

primarily negative—"an appeal from authorities that had lost their sacredness," back to a supposed original state of nature, in which man had been possessed of "certain unalienable rights," which were the foundations of those acquired in society. It was, moreover, the result of essentially the same spirit as that of Protestantism. "Calvin's Geneva in due time brought forth Rousseau; and English Puritanism on American soil produced the Declaration of Independence." It is in its negative and abstract character that Mr. Ritchie condemns the theory.

The first half of the work is largely taken up with this historical sketch of the theory, and though it is but a sketch, it is a very welcome addition to the literature of the subject, giving as it does an interpretation rather than a history. What we still desire is a thorough examination of the opinions of the later scholastics and earlier modern thinkers in regard to the meaning of *nature* and *natural law*. Even the doctrines of Hobbes and his critics sorely need a more historical discussion of their significance, viewed in the light of earlier theories.

In the remainder of his work Professor Ritchie gives us a criticism of some of the particular natural rights, such as those to life, liberty, toleration, and property. If it is necessary to find fault with this portion, it is only because we feel that our author might have given us something better than criticism. It is true that his criticism conceals construction, but the impression left is distinctly negative. We feel our natural rights slipping away from us before we are quite sure of any other basis than that in nature. It is only at the last that the moral of the book is drawn, and some use made of the fruitful analysis of the varied meanings of the term *nature*. The excellence of this conclusion is what makes us regret it had not begun sooner.

Instead of the theory of natural rights based on the absolute independence of the individual, we here receive a doctrine more in harmony with the trend of modern scientific thinking. Society is considered as an organism, each part of which exists in necessary relation to the whole, whose good alone determines what rights shall be allowed to the individual—that is, utility is the basis of

rights. But utility is not interpreted in the old abstract sense of pleasure. On the contrary, pleasure is good only in so far as it is useful in the preservation and advancement of society. Mr. Ritchie admits the apparent vagueness involved in his inability to determine more definitely what is useful to society, but holds that it is inseparable from the very idea of an evolution that the end cannot be fully known from the beginning. Society itself determines what is fittest by the test of survival. Hence "an adequate theory of rights and an adequate theory of the State must rest upon a philosophy of history; and steady progress in political and social reform cannot be made unless there is a willingness to learn the lessons of experience, and a reasonable reverence for the long toil of the human spirit in that past from which we inherit not only our problems, but the hope and the means of their solution"—a principle no less valuable in philosophy than in politics.

Norman Wilde.

THE GOLDEN AGE.*

The Golden Age is, as all know, the period of childhood. In vain do the "grown ups" ask "Where is it now, the glory and the dream?" In the little volume before us—a book very attractive to the eye, as are most of the books issued by this house—the "grown ups" are nicknamed the "Olympians," and such is the title of the Prologue, which one reads with that delightful sensation—as of a mental cold-water bath—which is occasioned by dipping into a fresh and sincere bit of writing. The author is, evidently, one of those who speak in their natural voice, the ring and the music of it unextracted by any consideration as to whether the output will be "marketable"—a consideration which sucks the life-blood out of half the writing of to-day. The water-mark of spontaneity in literature, though hard to describe, is unmistakable, and it is stamped on every story in *The Golden Age*. In the Prologue the reading Olympian is forced to see himself as the children—the children of this volume at least—see him, "stiff

* The Golden Age. By Kenneth Grahame. Chicago: Stone & Kimball. \$1.25 net.

and colourless, . . . equally without vital interests and intelligent pursuits." This criticism of the Olympians is, from a youngster's point of view, logical enough, but it is not childlike. Children, fortunately, take people very much as they find them, and they are far more charitable than are the Olympians themselves.

Moreover, Kenneth Grahame makes his children declare that "these hopeless and incapable creatures, . . . these elders, our betters by a trick of chance, command no respect, but only a certain envy—of their good luck—and pity—of their inability to make use of it." Children, most children, do not feel in this way, as is evident from their conduct. With what a trust, a trust almost pathetic, do the great body of little folk regard their elders! And with what lovingkindness do they overlook such errors as their own beloved Olympians may commit! One who understood this better said, "Except ye become as little children."

Save in this hostile attitude of his young heroes and heroines, Kenneth Grahame interprets child life with striking sympathy and truth, and at this point it is only fair to quote the author himself. He opens the book by saying: "Looking back to those days of old, ere the gate shut to behind me, I can see now that to children with a proper equipment of parents these things would have worn a different aspect. But to those whose nearest were aunts and uncles, a special attitude of mind may be allowed." However, the explanation hardly explains, since the children of these stories are pictured as happy, healthy youngsters, debarred from no natural pleasures, and even treated with a degree of indulgence, considering their roguish tendencies. Yet this note of criticism and hostility is sounded throughout the volume, marring an otherwise strong and true representation of child nature.

So delightfully genuine are the sympathy and liveliness with which the exploits of these children are recorded that the reader must needs hark back to his own childhood, and then look with kindlier eyes on the pranks and freaks of those who dwell in the Golden Age. Herein lies the true value of the book: it puts the Olympian in the child's place, so that he catches once more that "vis-

ionary gleam" which has faded out of his own life. And it is well for him to be reminded that there is one light for the child and another for himself. There is no "balance of power" in the case of adults and their young charges, and an arbitrary ruler should at least seek enlightenment. *The Golden Age* is an enlightener of adult stupidity.

Several of these stories are fine studies of the workings of a child's imagination, reproducing the very glamour in which the Golden Age is bathed. The best of these are "Alarums and Excursions" and "The Finding of the Princess." "Alarums and Excursions" is a charming bit of word painting. We see the children playing at Knights of the Round Table, and following far a band of exercising cavalry, in the hope of seeing a very bloody battle. When our young hero finds the Princess, an Olympian is sitting beside her in a pavilion.

"Hello, Sprat!" he said, with some abruptness, "where did you spring from?"

"I came up the stream," I explained, politely and comprehensively, "and I was only looking for the Princess."

"Then you are a water baby," he replied. "And what do you think of the Princess, now you've found her?"

"I think she is lovely" (I said, and doubtless I was right, having never learned to flatter). "But she's wide awake, so I suppose somebody has kissed her!"

The first story, "A Holiday," is one of the best in the volume. "A boy's will is the wind's will," and the boy, lightly following the wind whithersoever it leads him, runs up against the hard fact that law and license are incompatible. In this chapter, as in several others, there is a delicate touching on the problems of life, an outreaching and a questioning, which lend a world-wide interest to the unpretentious tale of a boy's doings. In "The Secret Drawer" and "The Roman Road" we find again that suggestion of something deeper than childish adventure—a momentary, shadowy glimpse, as though a mist had lifted and quickly fallen again. "The Burglars" and "The Blue Room" are full of young laughter and roguery, while "The Whitewashed Uncle" throws out a pretty broad hint to any Olympian who would fain be popular with the little people.

"Young Adam Cupid" and "What They Talked About" show the author

so wise in the lore of child nature that the chapter "Sawdust and Sin" is simply amazing in its error. Here a conceit possible to an adult only is foisted on the mind of a child with a result which is far from pleasing. Fancy a boy of tender years interpreting the conduct of a Japanese doll (who is seated beside a glowing wax beauty) as follows :

"Carried away by his passion, he fell sideways across Rosa's lap. One arm stuck stiffly upwards, as in passionate protestation; his amorous countenance was full of entreaty. Rosa hesitated—wavered—and yielded, crushing his slight frame under the weight of her full-bodied surrender."

The writing Olympian must confess! He thought this out in his study, and while the inspiration of his insight was far from him. Children do indeed have ideas about love and love affairs, but they are so deliciously, so alarmingly innocent and quaint in their conception of such matters! There is nothing innocent about this passage.

"A Falling Out" and "Exit Tyranus" are the only stories which could send a lump to the most sensitive throat; indeed, the author seems rather to have missed his opportunities for tenderness and pathos. His chief power lies in fitting to the reader's eyes those glasses through which the little ones look out upon this world of ours—glasses made largely of imagination and innocence and ignorance, and all shot with rosy and golden lights, but sometimes dimmed by the ruthless fingers of stupid Olympians. And would any such know how the universe looks to children, he is recommended to see it through the pages of *The Golden Age*.

Virginia Yeaman Rennitz.

HALF A CENTURY IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.*

The new humour has invaded the minister's study and cuts its capers with fantastic delight and with the conceit of a jolly good fellow through the 228 pages of clerical reminiscences which sprout from the reverend gentleman's "dead leaves and living seeds." From the contents of a deal box marked "D. L.," which properly means "Deputy Lieu-

* Fifty Years; or, Dead Leaves and Living Seeds. By Rev. Harry Jones, M.A. New York: Macmillan & Co. \$1.50.

tenant," but here stands for "Dead Leaves," the Rev. Harry Jones has disinterred the "jotted memories of a busy life, though (however meaningless to others) they are naturally the record of much that has been keenly interesting to myself." "When I draw a sheet," he says, "from this papery deposit (as I did the other day), it strikes a spark into the tinder-box of recollection, which soon spreads itself, showing clusters of rekindled aspirations, experiments, mistakes, successes, and failures long past, though once they had their effect upon the worker himself, let alone those among whom (for good or ill) he was called to work." But among these "dead leaves" there be some that "retain enough unfulfilled vitality (in the shape of warning or encouragement) to deserve the name of 'living seeds.' And I ask myself whether some record of efforts made, errors committed, and impressions received during a long ministerial life might not possibly help in the steerage of two or three younger lives, and thus encourage me in its compilation. At any rate, I will try."

And the result is not without a measure of success. Many will demur at the facetious tone which a certain light humour, sometimes flippant but never irreverent, imparts to this interesting record of half a century in the far from commonplace biography of a clerical life. The lavish use of parentheses which he seems to adopt for his "asides" mars almost on every page a most excellent vehicle of style for an unwearied garrulousness which is as entertaining as is its delightful egoism. The result is ludicrous at times, often degenerating to mere smartness, and sometimes confusing, as thus: "I did not know so much of Phillips Brooks, whom I visited at Boston, and who, the last time I saw him, communicated (as did also Dr. Asa Gray), before sailing home (he refused to take any part in the service) at my church."

For the nonce, the Rev. Harry Jones throws aside the prefix with his clerical dignity and the stalking-horse of sacerdotalism and steps out in this volume as a man among men who has something interesting to say, not too wisely, not too well, but in the manner of one who has gone through a hard day's work and is now chatting amiably over the nuts and wine. And the account