Register 2.6.23.

Psychology.

"If I were asked what is the most hopeful sign of the times to-day," writes Mr. C. W. Hayward, in "What Is Psychology," "I should unhesitatingly reply:—The awakening interest of scientific men, and especially of the people in general, in the subject of psychology." Ten or a dozen years ago the word was little more than a vaguely heard term to the average man in the street. To-day, the "awakening interest," which Mr. Hayward hails with such satisfaction, manifests itself not only in the increasing number of scientific and semi-popular treatises on the subject, but even in current fiction of the lighter (and lightest!) variety. How far the psychological studies of the latter are in accordance with either science or probability is open to question: the point is that purveyors of fiction, like producers of cinemas, are keen students of the whims of supply and demand. They waste no time on matters in which the general populace has not expressed its interest, and the mere fact that psychology (real or alleged) finds a place on the shelves of the lending libraries proves that it has at least piqued popular curiosity, and that in itself is good. It only remains, however, to ensure that curiosity shall be sanely and soundly satisfied, and Mr. Hayward comes forward with a semi-popular treatise as his quota towards the means to that desirable end ("What Is Psychology?" by Charles W. Hayward; George Allen & Unwin, Limited). Here is an author who is nothing if not versatile. He is an M.D. and a C.M. (Master of Surgery) of Edinburgh; a D.P.H., Cambridge; an M.R.C.S. and L.R.C.P., and, finally, a barrister-at-law. He has already published a treatise on diplomacy, some reflections on philosophy, some political skits, and some more serious political essays. Obviously he must know a good deal of human nature, and—as a doctor—he must also know a good deal of the practical and medical side of his subject. "Psychology is at once the most complicated science and the most important," he says. "But the production of a true psychology is the easiest—as well as the noblest—art if only the truth is recognised and followed. 'Human nature' is just what we have made it, and it can be just what we will make it." And then, for two hundred and fifty pages, this barrister-doctor-author points the way, as he sees it, to assist in the raising human nature to the highest possible standard. He believes strongly in the value of environment, and so shoulders on each one of us some responsibility for creating an environment that allows the comparatively low standard of human psychology that exists to-day. He is, moreover, depressing enough to hold that the "universal psychology of the world has been degraded by the war," and that it will take "one generation in time to regain our even pre-war standard of sanity." From the popular standpoint, the most interesting chapters are probably those dealing with auto-suggestion, and the possibilities of effecting physical cures through faith healing or Christian science. The writer believes implicitly in auto-suggestion, but gives short shrift to the two latter cults. "While I admit that they work through auto-suggestion, and that the whole of their merit is purely 'auto-suggestive,' I entirely repudiate any other claim they may make." Indeed, so strongly does he believe in auto-suggestion that he postulates that one may kill through it as well as cure, and that "B" (perfectly healthy and with no thought in his mind of illness) can be sent to bed with jaundice or a nerve crisis if a dozen or so of his friends conspire to tell him how ill he looks. In one thing Mr. Hayward will find all his readers in agreement with him, and that is in his insistence that improved hygiene is useless unless there be also improved psychology:—"Stud-farm breeding will not improve humanity so long as its psychology is so depraved that immoralities, passions, and excesses will ruin the best possible physical development." Like most enthusiasts, Mr. Hayward sometimes overstates his case, but students of psychology will find a good deal here that is both suggestive and informative.

Register 4.6.23

BRITAIN'S FINANCIAL POLICY.

A momentous appointment in the reconstructed British Cabinet has been that of Mr. Reginald McKenna to the Treasury. The choice was probably prompted by the difficult problems which await solution. Immediately after the war there was an enormous expansion of credit through the kindly offices of the banks. Unfortunately this was not followed by a corresponding flow of goods, and the banks found it necessary to curtail credit and to pursue a policy of deflation, which resulted in the bankruptcy of many firms, the restriction of orders, and serious unemployment. But while Britain deflated, Germany did not, and America halted and hesitated. Britain could claim that the value of the pound was rising in terms of the dollar, but found that she was gradually losing control of her foreign trade. Meanwhile France proceeded to pile Pelion on Ossa by adopting a policy which, however it might be justified sentimentally, was ruinous to British trade. When Mr. Baldwin and Mr. McKenna visited America recently on the subject of war debts, they plainly preached some home truths from the British viewpoint, which hurt American susceptibilities. Speaking in terms of analogy they said that the easiest way for England to secure the repayment of France's debt to her would be for England to go to war with some one in order that France might supply her with war materials! By implication this meant that if America would engage in a war, Britain could repay the debt that she now owes to her in war materials, in the same way as from 1914-1917 America ran England into debt by supplying her with necessaries for the great world struggle. All the matters thus indicated are greatly influencing national policy. The British people were not prepared to entrust the direction of affairs in the circumstances to either the Labour Party or the divided Liberals. But since the Conservatives have been in office they have suffered defeats in several by-elections, and been threatened with reverses in the House of Commons. Their foreign policy in Europe, Egypt, Iraq, India, and America has been severely handled, and the demand became general for statesmanship which would relieve the nation of an overweight of responsibilities and restore business confidence.

In finance the Conservative policy has supported deflation and credit restriction—which necessitated an attitude of patience with the Americans who were clamouring for the repayment of their debt—and the maintenance of neutrality (even if pained) towards France who, in her effort to get reparations and security, was hitting British trade severely. In foreign trade the policy was directed to the gradual winning back of markets and the adoption of a mild system of protection. At home it aimed at economy, the gradual lessening of unduly high wages, and the reduction of taxation. The existing situation is full of perplexities and trials. Britain to-day is confronted with acute unemployment, severe business stagnation, a terrifying reduction in foreign trade, and a quasi-financial bondage to Wall street, which British bankers resent. There is general dissatisfaction over the problem of the Ruhr. Evidence of all this and of the opinions of leading men as to what should be done are contained in the speeches of the Chairmen of the principal British banks. Mr. McKenna, in a recent speech to the shareholders of the London Joint City and Midland Bank, said, inter alia:—1. British trade is largely foreign. 2. Since it is falling off alarmingly, our best hope lies in a further development of our domestic trade. 3. Deflation as a policy is unsatisfactory. "If prices were to go back to a pre-war level a rate (income tax) of eight shillings in the pound would be required to meet the annual charge for debt alone, and no Chancellor could balance his Budget." 4. Deflation per medium of the conversion of Treasury bills to Treasury bonds has led to a fall in bank deposits. 5. It is obvious that every movement in trade comes from giving commercial order "for goods." Mr. Baldwin in March, 1922, said, "It is by spending that a nation lives." Mr. McKenna draws a very careful distinction between the inflation of credit and its expansion. These citations show that the opinions of Britain's leading bankers and men of business have undergone modification, and whereas they were prepared to approve a certain amount of deflation in order to get back to the gold standard they have found:—1. That it has brought unemployment. 2. That it has helped Britain to lose much export trade. 3. That though not directly connected with this, the Bonar Law policy towards France and America was depriving Britain of prestige, both politically as well as financially and therefore it has had to stop.

It is highly significant that the men chosen to lead the new Government should be Mr. Baldwin and Mr. McKenna. A nation's existence to-day among the great Powers depends on its capacity for understanding great financial problems and particularly for understanding the mysterious secret factor known as credit. It is in an understanding of the word Credit that the way out lies. Mr. Baldwin and Mr. McKenna are both bankers and students of the subject of Credit. But Mr. Baldwin is an industrialist before he is a banker, and he is not so busy as Mr. McKenna, and so he is made Prime Minister. Mr. McKenna is a banker more than anything else; also he is a busy banker. So he has been sent to the Treasury where he will not have to appear in public or make speeches, but simply finance Great Britain through one of her most troublesome crises. The changes of policy may be expected to include:—1. Credit expansion in the hope of reviving trade and curing unemployment. 2. Concentration of attention on developing British home industries, and this will probably involve a modicum of Protection. 3. Stiffening of the British attitude towards America. 4. A gradual transfer of patronge from France to former European customers, with guarantees of security to her. The French are disappointed in the new Cabinet, because it may mean the end of neutrality. Already there are reports that the British banks are lending money to British domestic industry on terms never thought of before, and in this Mr. McKenna's bank is leading the way. British finance has digested the lessons of war finance, and thus nourished, with an open mind and abundant information, the nation is moving forward, guided not by the financial teaching of 1884, but by that of 1923.

Register 6.6.23

Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Walenn returned to South Australia on Tuesday by the R.M.S. Orsova, after an absence of several months in England. While in London, Mr. Walenn's reputation as a violinist was further enhanced by a successful recital in the Aeolian Hall. He has come back to Australia, however, full of enthusiasm for the musical work that is being done here. Mr. Walenn will at once resume teaching at the Elder conservatorium.

Register 4-6-23.

AN APOSTLE OF CULTURE.

Seldom has Adelaide an opportunity of welcoming so distinguished a man of letters as Professor MacKail, who will arrive to-day. He will deliver three lectures, and gain incidentally an insight into new conditions of life, closely allied to those with which he is familiar in England, yet in some details, and even principles, vastly different. He has had a varied experience, as a high official in the education system of England, as a successful author, and as Professor of Poetry at Oxford for some years. In each respect he has followed in the footsteps of Matthew Arnold. To strain any resemblance would be idle, but it may fairly be said that each man has in his day been insistent on the value of beauty, and on its presence in ordinary things. The man who could find a strain of romance in Pope, as Professor MacKail has found it, must have an insight deep and wide; also a certain power of looking at things from an unusual and original angle—which yet does not betray him into the eccentricities of Shaw or the resolute perversities and self-contradictions of Chesterton. He like other brilliant men, revelled in the classical languages at first, and has worked on by degrees to modern writers. The translation of the Odyssey shows a painstaking spirit not common in authors nowadays, while the critical vein destined to be his chief claim to fame has shown itself in selections from the classics made by him for the benefit of men with more scanty leisure. As a critic, in fact, he has few living equals.

The pupil of Jowett, the son-in-law of Burne Jones, the biographer of William Morris, must have much to tell to a new and startlingly changed generation about the comparatively placid world of the eighteen-eighties. Curzon and Milner, and others since famous in public life, were more or less his contemporaries. Adelaide sits afar off, knowing of these men only by repute, immersed in her own public affairs, her own problems of social life, yet sharing with Britain all the glorious literature of the past. It is expected that the visitor will lecture upon Virgil, and upon Tennyson, who sang the praises of that "wielder of the stateliest measure." Those lectures will doubtless combine research with original criticism. The remaining one should give the speaker full scope for his undoubted powers. It aims at showing the place of Poetry in modern conditions, its absolute relation to the practical affairs of life. Now, Australia is a land of singers—in both senses of the word. Its vocalists are famous all over the world. Its poets are less famous; but they suit its own taste. The point to be stressed is that this horse-loving and sport-loving land has a very real fondness for its bards, and shows this by the practical step of buying what they write.

It is perhaps more nearly possible for one to live by the writing of verse alone here than in any other country. The phenomenon is bound to surprise our visitor, and to set him enquiring into its causes; from which may come further work from his pen which shall give fresh recognition to Australia as a land of unsuspected culture. That last word has unfortunately come to be spoken of with a half smile since Mr. Foster Fraser, on short acquaintance, unexpectedly fixed it as a label on Adelaide. But it has been fairly earned. The first Repertory Theatre in all Australia; the University