

A PAGE OF VERSE

A WHISTLER IN AN OLD STREET

BY HELEN DOUGLAS IRVINE

[*The New Witness*]

FLOATS there now
A starveling melody,
Where dead houses
Huddle pitiful,
Where a beggar
Plays his whistle
Near her door.

House forlorn,
Once stately, decorous,
Where she, bending,
Swept her courtesy;
Where her red heels
Tapped and twinkled
O'er the floor.

So a sound
Of laughter lingering
Haunts his piping,
Rises, quavering,
Thinly, sweetly
From his whistle
By her door.

WILD GEESE

BY KENNETH ASHLEY

[*The London Mercury*]

GRAY sky;
Gray weather;
Sad sedges sighing;
Summer is dead,
Autumn is dying.
Fast overhead
Two great birds flying;
One clanging cry,
A whirry of winging,
Two rigid necks,
Four great wings swinging —
And then, two specks
Far south, together,
Fade to the eye —
Gray geese, gray sky,
Gray weather.

CÆSAR REMEMBERS

BY WILLIAM KEAN SEYMOUR

[*The Outlook*]

CÆSAR, that proud man,
Sat in his tent
Weary with victory,
With striving spent.

Where the gray Chilterns
Coiled and slept,
That hard-lipped Emperor
Vigil kept.

In the thin starlight
His glimmering hordes
Fought with the hard earth —
Spades for swords.

Out on the hill-slopes
His helmèd host
Piled stark ramparts
Rimmed with frost.

But Cæsar cared not
For dyke and wall,
Faint and remote
Came the bugles' call;

Soft in the shadows
He saw, and heard,
A Roman garden,
A Roman bird.

'Worlds to conquer!—
But Cæsar fails
To add one song
To the nightingale's!'

Soft in the shadows
The tired man heard
A woman's laughter,
A woman's word.

Cæsar, shivering,
Heard repeat
Spades on the hillside,
Sentries' feet.

LIFE, LETTERS, AND THE ARTS

ANGLO-AMERICAN HISTORY PROFESSORS AND MR. WELLS

A CONFERENCE of professors of history in British and American universities, held during July at the new Institute of Historical Research in London, has laid plans for increased coöperation between scholars of the two nations, especially those who are engaged in research. The conference included noted historians from America, Canada, and Great Britain, and taking place as it did at a time when popular interest in historical problems is especially keen, it received comment in the English press to a degree unusual for a purely academic gathering. Two other events of importance to students of history occurred at nearly the same time. A few days before the historians met, the League of Nations Union sent a deputation on methods of history teaching to the President of the Board of Education, and at about the same time the Institute of Historical Research was opened. The conference devoted a great deal of its time to developing plans for the publication of manuscripts and other materials, as well as bibliographies designed to facilitate research in little-known fields.

The deputation from the League of Nations Union, which included Mr. H. G. Wells and Mr. Frederic Harrison, protested against the methods of teaching history now in vogue in Great Britain, of which Mr. Wells, since the publication of his *Outline of History*, entertains a particularly low opinion. Mr. Wells said:—

First of all we want our public as a whole to know more of general social history, of the history of mankind as a history of the development of communities. Our general

public has no ideas, or the very vaguest ideas, of the development of human society through the early Stone Age, through the Bronze Age, to the beginning of communities. It sees everything in a flattened perspective, with no real sense of the enormous past of the human community. As a consequence it accepts all sorts of current institutions, which are transitory, as permanent institutions.

At present our European public men, the statesmen, the politicians of our time, have necessarily to work upon the cheapest intellectual material. They cannot pause to educate during the activities and negotiations in the solving of urgent questions, and they have to work in every country upon a narrow and bitter ignorance of the wider facts of history. Unless we have a wider teaching of history, going beyond national range, we are bound to have impatience and all sorts of unhappy struggles and moods of apathy alternating with moods of hysterical combativeness, and the whole of international affairs has to go to the tune of that.

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MR. DRINKWATER'S 'LINCOLN' ATTACKED

ALTHOUGH Mr. John Drinkwater's play, *Abraham Lincoln*, met with a chorus of praise during its tour in this country as well as during the earlier English productions, at least one vigorously dissenting voice has been raised at its midsummer revival in England. Mr. Sidney W. Carroll, writing in the *London Times*, criticizes it bitterly, attributing its success mainly to the gullibility of the public. Mr. Carroll says of the play:—

It is a most pretentious 'spoof,' an impertinent travesty of the life of a really great man. It assumes a loftiness of treatment it is far from possessing. Its simplicity of construction and characterization has an eccentric naïveté to be found only in public wax-