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Any student of progressive education will find the statement by this vigorous reformer and experimenter of the present need in Germany a help in his own problems. It is characteristically German that the author turns to the Emperor as the means of accomplishing his end. A section is headed, "Der deutsche Kaiser, die Hoffnung aller Freunde der deutschen Nationalschule." "Es bleibt ja immer noch ein Retter in der Not, der deutsche Kaiser Wilhelm II!"

*The Seekers.* By JESSIE E. SAMPTER. With an Introduction by JOSIAH ROYCE. New York: Mitchell Kennerley, 1910. Pp. xii+302. \$1.25.

Anyone not intimately acquainted with upper-middle-class young people in a large city may have some difficulty in getting from this book the very useful material it contains. It is characterized as a "successful experiment in non-sectarian religion, in moral and aesthetic inquiry, with young people in new ways, in search of the meaning of things." As Bergson has stated, "The idea of disorder arises in our mind whenever, seeking one of the two kinds of order, we find the other." Many readers will lay the book aside because they are so accustomed to other forms of religious interest and statement that this will seem "disorder."

Professor Royce has written an appreciative introduction in which he says: "The book is one to encourage every lover of good things, and everyone who wants to see how the minds of young people in this country, and living under good conditions, can be turned toward great questions in such a way as to encourage sincerity, thoughtfulness, and the beginnings of true wisdom."

Seven young people (five girls and two boys), all about sixteen years of age, met on seventeen Sunday afternoons during a winter and discussed a series of topics which the author had worked out, and which she has formulated in the appendix. The record made by the leader supplemented by papers written by the other members of the club or class furnishes an unusually straightforward account of a social experiment. A brief characterization of each of the "seekers" and the clearness with which they reveal themselves in the discussions add to the value of the report.

The author's philosophy is a form of idealism approved by Professor Royce, and while she does wish chiefly that the young people become seekers, she shows throughout considerable tendency toward propaganda in favor of her own views. It seems unfortunate, too, that in terminology there is a tendency toward absolutism beyond the author's probable intention—"complete," "perfect," "the true reason," and similar terms call for constant restatement on the part of some readers.

The idealistic fallacy here considers a painting art while a photograph must not be so accounted, because of the greater power in the former case of choosing and omitting details. This transcendental control is usually tempered by common sense, but (p. 229) in discussing vocations, teacher and pupils alike are carried off their feet by their hopes and feelings in the unrealistic manner so often resulting in disappointment.

It seems strange to say that "we would not discuss definite social or political problems at all, since the girls and boys had neither the experience nor the judgment to profit by them now," when their meetings were given up to such topics as "God and the Meaning of Progress," "Matter and Spirit," "Prayer," "Evolution,"

"Immortality," "The Meaning of Beauty," etc.: topics worth the while of the seekers, but surely as far removed from their experience as those which were so resolutely eliminated.

With all due account taken of limitations, this is one of the most adequate presentations we have of an experiment in an important field, and it deserves study by school and other social students and workers.

FRANK A. MANNY

TEACHERS' TRAINING SCHOOL,  
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

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*English Literature: Its History and Its Significance for the Life of the English-Speaking World.* A Text-Book for Schools. By WILLIAM J. LONG. Boston: Ginn & Co., 1909. Pp. xv+582.

*A First Book in English Literature.* By HENRY S. PANCOAST AND PERCY VAN DYKE SHELLY. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1910. Pp. xix+497. \$1.15.

The man who sits him down to write a textbook of English literature is, in so far as he tries to do more than give a bare chronicle, hard put to it to reconcile a number of hardly reconcilable elements. If he is to succeed at all he must do more than give a bare chronicle; but criticism is just the thing that is likely to be fatal to him. Be critical, be critical; be not too critical, must be the legend over the entrance to his task. He is writing for readers for whom literature is, in a sense, on the defensive, readers who not only have as yet no critical judgment, but whose elementary liking for literature has hardly been won, and the spark of whose interest must be fanned into flame, yet with not too strong a breath.

A book of the type of Dr. Long's is likely, as a consequence, to prove of very genuine value in introductory courses. It is not too critical. In one sense it is not critical at all: it passes no independent judgment upon any writer or piece of writing, and clarifies no ideas, but falls easily into the current romantic estimate of literature, at times sinking to the weakling vacuity of art for art's sake, as in the introductory chapter: "A history or work of science may be, and sometimes is, literature, *but only as we forget the subject-matter and the presentation of facts in the simple beauty of its expression.*" The italics are mine. Dr. Long warns his reader that Johnson's criticisms are often misleading, and cites, as an example, the fact that Johnson had a word of praise for Pope. All this is intrinsically bad, but it may not be bad for those who are not yet strong enough for an adult diet. Elementary students are at a romantic age as well as in a romantic age, and can perhaps best be appealed to through the natural bent of their feelings. And withal it may be said that Dr. Long has a tender enthusiasm for literature that is genuinely infectious. His style is full of interest; he has the art of allusion and quotation, and a pleasing personal turn to his phrases.

To a mature mind the text by Messrs. Pancoast and Shelly is much more acceptable. Its criticisms are more objective, less marred by a romantic bias, far surer than those of Dr. Long. It may prove less enticing to a student who