

As Others See Us

American Policies, Politics, and People in the Searchlight of Foreign Criticism

AMERICAN STATESMEN IN EUROPEAN EYES

RECENTLY Mussolini had occasion to write a letter to General Cavallero who was retiring from the Ministry of War to devote himself to the manufacture of armaments. Mussolini thanked him in advance for his expected services in the latter field where 'much remains to be done; in spite of a certain Mr. Kellogg.' The *Berliner Tageblatt* (Berlin independent daily), with gentle irony, adds its tacit comment by headlining the dictator's statement. From such rapier thrusts in our direction we turn uncomfortably to the friendly gesture of the *London Observer* (Conservative weekly) which has pleasant things to say about Ambassador Houghton: 'The American Ambassador holds what is now the most important diplomatic office of its kind in any capital. Whether for our own sakes or for his, we cannot pretend to be sorry that he missed election to the Senate in the recent campaign. At this juncture in the world's business Providence evidently had another opinion of where the biggest work was to do; Mr. Houghton does not wear his heart upon his sleeve, and it is possible that his reserve has sometimes been misunderstood. But it is simply true to say that in this country the longer we know him the better we like him; and we venture to think it not improbable that he feels the corresponding idea about us. Mr. Houghton's return to his embassy is one asset.'

WHAT IS THE AMERICAN SPIRIT?

ONE would not suppose that Mexican and British opinions on the mentality of Americans would have much in common. Yet there is a curious resemblance between the following view of *El Universal* (Mexico City independent

daily): 'The infantile optimism of the Yankee is fundamentally negative; he flees rather than pursues; his optimism is fed with sensations — films of adventure with a happy ending, boxing, tragedies given a hundred columns in the press on the one hand, and the jazz orchestra with its accompanying bacchic dance on the other,' and the reaction of St. John Ervine to his American experi-

mechanical devices. He is the Great Peptoniser. Two or three years ago the secretary of a woman's club wrote to me in London. She said that the members wished to study drama during the coming winter, and would I be good enough to tell her the name of a good book on the subject? During the preceding winter they had studied music, and during the winter which preceded that one they had studied philosophy. I told her of the names of a number of books, and added that I was interested to observe that her society devoted three or four months to the study of music and philosophy. In our effete country, men devoted their lives to the study of one of these subjects! . . . Life is too easy for people here, and money, when it comes, comes too quickly and too bountifully. It may be that America is about to enter on a period of great flowering. On several occasions in *The Observer* I have stated that America seems to me to be in the same state of exuberance and fervor that England was in when Shakespeare was a boy. I have described Mr. Eugene O'Neill as the Marlowe of America, and on the whole I still believe that to be a true description, although I know of no man of genius who suffers from such grotesque lapses as Mr. O'Neill. Out of this ferment of vivid lives something superlatively great must presently emerge, and it may be that a boy is now playing in some village of America who is destined to be America's Shakespeare. The stuff is here waiting to be distilled into poetry. The young alchemist will find richness all round him.



Notenkraaker, Amsterdam

I. H. S.

A DUTCH JIBE at American armaments, titled 'In hoc signo vinces,' and reflecting Dutch opinion on the American cruiser bill.

ences and personal contacts as dramatic critic for the *New York World*. Writing in the *London Observer*, Mr. Ervine says:

On the one hand, there are the generosity and responsiveness to idealism of America, and the indubitably beautiful architecture. On the other hand, there is the mob-mood, the timid gregariousness, the fear of individuality and the terrible impatience with prolonged effort. The desire for culture is keen, but it does not cause many people to devote their lives to its pursuit. The American wants quick results. Quick, quick, quick. He does not write a letter when he can telephone — his telephone service is fine, his postal service is awful — and he is daft about telegrams. He is becoming hysterical about speed, and childlike about

THE ABSURDITY OF ANTI-EVOLUTION LAWS

EUROPE in general and England in particular have been slow to recover from amazement and grief at the American attitude toward the realities of science. The *Manchester Guardian* (British liberal weekly) shakes an admonishing finger and talks of a 'reductio ad absurdum' in American thought: —

The law which was passed to preserve the school children of Arkansas from the contamination of Darwinian biology seems likely to save them the trouble of acquiring much other useful knowledge. It is illegal in Arkansas to let any child into the secret that he is either 'descended or ascended from a lower order of animals.' An inquiring

scholar may well wonder how it could be possible for him to have descended from something lower than himself. The object of the law, however, is to prevent him from ever asking any such questions. And here is the difficulty. Knowledge, after all, is one, and it is hard to find a modern dictionary or encyclopædia which is innocent of all illegal references to evolution. The Encyclopædia Britannica, with its voluminous essays not only on biology itself but on Darwin and all the other arch-heretics who have followed him, is clearly beyond the pale of the law in Arkansas. So, too, is that standard work of reference, Webster's International Dictionary, which declares that the theory of evolution is 'based on facts abundantly disclosed by every branch of biological study.' Thus most of the reference books in schools and libraries in Arkansas must be toppled from their shelves, outlawed, banned, or possibly burnt. In the view of some of the chief opponents of the law that is the best thing to be done with them, for thus, in an extreme example, could its absurdity be best demonstrated.

THE EUROPEAN AS TOURIST IN AMERICA

BECAUSE of the formidable cost to foreigners of travel in the United States, it is rare to find travel articles devoted to American routes and facilities for sight-seeing in the European press. The *Neue Züricher Zeitung* (Swiss democratic daily) recently published a brief article on the joys of touring on this side of the Atlantic: —

'In Europe, one sees strange lands, strange peoples. In America only different aspects of one land and of one people, certain variations from the general type. One can best come to know the main type by a prolonged stay in one place, preferably Chicago; travel shows one the deviations, the Chinese in San Francisco, the Mexicans in Los Angeles, the negroes in the South. Europe shows the visitor primarily a past; America has only the present to show. It makes a ludicrous effect when America talks of the past — some 200 years. It makes a painful effect when one is shown the tiny remnant of the Indians which has not been annihilated, and when an Indian lets himself be photographed for twenty-five cents.'

The writer marvels at the efficient standardization which characterizes tours in the United States, especially in the national parks. The trip proceeds as if by magic. Baggage seems to take care of itself automatically. 'The tourist, an atom in a large mass, has no cares; his only duty is to keep watch for the times of departure.' The European traveler does not find the railroads as comfortable as they might be for long journeys, and

Arizona, and New Mexico that remind one of Africa; one learns to know, in the course of trips by automobile, the sections of Colorado that are like Switzerland, and the beautiful cities of the West; one sees everything that one cares to see, and the richness and beauty of the land keep one in a state of wonderment. And during the whole journey there is no annoyance whatever from passport officials and customs inspections.'



POOR UNCLE SAM!

'AMERICA celebrates the Hoover victory.'

complains particularly of the sleeping cars and the observation platforms, which have room only for 6 or 8 people. But he finds compensation in that 'the greatest reward of such a journey is the impression gained of the tremendous unity and diversity of the country. Everywhere one meets the same race of men, the same customs, but also a variety bestowed by nature. One travels through the industrial sections of the East, the infinite corn and wheat fields, and the cotton belt; through the parts of Nevada,

ANGLO- AMERICAN WAR?

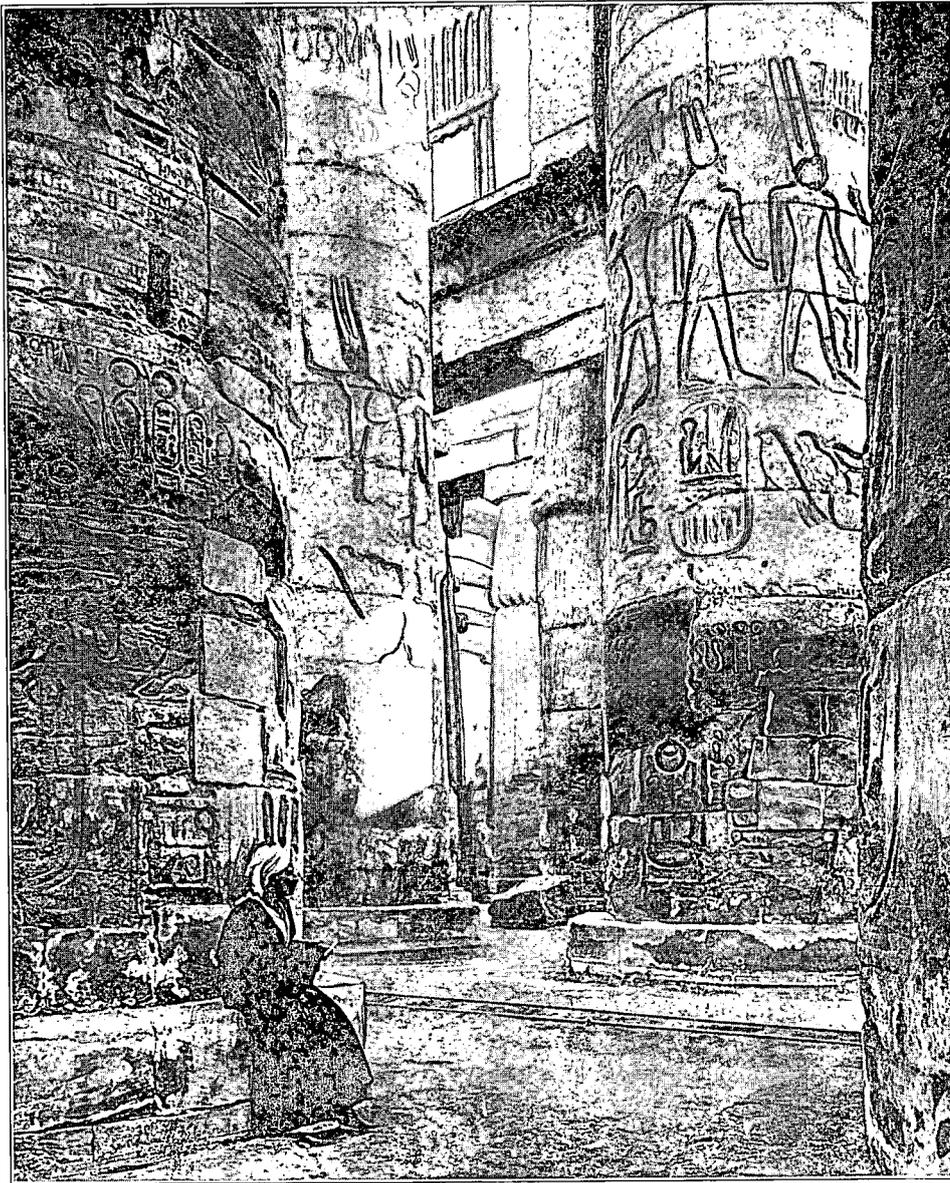
THE complacent attitude of many Americans and Englishmen toward the 'impossibility' of an Anglo-American war under any conceivable circumstances is bitingly attacked in the *National Review*, a London Tory monthly edited by J. L. Maxse.

'We should not care to go so far as to say that a great many Americans seriously contemplate war with Great Britain,' says the editorial, 'though there are far more Jingoists in the United States of America than the *Times*, for example, is aware of — they probably outnumber the Pacifists. They are a political power, and it is notorious that any politician on the make becomes extremely popular whenever he manifests against England. As we had a sufficient dose of war from 1914 to 1918 to last us for some considerable time, we obviously want, and need, Peace, which is incontestably the greatest British interest. We are more likely to get it if we recognize that not a few Americans are always

spoiling for a row with us, and are never so happy as when they are fulminating against John Bull, after the manner of Big Bill Thompson of Chicago. They don't always mean all they say. It is a habit to blackguard the British, but a dangerous one, as one fine day, in their excitement, they may manoeuvre a weak-kneed Washington Government into a position from which it would be difficult to withdraw without "trouble." We should envisage this eventuality, and do everything in reason to avoid it.'

TRAVELING INTO THE PAST

BETWEEN THE NILE
and the Euphrates
the world's oldest
monuments await the
modern traveler.



De Cou. Ewing Galloway

PILLARS OF ANTIQUITY

THE TREMENDOUS
COLUMNS of the great
hall of the temple at
Karnak, up the Nile
from Cairo.

World Travel Notes

From the Nile to the Euphrates

EGYPT'S flat Mediterranean coast prevents Alexandria from being seen until one's ship enters the great harbor. Then, in front and to the left, is the Mohammedan quarter. Shapeless, blank-walled houses whose windows give only on inner courts overhang the dirty and irregular ways. To the right of the steamer pier lies modern Alexandria, with trams, motors, traffic police. Could this have been, for a thousand years, the gorgeous capital of the Ptolemies? Did Cleopatra's needles — now of the Thames Embankment and New York's Central Park — once rise imperiously in the Place Mehemet Ali? The senior clerk in Claridge's Hotel, just up the avenue,

says yes. He is as familiar with Egyptian history as with the tricks of sly porters and touts down at the steamer landing.

All day long, except for the quiet noon hours, one may rub shoulders with Arabs, Greeks, Sudanese, Syrians, Turks. Some are musicians, some sweetmeat vendors. White-turbaned clerics go cheek by jowl with brown-skinned water carriers, beggars, lazy bazaar tenders. Another side of Egypt is conjured up by mention of pyramids, heat, the strange odor of camels, the Valley of the Kings, the far distant desert, like a limitless sandy sea.

'We never made a better investment, from whatever point of view we may look

at it.' Thus speaks an Englishman of the Suez Canal. Even so, it is not attractive to the tourist. Port Said, its Mediterranean entrance, is where one takes the train for 'the mother of the world,' Cairo.

Cairo's modern half is built on Western lines, with fine hotels and broad, clean boulevards. No hostleries are superior to the Continental, Savoy, Shephard's, the Semiramis. Cafés abound, many of them with gaming rooms. 'Scarcely any,' adds an English commentator, 'are suitable for ladies; especially does this remark apply to Cafés Concerts. Americans, however, will have their own ideas of what is what in Cairo!'

To-day, Cairo is the most renowned