

## *American Rhodes Scholars.*

**I**N the New York *Nation* of September 17, there is a very interesting six-column treatment of the subject: What does Oxford think of the American Rhodes Scholars, by Mr. F. I. Wylie, Secretary of the Rhodes Trustees. Much has been heard of Oxford from the point of view of these scholars, but little, if anything, has been heard on the other side, that is, from Oxford. At the University there are less than three thousand students; the Rhodes scholars make up a possible one hundred and ninety, and half of this number are Americans.

University opinion accepts these scholars as an element of real value. Oxford, in its traditions and rate of growth, has been conservative. It is fed by public schools which are essentially provincial, and the influence of the American in Oxford is of no small importance in the matter of bringing the English public-school boy to realize that there are other ways of doing things and other points of view than those to which he had been accustomed. A few sentences demand quotation:

"And the influence which they (the American Rhodes scholars) exercise is 'not merely fresh, and so stimulating. It is in itself healthy. The American 'Rhodes scholar is, as a rule, sincere and robust; he is, on the average, older than 'our English undergraduate; he knows better what he wants, and is more strenuous in trying to get it; he is more independent in his judgments; and he has more 'perspective. Doubtless he has his own conventions and shibboleths; but, as they 'are different from ours, he commonly gets the credit of being less hampered by 'such things than we are. This may be an illusion; but it counts. One way or 'another, he comes to be regarded—in the end by undergraduates as well as dons '—as a person with stuff in him, and interesting; comes, not necessarily to be understood, but commonly to be respected; to be genuinely liked; to be, in actual 'fact, very welcome."

It is only on the purely scholastic side that he gets any adverse criticism. This is to the effect that, although he has shown himself alert and versatile, quick to take a point and alive to the interest of things, he is wanting in thoroughness and profundity. On this point, the writer says: "If it is the case that the education in 'the majority of American colleges, so far at any rate as the A.B. courses are 'concerned, is more broken up than ours into stages and compartments, this difference may help to account for the impression which seems to prevail here that 'the American college man, while he is conspicuously intelligent, and knows something about a good many subjects, is deficient in the grasp of any one subject, 'and not sufficiently exacting in his standards."

The Oxford authorities tend to look upon the Rhodes scholars as "men picked deliberately from a crowd of eager and distinguished competitors; as coming, 'in fact, weighted with a whole state's learning and prestige"; and although they say that the examination results obtained from them are creditable, yet they admit that they felt at first a tiny shock of disappointment.

As to the extent to which the Americans, as an element in the place, fuse with the other elements, there is a divergence of opinion. No general answer, how-