

from the floor and cramming it back in the box I discovered my defense.

Smiling my very best smile, I turned and faced the angry officials the other side of the counter and, holding the box towards them, pointed to three printed words underneath: "Made in Germany."

## BOOKS

### HUMAN FORCES IN THE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT.

Shelley, Godwin and their Circle. By H. N. Brailsford. Published by Henry Holt & Co., New York. Price, 50 cents.

There is no reason, except as a catch-word, why the name of Shelley should come first in the title of this little volume, the body of which is taken up with an account of William Godwin's work, and of his influence on contemporary thinkers. No man ever influenced the high thinkers of a period more than Godwin influenced the finest literary spirits of the early years of the eighteen hundreds. He had Wordsworth, Coleridge and Shelley as his pupils in thought. The fact that Wordsworth in later years balked at Godwin's democratic philosophy made him the more or less conscious subject of Browning's "Lost Leader."

Mr. Brailsford has rendered a great service in giving us today a clear, concise and sufficiently sympathetic study of Godwin's teachings, for Godwin was in his day a supreme force in the democratic movement, and he has been too much forgotten. This book is one which should be read by all who wish to know the progressive growth of the democratic mind during the past century and a half. It will help the reader in understanding the influences of the American and the French Revolutions, and especially the reactions that followed the excesses of the latter.\*

The chapter on Thomas Paine is excellent. It will prove a strong support in the way of establishing a just estimate of that great name. How little Paine has been understood and appreciated even in our own time is shown by the fact that Mr. Roosevelt has called him "a dirty little atheist." As Mr. Brailsford says, in quoting this, Mr. Roosevelt's contemptuous slur "exposed nothing but his own ignorance." But Mr. Roosevelt, as is so often the case with him, merely expressed the popular view. Difficult, indeed, it is, even now in this twentieth century, for a writer who takes the democratic viewpoint to get a fair hearing. Nor is the reason for this a deep mystery. We have our public schools supported by all the people for the children of all the people, and yet all the read-

\*Godwin was born in 1756 and died in 1836. His life thus overlapped the rise and swell and ebb of the revolutionary impulses.

ing, all the text-books of history, all the influences in these schools are still either undemocratic, or, at any rate, distinctly conservative. Imagine a selection of school reading from any of the great books that represent the democratic movement in the world's history! And yet these books contain just as great literature, even from an artistic point of view, as the inane stuff which is usually assigned and provided for the children's reading. Mr. Brailsford does justice also to the work of Mary Wollstonecraft as a pioneer in the advocacy of women's rights. He calls her book, which was published in 1792, "perhaps the most original book of its century." This book, "Vindication of the Rights of Woman," was indeed a brave performance. As Mr. Brailsford says, "What was absolutely new in the world's history was that for the first time a woman dared to sit down to write a book which was not an echo of men's thinking, nor an attempt to do rather well what some man had done a little better, but a first exploration of the problems of society and morals from a standpoint which recognized humanity without ignoring sex."

The final chapter on Shelley is the least satisfactory in the book, and it is a surprise that no mention is made of Mr. Salt's interesting study of Shelley's democracy. The fact is that Mr. Brailsford is rather the unbiased critic, and does not readily give himself away. But all who have the democratic mind will thank him for his book, which describes in an interesting style the leading thoughts and influences of a most important epoch in the democratic movement.

JAMES H. DILLARD.



### NEW LIGHT ON OLD HISTORY.

Sociological Study of the Bible. By Louis Wallis. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago. (Second Impression.) Price, \$1.50 net.

The major portion of Professor Wallis' book\* is devoted to a scholarly analysis of the forces which finally led to the amalgamation of the liberty-loving hill-men of Israel with the more cultured but plutocratic Amoritic city dwellers. The dissimilar aspirations resulting from this mesalliance are symbolized by the respective worships of Yahweh, the Israelitish God and Baal, the deity of the Amorites. So that a new light is thrown upon the protests of the prophets, the frequent revolutions and the continual turmoil and discontent which afflicted the nation. Until at length we find a centralized plutocratic government of which the church is an important member, a church which has rejected the social problem and with it the traditional land policy of the Israelites, and finally

\*For earlier review, see The Public of May 31, 1912, at page 521.