

NEW BOOKS

CONSTITUTIONAL HISTORY OF THE FIRST BRITISH EMPIRE. By A. Berriedale Keith. Oxford University Press. pp. 443, xii. 1930.

The constitutional history of the Empire prior to 1776 has too long remained virtually a closed book to students of the present Empire. In part, this is no doubt due to our provincialism; we have been generally interested in imperial history only in so far as it has concerned our own particular corner of the Empire. In part, it has been due to the lack of a convenient text. Yet so long as we are ignorant of the first Empire, our perspective of the present is likely to be faulty. We shall, however, no longer have reasonable excuse for ignorance. Professor Keith, whose monumental works on the present imperial constitution are known throughout the Empire and beyond, has now come to our aid with the very volume needed.

The Empire began, like parliament, as "a bud put forth by the monarchy," and the imperial constitution sprang from the prerogative rather than from statute. Colonies began normally as one of two types, the chartered company, such as Virginia in 1606, modelled on the great trading companies of Elizabeth's reign, or the proprietary colony, such as Maryland, modelled largely on the County Palatine of Durham. Both types carried with them wide powers of government derived from the Crown, and both were nurseries of colonial self-government. Beginning with the first House of Burgesses established in Virginia under company rule in 1619, the representative assembly became a normal institution of government in the colonies, and therein lay the essential difference between English colonies and those of France or Spain. Not even the cancellation of charters and proprietary grants later in the century was to destroy the growth of representative institutions, though for a time it was dangerously imperilled under the Second James when the Dominion of New England was created without an Assembly. The Revolution of 1688, however, saved the situation. Seeds of political liberty were thus planted early in English America, seeds which were to bear fruit in an independent United States, and later Dominion self-government in Canada.

The imperial constitution grew more complete during the eighteenth century. Most of the colonies had been brought under royal control, and the technique of administering an Empire became more fully developed. In the colonies the Governor became the chief instrument of control, and in England the Board of Trade. Between the Governor and the Assembly there arose in colony after colony those ceaseless feuds for political power with which students of Canadian history prior to responsible government are familiar. The questions were largely the same, the control of the revenue, appointments to office, and the refusal of assent to legislation. During the period, too, there developed the practices of disallowance and reservation of colonial

legislation, the restriction of colonial legislatures to territorial limits, the rule that colonial legislation must not be repugnant to the laws of England, and the imperial control over Maritime commerce and Admiralty jurisdiction. The removal of these forms of imperial control, it is worth noting, was agreed to only at the Imperial Conference of 1930. Thus is the present Empire linked with the first.

While the primary source of the imperial constitution was the prerogative and not statute, parliament had from the first apparently no doubts as to its power to legislate for the colonies. In point of fact, however, there was little legislation on colonial affairs until the victory of parliament over Charles I. In 1649 the House of Commons laid down that "as the supreme authority of the nation" it had the right to govern the colonies as well as England. In the following year it assumed control over colonial commerce by the first of the Navigation Acts, and from then on its right to control the external trade of the colonies was apparently little questioned. Nevertheless, even after this assumption of control, parliament interfered little in internal colonial affairs, and colour was thereby lent to the contention of the colonists after 1763 that parliament was exceeding its jurisdiction when it proceeded to tax the colonies. Professor Keith, however, marshalls much evidence against the colonial claims, and answers effectively Professor McIlwain who has recently come to the aid of the colonists.

Professor Keith surveys the imperial constitution during the period of its origin in the seventeenth century, its zenith in the eighteenth, and its decline following the Seven Years' War. His treatment especially in the first two divisions is topical rather than chronological. This leads to some repetition, and may perhaps annoy the chronologically-minded historian. Yet the variety of colonial constitutions, and the complexity of the subject, probably make a chronological treatment impracticable. Professor Keith has rigorously excluded discussion of contemporary English politics, of economic policy, and of personalities. Are not these the real dynamics of the constitution? And can constitutional history be studied to the best advantage in an artificial vacuum? Yet it is perhaps unfair to criticize the book on these grounds; an author has the choice of a subject. Professor Keith has not aimed to say the last word on the subject, but merely to write a text-book to serve as an introduction to later constitutional history. In this he has succeeded admirably. The topical arrangement, an excellent index, a table of cases, a brief but well-selected bibliography, and a plenitude of footnotes to readily accessible material make this an unusually useful reference work for students of imperial history and constitutional law. Professor Keith has placed workers in these fields in his debt.

ROBERT A. MACKAY

THE STARS IN THEIR COURSES. By Sir James Jeans. The Macmillan Co. of Canada, Ltd., Toronto. 188 pages. \$2.00.

The success of Sir James Jeans's recent popular accounts of astronomy, *The Universe Around Us* and *The Mysterious Universe*, has not been surprising, in view of his outstanding original research and his

highly successful text-books in several branches of mathematical physics. *The Stars in Their Courses* is more limited in scope. It is a simple non-technical survey of the present state of astronomical knowledge, with only passing reference to the more speculative ideas as to the evolution of the universe which were so ably presented in the two earlier books. The first chapters give a short description of the features of the sky, the physical nature of the sun and the moon and the sun's family—planets, satellites and comets. A group of chapters deals with the stars—their weights and measures, their variety, and their grouping in our galaxy. A chapter on the nebulae then gives an account of these stupendous island universes, and finally a sketch is given of the great universe in which fact necessarily gives way to conjecture. The book is well illustrated with fine photographs and star maps. An appendix gives instructions for identifying the constellations and finding special stars.

The Stars in Their Courses is an amplification of a series of radio talks, skillfully written, while retaining an easy conversational style. It is meant for those with no special knowledge of science, and is rich in analogies to aid those without the gift (or opiate) of mathematics in realizing the huge magnitudes involved. The author has an almost uncanny facility for anticipating and answering the questions which arise in the reader's mind as he peruses the book. It can be recommended to all who wish a simple, readable and up-to-date account of the science of astronomy.

G. H. HENDERSON.

THE CURIOUS STORY OF DR. MARSHALL. By Joseph Whitman Bailey. The Murray Printing Company, Cambridge, Mass.

Someone has said that no book which deals, even remotely, with Napoleon can be quite without interest. That rather acute observation applies to this short biography of a remarkable character. It is unfortunate that the book idea is somewhat remotely with Dr. Marshall as well as with Napoleon. That, however, is not Mr. Bailey's fault, but his—and our—misfortune. Marshall himself and one or more of his descendants carefully destroyed a great deal of material dealing with his restless life and affairs, denying posterity much pleasure and possibly not a little profit.

Dr. Joseph Head Marshall was the ancestor of a number of distinguished Canadians. His son was the first Superintendent of Education of the province of New Brunswick. The friend and colleague of the famous Jenner, he was himself one of the early leaders in preventive medicine. Sent to the Mediterranean to fight the small-pox plague then raging, he became *persona grata* at the court of Ferdinand IV. This gave him an entrée into the feverish diplomatic life of the time, and he plunged recklessly into the torrent of plots and counter-plots that whirled about the figure of Napoleon, to emerge a decade or more later with a French title of nobility and, perhaps more surprisingly, with a whole skin. The great figures of Napoleon, Castlereagh, Wellington and Fouché, one of history's most notorious

rogues, do not appear in person, but their shadows fall across many pages, while Dr. Marshall bustles to and fro with mysterious packets of letters written in cipher, draft treaties that come to nothing, and portentous whispered warnings and advice. With the scanty materials at hand, Mr. Bailey has lifted a corner of the curtain that hides the life of a man who had the flair for living dangerously developed to a high degree. He gives us only a peep, but he does so pleasantly enough.

V. P. SEARY.

SHAKESPEARE'S PROBLEM COMEDIES. By William Witherle Lawrence. The Macmillan Company, Toronto. 1931. Pp. ix, 259. \$3.00.

To those familiar with the medieval studies of Professor W. W. Lawrence of Columbia, it will be sufficient to say that the present volume offers the same combination of scholarship and insight by which his contributions to learned journals were crystallized in *Beowulf and Epic Tradition*. The author's original intention was to write a book showing that to understand Shakespeare it was necessary to have some knowledge of the life and literature of the Middle Ages; but the advance of historical research in the last twenty-five years has caused him to limit his study to those plays which, although specially adapted to this method of approach, "have been very little so treated, and never, I think, as a group." An earlier type of criticism, still generally accepted, held that "the shift of mood in the dramatic romances, like that earlier in the tragedies and the darker comedies, was due mainly to Shakespeare's temper and view of life, resulting from personal experiences." This view, held to-day by such authorities as Sir Edmund Chambers, is represented in its essentials by the four "periods" that have been tabulated in every schoolbook since Dowden's *Shakspeare Primer*. Mr. Lawrence admits that we cannot deny it all validity, but considers that it has been greatly exaggerated. "'Personal experiences' is rather a vague term. . . . No one would deny to external events all effects on (Shakespeare's) creative powers. The question is mainly one of emphasis, and this has been wrongly placed." (p. 224). As Mr. Lawrence points out, imaginative composition does not necessarily adjust itself in tone or atmosphere to the changing moods or experiences of the artist, nor does it lend itself to an exactly classified arrangement into types and periods. "A literary artist, and still more a busy dramatist, may turn quickly from one style of writing to another. . . . and external conditions such as literary fashion and theatrical supply and demand may be more potent than personal interests and artistic preoccupations."

Literary fashions and theatrical demand are examined for the light they throw upon the so-called "bitter" and "disillusioned" comedies of the "third period", *All's Well That Ends Well*, *Measure for Measure*, and *Troilus and Cressida*; while illuminating incidental commentary is offered on portions of *Hamlet* and *Timon*

of *Athens*, and on such disconcerting portions of the "romantic" plays of the fourth period as the opening of *The Winter's Tale* and the wager in *Cymbeline*. We are reminded that the "romances" of the final period are by no means entirely sunny, and that their cynicism is an exact match for that of the plays with apparently forced and conventional happy endings, written "in the depths" and generally regarded as comedies in a merely technical sense; that whatever his personal feelings, Shakespeare was a working dramatist, and wrote comedies not to vent his spleen but to entertain his audience; that his plots were neither new nor original, but that he adopted old tales, and the conventions bound up with them for an audience to whom the types were familiar and the convention acceptable. Mr. Lawrence is convinced that the choice of "problem" plot and the "unpleasant" subjects that mark the turn of the century reflect a change not so much in the mind and experience of the dramatist as in the taste of his audience. Moreover, as is shown from a convincing but not pedantic examination of sources and analogues, what seems to us a perverted choice of subject and a perverted notion of comedy represented to a contemporary audience merely the natural presentation of a natural story. The title *All's Well That Ends Well* is not a cynical commentary on the outcome of the plot, but a plain statement of fact. Helena would be accepted, not as a prostitute who gains marriage by a trick, but as a heroine who weds her hero by lawful means. "The conventions of popular story which were accepted as current in the days of Elizabeth and James seem to us to-day only absurd and impossible. . . . It was just because love *could* 'give bills of exchange', because the fulfilment of difficult conditions *could* bring forgiveness and love and happiness in the world of story-telling, that all the characters in the play accept the situation, and that Shakespeare could put it without hesitation upon the stage." (p. 73).

The various conventions cannot be examined in detail. Suffice it to indicate the treatment of one of the most baffling "problems"—the wager in *Cymbeline*, which is shown to be based on a convention of chivalry, acceptable to an Elizabethan audience, that "the perfect hero was properly morbidly sensitive about the spotless purity and honour of his wife," that he was bound to accept a challenge to prove her chastity, and justified in putting her to death if she were proved unfaithful. Posthumus was not the cad that he seems to us, and is to be taken as sincerely portrayed. Mr. Lawrence warns his readers not to detect irony too readily, nor to read too much cynicism or moralising into Shakespeare's plays. As he almost too generously admits, much of what he says has been said before, and his purpose is to remind rather than to inform. At the same time, there is much in the book that is genuinely original, either as scholarship or as criticism, and its synthesis of old and new material to enlighten a dark corner of the Shakespeare canon makes the work as a whole essential both to the scholar and to the serious general reader.

C. L. BENNET.

LINGUISTIC SCIENCE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. By Holger Pedersen. University of Copenhagen. Authorized Translation from the Danish. By John Webster Spargo, Northwestern University. Cambridge, Harvard University Press. 1931.

This book will satisfy a want for a few people, but its most important result should be to create a want in many more. For it is true, as the translator says, that "The average cultivated person of to-day can be expected to know less than nothing of linguistics." We are all familiar with language as an instrument to be abused; few, perhaps, understand that it is the greatest of human institutions, without which humanity is as the beasts of the field.

In the Introduction the author gives a very brief resumé of the attempts toward linguistic science made during pagan antiquity and during the earlier centuries of our era. Modern linguistics, as a serious study, was made possible by the discovery of Sanskrit in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Bopp is perhaps the greatest among the founders; and his dates are 1791-1867. This does not mean that the work of earlier generations was fruitless. "In spite of its very different appearance, the linguistic science of the nineteenth century carries on logically from the earlier development: the butterfly bursts forth from its cocoon as the result of the growth it has experienced within its winter shelter."

Besides the Introduction, this volume contains eight sections: I, The ancient literary languages of India and Iran become known; II, The great linguistic groups of Modern Europe, Germanic, Slavonic, Celtic; III, Lithuanian, Albanian, Armenian; IV, The continued study of the Classical Languages; V, The study of the Non-Indo-European families of languages; VI, Inscriptions and archaeological discoveries, the study of the history of writing; VII, The methods of comparative linguistics; VIII, Linguistic affinities of the Indo-Europeans, home, and civilization.

Throughout the work, the distinction between philology and linguistics is never forgotten, but their relation is also remembered. Philology is "a study whose task is the interpretation of the literary monuments in which the spiritual life of a given period has found expression," and yet "Philology and pure linguistics are inseparable. The general rule is that no philologist escapes labour in linguistic science, and no student of pure linguistics can dispense with philological studies." And the translator points out that all important advances in the field during the last century and a quarter have been made by scholars who attacked their problem from the side of phonetics. The classicist, too, finds kindly reference. Classical Philology "has continued throughout the nineteenth century to show youthful energy and the ability to progress." "Work on the sources has been systematized, and method in all its branches has been firmer than ever before." Brugmann and Curtius are presented in such a way that Brugmann does not carry off all the honours; and the story of the work of Ascoli and Thomsen and Verner and DeSaussure and Brugmann himself is a very triumphal procession.

The reader who has worked through the book will probably find the eighth section the most interesting. The Indo-Europeans knew bears and birch trees and snow, and had pretty well defined family relationships. Indo-European is, of course, a purely linguistic conception. But somebody spoke whatever it was, and there is enough evidence to make interesting speculation as to where they lived and what their customs were. Etruscan is properly ruled out of the Indo-European family. We are told that Hermann Moller in his "Semitisch and Indogermanisch" has made a splendid and successful attempt to "discover the laws controlling the relationship between Indo-European and Semitic consonants," a statement that seems to one reviewer totally ignorant of Semitics to savour of optimism. But the reader must study these details for himself.

A fuller discussion of Hittite, in the light of recent investigations and theories, would have been welcome; and it seems odd that the name of Wundt does not appear in the index, and apparently not in the book. His great contribution to the psychology of speech has surely some bearing on linguistics. But Wundt may have been overlooked, and the discussion of Hittite and its problems is largely very recent.

The book contains two or three convenient maps, and a great many illustrations of eminent scholars. German and Scandinavian faces are especially abundant. There are some interesting tête-a-têtes. Whitney and Wackernagel appropriately face each other; the greatest of Sanskrit grammarians since Panini can hold eternal discourse on *guna* and *vridhhi*. Brugmann and Delbruck are face to face, as they will stand for ever in the huge Comparative Grammar. Madvig and Cobet smile genially at each other, as they may have smiled when Madvig's princely courtesy paid the great Grecian that graceful compliment: "Post Cobetum, Latine loqui vereor." Curtius is alone, and bears a troubled look as at the threatening approach of the New Grammarians. But there is no picture of any scholar from this continent except Whitney; and some search has failed to find the name of any living scholar from this side except Sapir.

This lack of linguistic scholarship on this side of the water is no mere imagination of a careless or prejudiced Dane. The translator speaks of "the terror of language study so prevalent in America, a terror which would be comical if it were not so far-reaching in its effects, culturally and spiritually." Something is being done, however, and we too are susceptible though not ambitious of civilization. It will aid in that process if as many persons as possible, academic and otherwise, acquaint themselves with the matters treated in the book here under review.

E. W. NICHOLS.

LOCKE, BERKELEY, HUME. By C. R. Morris. Oxford. At the Clarendon Press. 1931. Pp. 174. \$1.75.

Much water has flowed under the philosophic bridges since the members of the English Empirical School (only one of whom was an Englishman, while another hated all Englishmen like poison) laid down

the last worn quill and sanded the ultimate blotches. But *esse est percipi* has turned the downright Dr. Johnsons of succeeding generations to blasphemy and violence, and still trips the light fantastic pose of the modern Idealist. In spite of Professor Muirhead's plea for "The Platonic Tradition in Anglo-Saxon Philosophy", we like to think that Locke, Berkeley and Hume, rather than Collier, Norris and the Cambridge Platonists, are typical of the minds of our race when we turn them to philosophy. But why, I wonder? Locke, it is true, was an Englishman, an unprofessional doctor, and a sensible, practical person, who followed an "historical, plain method" and wrote philosophy like a gentleman and a Christian. *Nec philosophia sine virtute*. But Berkeley was a warm-hearted Irish bishop, who was interested in what we should call "social service", and his ideas were very upsetting. And Hume, cautious, and known as frugal even in his native Edinburgh, had not even the virtue of the warm heart. This at least they had in common; when they wrote philosophy, they also created literature. Some bits of Hobbes stick in the mind like burrs to a woollen coat, but there are passages in Berkeley's "Dialogues" that are memorable, and in Hume we have the eighteenth century essay at its best. Professor Whitehead has said that the whole course of European philosophy consists of a "series of footnotes to Plato." Applied to the philosopher of to-day, there is more than one sense in which that is true. It was not true of Locke, Berkeley and Hume.

But if we can find pleasure in the reading of philosophers, we ought also to turn to them for instruction, and here Mr. Morris is ready to be our complete and efficient guide. He is thorough, he is competent, he is clear. He is sympathetic, and at the right places he is critical too. He has compressed an immense amount of information, exposition and evaluation into his 174 pages. Finally, he appends a useful index and a really helpful short bibliography.

F. H. PAGE.

THE CRISIS OF ENGLISH LIBERTY. Sir John A. R. Marriott.
Clarendon Press. Oxford. 1930. xiv, 472. Price \$4.50.

Students of British politics have recently been startled out of their complacency respecting British institutions by Lord Chancellor Hewart's *The New Despotism* and Mr. Ramsay Muir's *How Britain is Governed*. Both have pointed to the growing bureaucracy and the declining powers of Parliament and the Courts. Sir John Marriott now joins the fray with a quiver full of historical shafts. The constitutional questions of to-day, Sir John reminds us, are the issues of the seventeenth century in modern dress:

The final result of the prolonged conflict of the seventeenth century was to confide the key of the position to Parliament. Parliament still retains it. If, however, Parliament should neglect to use it, the battle will have to be fought afresh, under the same flag, on the same field. Our fathers fought against Princes; we have to fight against the Powers which lurk in the darkness of Whitehall and still cover themselves under the prerogative of the Crown. (p. 18)

Under these circumstances Sir John believes the seventeenth century has a message for the twentieth, and he proposes to tell again

for "the English citizen-ruler" of to-day the oft-told tale of the seventeenth century conflict.

Sir John is in familiar pastures, and writes with more than his wonted verve. Though he can scarcely be said to add to our knowledge of the period—indeed he does not pretend to do so—his vigorous and fresh treatment, his frequent analogies with later and contemporary developments, his insight into the "consequentials" as opposed to the "circumstantials" of the struggle, make his book a welcome addition to the literature on the period. It will be particularly welcome to the general reader interested in history and politics, and to the college student who finds Gardiner and Firth too ponderous. Though pointing a political moral from history for the present generation, Sir John is too sound an historian to be accused of cutting his history to suit his pattern, or of reading history backward. The whole story of the period is surveyed, including the religious issue, as well as the relations with the colonies, and with Europe, though the chapters on the last two subjects are not as satisfactory as the remainder of the book. It is to be regretted that Sir John seems quite unfamiliar with recent American scholarship on the colonies and on constitutional history in the seventeenth century. No reference, for example, is made to the works of Osgoode, McIlwain, Adams, or Andrews. Or does Sir John believe that Americans are unable to understand the mysteries of the English Constitution?

ROBERT A. MACKAY.

BUSINESS OR BANKRUPTCY. By Norman Tiptaft. Elkin, Mathews & Marrot. London, 1930.

Mr. Tiptaft's little book maintains that there is mismanagement of an estate. The estate is the British Empire in general and Great Britain in particular. The manager to blame is the Government of Great Britain—not this Government or the last one, which was just as bad, but the government machinery in general. It is evident, Mr. Tiptaft maintains, that the situation is serious in the Old Country. For one thing, there are (Aug. 1930) nearly two million men out of employment. For another thing, there is a tendency to spend money without earning it, and a consequent chance of winding up in national bankruptcy. Since the situation is rapidly becoming impossible, something must be done immediately. The two great questions are what to do, and who is to do it.

Obviously there are two ways of balancing an unsatisfactory budget, to earn more or to spend less. If somebody who would follow either or both of these policies were in charge of national finance, deficits in the budget would cease to occur. But unfortunately the people in control are politicians, and politicians cannot do such things. The crux of the matter is that electors do not like politicians who stand for higher taxes and lower government expenditures, and do like those who stand for low taxes and ample government manna. The fault does not lie with the politicians. It lies with the sovereign people who persist in looking upon political candidatures as a game to exploit,

and with the system that permits them to do it. So, Mr. Tiptaft concludes, the politicians who hold the reins of power in the matter are not the people to manage the estate properly. The management must be taken out of politics if the nation is to be taken out of the present mess. The solution is appointment of two very small, very efficient, committees, one of business men to organize the nation's business, one of bankers and accountants to regulate expenditure. Presumably they are to be ultimately responsible to the Cabinet.

Mr. Tiptaft is not quite clear on the amount of independence to be allowed these committees. Appointment by and accountability to the Cabinet would scarcely lift them out of politics. Complete irresponsibility would amount to bureaucracy. He seems to desire something mid-way, but hesitates to make precise definitions. The general argument is for the application of business principles by business men to a national business in a bad way. It is the cry of a business man who has just returned from a world-wide trip to drum up business, and the man is exceedingly disgusted. He is convinced that the solution of Britain's economic problem lies in the development of Empire markets within a ring fence tariff. Steps in that direction would be the first duty of his business committee. The book, if it is at times somewhat lacking in dignity, is certainly packed with enthusiasm and conviction. This solution may grate on the ears of firm believers in British parliamentary institutions, but it is not the voice of one crying in the wilderness. If parliament is incapable of handling economic questions, the not too distant future may see a move in the direction he advocates.

W. H. JOST.

APHORISMS. By F. H. Bradley. Oxford. At the Clarendon Press.
Price \$1.50.

This little book is apparently an act of piety, being the issue of a collection of aphorisms intended and prepared for publication by Bradley himself. That it will not appeal to a wide public, the publishers have foreseen, since they have printed only 750 copies and have distributed the type. Without doubt it will be "caviare to the general", and for most will inevitably challenge comparison with many epigrams incomparably more brilliant, e.g. those of Oscar Wilde. However, for those who know their Bradley well and have a palate that appreciates the true Bradley flavor, a perusal of these pithy sayings will be both a new joy and an awakening of the echoes of many past pleasures. I quote a couple of aphorisms at random.

"A great library to one man is a temple of immortal spirits. On another it strikes as a most melancholy charnel-house of souls."

"One was asked, 'What is Hell?' And he answered, 'It is Heaven—that has come too late.'"

Let the reader judge.

A. K. GRIFFIN

ELEMENTS OF THE LAW OF CONTRACTS. By Arthur Berriedale Keith. Oxford, Clarendon Press. 151 pages.

Prof. Arthur Berriedale Keith, Professor of Sanskrit and Lecturer on the Constitution of the British Empire at the University of Edinburgh, Editor also of Dicey's standard work on Conflict of Laws, has stooped from a great eminence of learning and distinction to write a very elementary book on the Law of Contracts. It may well be doubted whether it will add to his reputation, or whether it was worth doing at all.

When we put aside the interest which attaches to the book from the personality of its author, it may be said that it covers in clear and readable form the whole field of contract law in 134 small pages. A book of such compression necessarily dispenses largely with the discussion of decisions and illustrative instances, and involves a spurious simplicity and generality of statement calculated to create, in the reader, an illusion of certainty and knowledge. Read retrospectively as a synopsis of the standard elementary works to which it purports to be an introduction, it may be of value to the student on the eve of his examination. No opinion is hazarded as to its value for other purposes or persons.

V. C. MACDONALD.

A DEFENCE OF PHILOSOPHY. By Ralph Barton Perry. Cambridge, Harvard University Press. 56 pages.

Professor Perry does not tell us who in particular has been attacking philosophy recently. No doubt he considers this information unnecessary in the present day and generation. He indicates sufficiently that the whole climate is unsympathetic, if not exactly antagonistic; witness the uneasy hush that falls over that inner sanctum of democracy, the Pullman smoker, when anyone, on being asked what line of business he is in, rashly proclaims himself a teacher of philosophy.

It is hard to defend oneself against an atmosphere. Don Quixote tilting against windmills is a serious figure beside one who beats the general air by way of reprisal. Special gifts are needed. Our author shows us one eminently successful method of self-protection. He puts up a defensive barrage, not of poison gas, but of a peculiarly disarming and penetrating aura of humor. He does not so much assert as suggest that the philosopher is, after all, not a museum relic nor a kind of vestigial social appendix, as yet unamputated, but a genuine by-product of even modern times and contemporary human nature. He is the small boy who never grows up to the point of ceasing to ask questions, and who refuses to be put off by the hurriedly improvised wisdom of his parents and teachers, and who insists on putting his queries direct to that old sphinx, the universe itself. The universe is notoriously deaf and uncommunicative, but the philosopher refuses to be thereby discouraged, knowing that until his questions are answered, nobody can really be quite sure of anything.

This is no *Serious Call to a philosophic Life*, a flaming *Protrepticus*, such as the members of Plato's Academy used to address to the surging military and commercial throngs of their stirring times. The present, it appears, is not occasion for enthusiasm. There is no use now in shouting the gospel from the pulpit and the street-corner. The quiet of the university campus, however, must at least be kept undisturbed by the go-getters who come charging in and demanding what this or that aloof and contemplative figure is producing for his living. Professor Perry refuses to dispel these rude intruders with the magic word "research". After all, if his outer defences of humor and sanity fail, he can always employ that age-old weapon on which philosophers have impaled over-eager adversaries since the days when the Milesians used to hurl their witticisms at Thales. He can point out to the man who explains volubly why the scheme of things has no room in it for the philosopher, that he is himself philosophising. There is no escape. Philosophers there always must be. They are the small band (not who leaven the lump: that metaphor is out of fashion) who form one of the ductless glands supplying vital hormones to the body politic.

A. K. GRIFFIN.

AETERNITAS—A SPINOZISTIC STUDY. By H. F. Hallett, Oxford.
At the Clarendon Press. 1930.

Spinoza, who was neglected in his own day and for many years afterwards, has been increasingly recognized and studied in more modern times. Especially have the last few years witnessed the publication of several expositions of his philosophy. This work differs from most in that its avowed purpose is more modest. It does not profess to conduct an orderly examination of Spinoza's tenets, but merely "to discover clues to the solution of some ultimate problems that in recent times have come in the focus of philosophical attention and which can only be met on the plane of metaphysics." The clues are found, of course, in Spinoza's doctrines.

The problems discussed, as one might expect from the title of the book, are those relating to time and duration. Naturally, then, the views of Mr. Alexander, M. Bergson, and Mr. Whitehead receive particular consideration. They are duly corrected in the light of Spinoza's solution of the difficulties involved.

The method is one that ought to commend itself by the production of the very best kind to elucidation of Spinoza, even if the treatment of the subject-matter could not be accepted as final. First comes the statement of the problem, and then the solutions that have been furnished by others. These are preliminary to the account of Spinoza's appreciation of the question and his answer to it. However, Spinoza who has the reputation of being by no means an easy writer to follow, cannot be said to have been much simplified or clarified by this study of Mr. Hallett. This is due largely to an abstractness of thought that is extreme even for a philosopher, and to what seems at times a positively wilful disconnectedness and involution of style. In fact, after a page

of Mr. Hallett's English, Spinoza's Latin in the footnotes at the bottom comes as a positive relief.

Students of Spinoza, however, will be grateful to the author for this thorough, painstaking analysis of what Spinoza meant by eternity, as well as for his insistence on certain points in Spinoza's teaching that are not always given their proper emphasis, e.g. the essential eternity of human minds. For the average reader, the argument may perhaps be summarized as follows. Time is the measure of change, duration the measure of continuity; eternity as enjoyed by God (or "aeternitas" to distinguish it from indefinite duration) is something different. It is not mere timelessness, and it is not any kind of ordinary duration. Yet it is as much aloof as is timelessness from the common order of nature, and it is more real than any ordinary duration. In fact, it is reality itself. What such may be, let the reader judge.

A. K. GRIFFIN.

ENGLAND. By Wilhelm Dibelius. Translated from the German by Mary Agnes Hamilton, M.P. With an Introduction by A. D. Lindsay. Harper Brothers, New York and London.

This is a book which recalls Voltaire's *Lettres sur les anglais*, Arthur Young's *Travels in France*, Emerson's *English Traits*, and other writings in which a foreigner has given the natives of a country his frank avowal of the way they impressed him. Herr Dibelius, who has died since his *England* appeared, was professor of English in the University of Berlin. The idea of writing it arose in his mind during the War, because—in his own words—he felt that his countrymen were fighting an enemy they did not know. Perhaps some Englishman, with the requisite equipment and ability, will produce a companion volume to introduce to us the Germans of whom our knowledge is no less incomplete.

Herr Dibelius has at least set a pattern which such a writer will not easily surpass. It is not to be expected that his account of the beginnings of the Great War will be read without indignation by most Englishmen, and there are numerous passages which will make a British Imperialist revert to the language of execration so familiar a few years ago. But these are not the sections that are significant, and the corresponding book by an Englishman for Englishmen on Germany would be sure to placate readers with many a patriotic paragraph equally disputable.

The author's really valuable work lies in his picture of the form and working and inner spirit of British government, British Churches and religion, British education, British social and family life, drawn for those whose ways are in many respects different. He explains to Germans such phenomena as those of parties in the House of Commons, the practice of law in England, the influence and methods of the English press, the varieties of Churches in England, Scotland and Ireland, the universities and schools, and a great deal more. It is both fascinating and instructive to see all this described by one to whom it is novel, but who has examined it with the disinterested resolve to know its inner meaning and to explain it to those who think in terms of a different system. Everywhere Herr Dibelius has

tried to see just what Germany's former "enemy" really means by the social and political and religious usages she has set up.

Of course, there are here and there amusing slips. The story of Lord Rosebery being "elected" premier (p. 193) will surprise the political scientists, and it is gratifying but not quite credible information that every Englishman knows *The Pilgrim's Progress* almost by heart (p. 396). But in general here is one of the most impressive and stimulating books that the post-war period has given us, and one of the most encouraging, because it is a genuine effort on a large scale to reveal one antagonist to another.

The translator has done her work admirably in producing a volume which gives us real English, not German transliterated.

H. L. S.

PENULTIMA. By Sir Alfred Hopkinson, K. C., LL.D. Martin Hopkinson Ltd., London.

A charming book is *Penultima*, for all those who like genuine autobiography quite apart from consideration of whether they share or do not share the moods of the autobiographer. And in Sir Alfred Hopkinson's case so many of the moods must be fully shared by all readers of good will.

The writer has passed his eightieth year, and has played more differing rôles than most men—as a lawyer, a member of parliament, a professor, and a university Vice-Chancellor. His book of reminiscences begins with the daring avowal that it will contain no scandal, and that the writer is of the mid-Victorian type, middle class and Nonconformist. That will deter many a reader at once. It is indeed a recurring note in the book that those mid-Victorian, middle-class, Nonconformists were people of far broader views and finer culture than the critics who have now the fashion of sneering at them, and this picture of the life of half a century ago will go far to support the judgment.

Sir Alfred Hopkinson knew a great many of the men who made British history in the years he describes, and there are many personal anecdotes which light up the narrative. The book has the usual divisions into Literature, Science, Religion, Education, and the rest. It is the writer's hope that some day in the distant future this volume may be picked up, "perhaps for a few pence" on a second-hand book stall, by one who desires to know how the mid-Victorians really lived, and that it may correct some of his illusions about them. That does seem quite probable. No one surely had a better opportunity of knowing that class. How completely Sir Alfred Hopkinson belonged to it is illustrated by the fact that even at this time of day he is prepared to defend the Liberal Unionist movement in which he shared in 1885. One thinks of the old saying about the Bourbons.

But at eighty years of age no man perhaps should be expected to change, and it is well for the coming historian to have this faithful picture of a mid-Victorian enduring unto the end. Sir Alfred Hopkinson's work is the best illustration of his own perfect sentence in introducing his book: "As life's sun goes down, the early years—though so far distant—seem to grow more distinct, and a new and warmer light to shine upon them."

H. L. S.