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THE EDINBURGH REVIEW.

THE *Edinburgh Review*, whose editor has just been appointed Financial Secretary of the Treasury, contains an article on "National Security," which is much more ministerial than might have been expected—even under the present circumstances. Considering the independent judgment of the *Edinburgh*, it is a great disappointment to find such an article as this, which is a weak and ineffective attempt to bolster up Mr. Brodrick's Army Scheme.

THE EMPEROR CHARLES V.

The first article in this number is devoted to a very laudatory review of Mr. Edward Armstrong's biography of Charles V. "Mr. Armstrong," says the reviewer, "does more than any previous writer to make the century live for his readers. He is so impartial that after a close scrutiny we have no further knowledge of his religious opinions or beliefs at the end than we had at the beginning." Charles V. never learnt mathematics till he was over thirty years, but he was a free-trader before his time. At the age of fifty he was a worn out old man, and at fifty-five he retired to a monastery. Mr. Armstrong thinks the chief cause of this premature decay was the fact that he was not able to chew his food by reason of the protrusion of his lower jaw. Although he could chew nothing, he ate everything, bolting huge slabs of beef, mutton, and other meat twice or thrice every day. At dinner he used to drink five quarts of Rhine wine. The article is a very interesting one, and full of too much forgotten facts. Take, as an instance, the statement that in 1543 France, the Sultan and the Pope being allied together against Charles V., Barbarossa sold the population of Nice as slaves in the market-place at Toulon, and on retiring home he carried off 14,000 of the inhabitants of the Riviera into slavery—not bad for the ally of the Pope.

HOW TO IMPROVE ENGLISH AGRICULTURE.

The article on English Agriculture is a review of Mr. Rider Haggard's "Rural England," not altogether sympathetic. The reviewer somewhat scoffs at Mr. Haggard's panacea of an agricultural parcel post, and thus sums up his own wisdom:—

We must accept prices as they are, and meet them by cheapening the cost of production through improved methods and by co-operation for the purchase of the requirements of the farm. At the same time, we must secure the highest market price by producing the best article and combining to meet the requirements of the trade; and to secure labour we must, as far as possible, give the labourer a personal interest in his work. There is nothing disheartening in the outlook for agriculture in this country, although the croakings and forebodings of some friends might make us think so. A stern determination to succeed, come what may, combined with a firm belief that success can be attained, is what is required, and, above all, a greater spirit of self-reliance and less dependence on State aid. Then, if despondency is banished, and changed conditions are recognised, all will be well with British agriculture.

EXPANSION AND EXPENDITURE.

The article under this head deals with Mr. Hobson's "Imperialism," Mr. Carnegie's "Rectorial Address," Mr. Kidd's "Control of the Tropics," and one or two other works. The reviewer admits the truth of Mr. Hobson's statement that, despite the vast additions made to British possessions in the last twenty-five years, there has been a hardly perceptible increase in the value of British trade with them. Our trade has gone up in countries not under our flag; it has comparatively declined in our new colonies. On the whole, the reviewer is hopeful, and says there is singularly little food for pessimistic reflection

either in the commercial situation as it is to-day or in the fiscal system which has so well responded to an unprecedented strain. To adopt any of the nostrums of the Protectionists would invite aggression by uniting the world against us as a common enemy.

LA REVUE.

La Revue for April 1st opens with M. Leroy-Beaulieu's paper on the Emperor Nicholas's Manifesto, which I noticed in advance last month. Professor Angelo Mosso writes on "Physical Education in the Universities." He deals chiefly with American and English Universities, and regards their athleticism as an almost unmixed blessing. On the Continent, the German Universities are farthest ahead in this respect, but the writer's country, Italy, is backward, and he regards physical culture as absolutely essential to prevent the degeneration of the Italian governing classes. While in England members of the learned societies are physically superior to the labouring class, in Italy the educated classes are much inferior physically to the peasants. The effect of better food is destroyed by lack of exercise. There is an illustrated article by M. G. Savitch on Mr. G. F. Watts. Mr. Henry Paris writes on "The Theatrical Proletariat in Germany," and points out how much better provided for are the lower ranks of the theatrical profession in Germany than in France.

THE SCENT OF FLOWERS.

The second number of *La Revue* for April contains two articles on "L'Angleterre Armée" by English writers, in neither of which is there anything new for English readers. M. Blanchon writes on "The Perfume of Flowers." He says that most perfumes are in reality excitants which stimulate and then provoke a reaction; that is, a weakness equal to the quantity of power employed at the moment of excitation. Perfumes, in fact, act as alcohol acts. Their chief virtue is their antiseptic quality. The bacilli of typhoid have been killed in from twelve to eighty minutes by different essences. Scent-giving flowers are not, as is often stated, bad in sick-rooms. But they should be chosen in view of their effect on the nervous system or of their antiseptic qualities. Growing flowers are the best. Flowers with delicate perfumes act favourably on the nervous system.

MESSENGERS TO MARS.

Mr. A. Le Mée writes on the fascinating subject of "Interplanetary Communications," meaning thereby the actual transportation of human beings to other planets. The problem is, of course, practically insoluble, but Mr. Le Mée merely enquires whether there is any theoretical difficulty against it, and says there is not. At present the only conceivable way is Jules Verne's; that is, the construction of a gigantic cannon with force sufficient to overcome the earth's attraction. Mr. Le Mée maintains that, provided such a cannon could be built, the mere aiming at another planet presents no difficulty, and he thinks that human beings in a shell might survive the first shock if slow powder was used. He also argues ingeniously that the collision at high speed between the shell and the planet aimed at might be prevented by having internal mechanism in the shell for retarding its movement. He takes also a sanguine view as to the possibility of human beings finding supportable conditions on some of the planets.

THE *Woman at Home* for May contains a remarkably beautiful portrait of Mrs. Asquith, as well as portraits of Lady Warwick and Lady Curzon.