

ON THE LINE

RIDICULE is often successful where plain logic fails. The politician who wishes to expose the weaknesses of an opponent's case is hard put to it if humour is not a part of his natural equipment. The author of **What Might Have Been** (Murray: 6s.) has no lack of that essential. He writes with the satire which burns. He has the gift of insight also; and sees the future as the Fabians do not paint it; but as it well might be if a certain order of Socialism were triumphant. We are shown England in the "Collateral Year." Things have changed since this present day of grace. Demos is in office, and absolute. His hobnailed boots have stamped upon most of our institutions. The House of Lords is gone, with no second Chamber to take its place. Home Rule is a fact. Peace at any price has become the Imperial policy; the House of Commons is overwhelmingly commonplace; Tammany has become Anglicised. The orators of Tower Hill make our laws, mismanage the departments and fill their pockets. Socialism, of the bowler-hat order, is a fact; and jobbery and doles its consequences.

The multitudinous effects of government by the mob's puppets are mordantly described in this humorous, angry book. Art and commerce, laws and learning do die, under this withering, soulless governance. The hope of England—of honesty and the high ideals—slumbers, until another Hampden rises to undo the people's wrongs. The story, of course, has its