

HELPING YOU to KEEP POSTED

WHEN a master of languages strikes a congenial topic, you are at once interested. There is a real charm in John Galsworthy's clever delineation of French people and character and places, in the current fortnightly. He writes in France, 1916-1917, the France that remains after years of war:

Paris is Paris, was, and ever shall be, he says. Paris is not France. If the Germans had taken Paris, they would have occupied the bodily heart, the centre of her circulatory system; but the spirit of France their heavy hands would not have clutched, for it never dwelt there. Paris is hard and hurried; France is not. Paris loves pleasure; France loves life. Paris is a brilliant stranger in her own land. And yet a lot of true Frenchmen and Frenchwomen live there, and many plots of real French life are cultivated. His description of the poilus fairly dances with interest.

Here is a tall Savoyard Cavalryman, he says, with a maimed hand and a moustache turned up at the ends, big and strong, with grey eyes, and a sort of sage self-reliance; only twenty-six, but might be forty. Here is a real Latin, who was buried by an explosion at Verdun, handsome, with dark hair and a round head, and colour in his cheeks; an ironical critic of everything, a Socialist, a mocker, a fine, strong fellow with a clear brain, who attracts women. Here are two peasants from the Central South, both with bad sciatica, slower in look, with a mournful, rather monkeyish expression in their eyes, as if puzzled by their sufferings. Here is a true Frenchman, a Territorial, from Roanne, riddled with rheumatism, quick and gay, and suffering, touchy and affectionate, not tall, brown-faced, brown-eyed, rather fair, with clean jaw and features, and eyes with a soul in them, looking a little up; forty-eight—the oldest of them all—they call him Grandpere. And here is a printer from Lyon, with shell-shock; medium-coloured, short and roundish and neat, full of humanity and high standards and domestic affection; and so polite, with eyes a little like a dog's. And here another with shell-shock and brown-green eyes, from the "invaded countries"; defiant, truly, this one, but with a heart when you get at it; neat, and brooding, quick as a cat, nervous and wanting his own way. But they are all so varied.

This is our first real sight of them in their tired glory. They look weary and dusty and strong: every face has character, no face looks empty or as if its thought were being done by others. Their laughter is not vulgar or thick. Alongside their faces the English face looks stupid, the English body angular and—neat. They are loaded with queer

burdens, bread and bottles bulge their pockets; their blue-grey is prettier than khaki, their round helmets are becoming. Our Tommies, even to our own eyes, seem uniformed, but hardly two out of

all this crowd are dressed alike. The French soldier luxuriates in extremes; he can go to his death in white gloves and dandyism—he can glory in unshavenness and patches.

When Galsworthy comes to the Frenchwomen, he is equally scintillating and enthusiastic, when he asks, What is it in the Frenchwoman that makes her so utterly unique? There is in her a kind of inherited, conservative, clever, dainty capability; no matter where you go in France, or in what class—country or town—you find it. She cannot waste, she cannot spoil, she makes and shows—the best of everything. If I were asked for a concrete illustration of self-respect I should say—the Frenchwoman. It is a particular kind of self-respect, no doubt, very

GALSWORTHY, eminent play-maker, shrewdly discriminates between the French and the English.

BERNARD BARUCH, wizard of Wall St., becomes a public service expert in his knowledge of metals.

UNFAMILIAR facts about the great Quebec Bridge, according to competent Canadian authorities, the greatest steel structure in the world, the Woolworth Building not excepted.

WHAT'S the matter with Tchaikowsky's rank as a Slav composer? Ossip Gabrilowitsch damns him with faint praise.



much limited to this world; and perhaps beginning to be a little frayed. We have some Frenchwomen at the hospital, the servants who keep us in running order—the dear cook whom we love not only for her baked meats, proud of her soldier son—once a professor, now a sergeant, and she a woman of property, with two houses in the little town; patient, kind, very stubborn about her dishes, which have in them the essential juices and savours that characterize all things really French. She has great sweetness and self-containment in her small, wrinkled, yellowish face; always quietly polite and grave, she bubbles deliciously at any joke, and gives affection sagaciously to those who merit.

Then there is the "farmeress" at the home farm that gives the hospital its milk; a splendid, grey-eyed creature, doing the work of her husband who is at the front, with a little girl and boy rounder and rosier than anything you ever saw; and a small, one-eyed brother-in-law who drinks. My God! he drinks! Any day you go into the town to do hospital commissions you may see the hospital donkey-car with the charming grey donkey outside the Cafe de l'Univers or what not, and know that Charles is within. He beguiles our poilus, and they take little beguiling. Wine is too plentiful in France. The sun in the wines of France quickens and cheers the blood in the veins of France. But the gift of wine is abused. One may see a poster that says—with what truth I know not—that drink has cost France more than the Franco-Prussian war. French drunkenness is not so sottish as our beer-and-whiskey-fuddled variety, but it is not pleasant to see, and mars a fair land.

Consent to feel like an artist for a moment as you read his charm-picture of France and his fine discrimination between French and English:

What a fair land! I never before grasped the charm of French colouring; the pinkish-yellow of the pan-tiled roofs, the lavender-grey or dim green of the shutters, the self-respecting shapes and flatness of the houses, unworried by wriggling ornamentation of lines coming up in order that they may

go down again; the universal plane-trees with their variegated trunks and dancing lightness—nothing more charming than plane-trees in winter, their delicate twigs and little brown balls shaking against the clear, pale skies, and in summer nothing more green and beautiful than their sun-flecked shade. Each country has its special genius of colouring—best displayed in winter. To characterize such genius by a word or two is hopeless; but one might say the genius of Spain is brown; of Ireland green; of England chalky blue-green; of Egypt shimmering sandstone. For France amethystine feebly expresses the sensation. Walk into an English village, however beautiful—and many are very beautiful—you will not get the peculiar sharp spiritual sensation that will come on you entering some little French village or town. The blue wood-smoke, the pinkish tiles, the grey shutters, the grey-brown plane-trees, the pale blue sky, the yellowish houses, and above all the clean forms and the clear air.

France! Be warned in time by our dismal fate! Don't lose your love of the land; don't let industrialism absorb your peasantry, and the lure of wealth and the cheap glamour of the towns draw you into their uncharmed circles. We English have rattled deep into a paradise of machines, chimneys, cinemas, and halfpenny papers; have bartered our heritage of health, dignity, and looks for wealth, and badly distributed wealth at that. You were trembling on the verge of the same precipice when the war came; with its death and wind of restlessness the war bids fair to tip you over. Hold back with all your might! Your two dangers are drink and the lure of the big towns. No race can preserve sanity and refinement that really gives way to these. You will not fare even as well as we have if you yield; our fibre is coarser and more resistant than yours, nor had we ever so much grace to lose. It is by grace and self-respect that you have had your pre-eminence; let these wither, as wither they must in the grip of a sordid industrialism, and your star will burn out.

ABOUT the time that President Wilson's peace note was published our old friend Thomas Lawson touched off a star shell which was supposed to shed a lot of light on the way Wall Street pirates were looting the public because of "inside" information which, according to Tommy, was leaking from the White House. Bernard Baruch was one of the "big" men whom Lawson had in mind when he sent the rocket up. Baruch was reported to have made six millions by selling short in time to anticipate the slump in stocks which came when the Peace note was made public. According to Baruch's own testimony, he actually made \$476,168.47, and when told about the six millions, he said, "Well, somebody got my share." The investigation apparently disproved Lawson's startling statements; it certainly cleared Baruch, who convinced the investigating commission that he had made his little pile out of the deal by exercising his habit to read the newspapers thoroughly and to "grasp the psychological effect of the news."

He has been doing this kind of thing for about sixteen years or so, and at 47 he is credited with a bank roll which touches ten millions in round figures. He made practically every penny of his fortune playing big bear in the Wall Street game, and the fellows in that little alley regard him as something of a wizard when it comes to seeing a fall in metal stocks about two jumps ahead of the crowd. The way he

Galsworthy
Critically
Glorifies France

Baruch, Wall St.
Wizard, in
Public Service