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THE GATE OF KNOWLEDGE.

(Continued from page 285.)

I have attempted to show that instead of healing the wound, Organized Charity is filling the ulcers with the pus of other wounds. Through spying, lying and deceiving they have risen to dangerous power, so that they now command an army of millions. One is a subject of Organized Charity whether he gives or receives alms.

From their patrons, wholesale dealers in potatoes and munitions fattening on the sustaining and taking of life with equal hypocrisy and patriotism, Organized Charity emulates the old wholesale dealing in human flesh and tears of the slave days. More than two million people in the United States are in the clutches of Organized Charity. Its aggregate income is more than two hundred million dollars a year, and its property one billion dollars. It is the greatest power of evil on earth.

I have attempted to show how the poor are herded and labeled and libelled and insulted, how their private life is destroyed and besmirched. Organized Charity considers poverty a crime and riches a virtue. It acts on this principle; the poor are criminals. The alms are administered as punishment. Absolute destitution is considered a crime deserving the severest punishment.

I have suggested no remedy, beyond the personal giving of alms as of old, because I know that any remedy would immediately be institutionalized, for the sake of efficiency, on the unchristian theory of the "deserving poor."

To those whose peaceful slumber I have disturbed and who cry "how impossibly horrible!" I say again, "Can you keep your head high when you see the single file of a bread line? Can you imagine anything more brutal than to compel men to bare their souls to shame that the body may live—a little longer?" From those ranks, murderers, prostitutes, and strike breakers are recruited. It symbolizes the methods of Organized Charity. Watch now the intrigues of the diverse war charities as to who shall obtain the fattest bone!

Charity is now fast becoming an International Power; and if I have not compared it to the Camorra, the Mafia, and the Black Hand, it is because I feared to do those institutions an injustice.

KONRAD BERCOVICI.

"*Spirit Intercourse, Its Theory and Practice*," by J. Hewat McKenzie. (Mitchell Kennerley, 1917.)

I have never read such nauseating twaddle as this book. The author is so ignorant, so impudently ignorant, that he even claims ordinary vaudeville performances as operated by spiritual means! There is also a great deal of disgusting nonsense about the frightful things that happen to you after death if you lead a normal healthy life on earth.

A. QUILLER, JR.

"*The Hand Invisible*." Edited by E. B. Harriett. (International Historical Society, Inc., New York, 1917.)

This is a very interesting book. No great pains have been taken to insist

upon the nature of the means by which it was obtained. The book therefore stands or falls by its own merit; and in this case the merit is considerable. It is true that there is not any particularly new truth; but there is much which cannot fail to help and encourage a great many people in this country. At times the thought is decidedly epigrammatic: "Painted fun knows no mirth."

There is much quiet wisdom, too, one may say, on almost every page. It is not a book which will be of any use to those who are spiritually advanced in the technical sense; but its influence upon the average reader can but be helpful.

MILES.

"*Kelly of the Foreign Legion*." (Mitchell Kennerley, 1917.)

Most writers of war stories have been sophisticated persons who thought that they had better put in some fine writing and some profound philosophical thoughts. Among these, thank God, is not to be found Kelly of the Foreign Legion. I think we may take him as the average soldier. A perfectly simple-minded, decent, good fellow. His highest thoughts about the war are to say that it is an asinine thing. We consequently get a very charming account of what soldiers really go through, without the slightest attempt at swank, and padding, and trying to make an impression. It is quite the best book on the war I have yet seen.

A. C.

Henrik Ibsen

Henrik Ibsen is beyond question the most important figure in modern thought. There are after all very few writers who have perfectly summarized great periods of the history of the race. Sophocles represents to us in dramatic form, perhaps better than any of his contemporaries, the real trend of ancient thought. Aristotle may be considered his only rival; and Sophocles is more important than Aristotle because he employs the method of art. The dark ages are dark to us, mainly, because they lacked so perfect an exponent. Dante is the only poet who is at all satisfactory. The spirit of the Renaissance is far more perfectly expressed in Shakespeare than in any other writer. After his time there is no one of planetary importance until we come to Balzac. But Balzac wrote in a period of transition; revolution and counter-revolution had already made earthquakes in Europe. But the world at large was not alive to the significance of what was happening. Nobody foresaw the extent of the dominion of science.

Ibsen was the first man to realize how tremendous an upheaval was involved in the discoveries of chemist and physicist. Revealed religion had already gone by the board so far as thinking men were concerned; and with it had gone the crude morality which is based upon it. People were feeling the need of confession while revolted at the idea of confessing to a priest, the need of redemption while appalled at the thought of a redeemer. Man was shaking himself free from the nightmare of ages, and he was in the curious condition which often happens to one in the morning. One is not sure whether one is awake or asleep. One does not fully realize where one is or who one is. This condition is often one of great