

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