

THE GATE OF KNOWLEDGE.

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock."

"The Menace of Peace," George D. Herron. (Mitchel Kennerley, 1917.)

It is said that many soldiers have lost their minds owing to the war. So have some civilians. But we do not think that George D. Herron is in either group. He raves in a most blasphemous manner about Christ, and he looks every night under his bed for a Jesuit.

The world is indeed hysterical when such delirious cat-calls find a publisher.

Not content with destroying the German body, he must destroy the "German mind," another phantom like his "wicked Pope Benedict" bribed by German gold, like (I suppose) the Earthquake of San Francisco. Probably the Flood was started by the Germans to try out their U-boats. Such alleged partisans of the Allies are their gravest enemies.

A book of roaring blasphemy like this is just the argument that the enemy most needs.

Lord, save us from our friends!

A. QUILLER, JR.

The Unveiling: a poetic drama in five acts, by Jackson Boyd; G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1915.

Only last month an old and valued friend of mine reviewed the works of Mr. Robert Frost for Pearson's Magazine. I chanced to call upon him in his sumptuous yet chaste atelier. I found him prone, the prey of a proud melancholy. "Speak, speak!" I cried impetuously. "I am surpassing glad and sad," quoth he, "for lo! I have attained my apex, my apogee, my

meridian, my asymptote, my climax. I have made the great discovery of my life; now I must pass into the sere and gamboge, a wailing derelict. Yes, my poor brother, Othello's occupation gone. Never can I pierce further than I have done into the hells of bad verse; never shall I find an intellect more imbecile, a style more wooden, than that of Robert Frost!"

At that precise moment a clarion peal upon the bell broke in upon my gloomy meditations. Two powdered lackeys ushered in the visitor. It was a special messenger from G. P. Putnam's Sons, his hair flying loose, his garments dusty and disordered with his haste. Yet apparently he had been two years on the way, for he brought a volume published all that time ago.

The volume fell from my friend's nerveless hand. "Open it!" he sobbed pitifully. I performed the rash act amid loud applause from all present. It was indeed "The Unveiling." "Be of good cheer," I shouted, as I scanned the pages, "whaur's your Robbie Frost noo?" My friend has completely recovered his health and good spirits; but I am perfectly certain that Pearson's, in holy awe and godly fear of the Society for the Suppression of the English Language, will never allow him to print what he thinks of this book. "Worse than Frost!" he keeps on repeating to himself, in a kind of ecstatic coma. (No further bulletins will be issued.)

A. QUILLER, JR.

AN OPEN LETTER TO GENERAL WHITE.

Sir: In reply to your invitation I presented myself at 280 Broadway on the morning appointed by you.

After a brief pause for embarrassment, a young and very charming officer addressed me and my fellow-loyalists as follows:

"Haw. Haw. Awfly sorry, you chaps, dontyerknow, but the fact is we aren't ready. We put it in the newspapers, of course, but some rotten blighter's let us down. No rooms to undress in, haw, haw; no forms, no stationery, what."

My name and address was then taken, to save trouble; I was to be summoned when they did get ready.

I did not get this summons; so I went down again in a week or so. This time I was examined by a "doctor," one of the funniest men I ever saw. Without making the necessary tests—I happen to be a doctor myself—he pronounced a diagnosis which had the merit of being totally at variance with that of the best opinion of Harley Street. He then promised to mail a certificate of exemption, which I have not yet received.

Yesterday I told my troubles to an American. He said: "You are lucky to get off so easily. How many of your friends are lying dead at Gallipoli, in Mesopotamia, on the Somme, and so on, just because of the mutton-headed incompetence of these gold-braided dummies? It's all of a piece."

I stopped him there with a short hook to the jaw.

Was I right? And what should I do now?

I have the honor to be, Sir, in undying loyalty to the Empire, your most humble and obedient servant.

BRITON.

P. S.—I cannot but think it an error to employ the insulting neologism "Britisher" in addressing Britons.

It is bad logopoeisis to try to construct a noun from an adjective by adding "er." You can make a word like "mucker" from "muck," to mean "one who mucks things"; "stinker" from "stink," to mean one who makes a stink"; for "er" added to a noun or a verb gives the idea of agency. But "er" tacked on to an adjective gives the idea of increase; it is the sign of the comparative; as "stupider" from "stupid."

Briton is a noble word, a word consecrated to us by the use of generations, as by the genius of Dibdin. Britisher is no word at all; it is simply a term of abuse and contempt invented by the American sea-captains when they felt that way. To use it to us as a term of endearment is just one more instance of the muddle that is risking the loss of the war.

I almost think that it has been a mistake to distrust the few men of brains that we possess. Sir Richard Burton got into trouble for furnishing his superiors with full and accurate information of the Indian Mutiny two years before the outbreak at Meerut; Consul Litton was banished to Teng-Yueh because he offered to give the Ambassador complete details of the Boxer organizations while they were still incognito; Sir William Butler lost his reputation because he predicted the Boer War; Sir Bampfylde Fuller was dismissed because he told the truth about India. Why do you so hate and fear intelligence when we who happen to possess it are willing to offer it single-heartedly to our country?