

immigrant without roots or resources. (Should we not be bringing in more Danes today?) It is always edifying to see the penniless outdistancing the comfortable, and the keen mind and wit that made the career have also given sparkle and panache to the book.

—David Hall

SECONDHAND THOUGHTS

MEN OF OTHER PLANETS, by Kenneth Heuer, Victor Gollancz. English price, 12.6.

ACCORDING to a note on one of the fly-leaves of this book, it is "copyright 1951 by Kenneth Heuer," but since it is usually permissible to quote brief passages from copyright works one may perhaps draw attention to a note which appears on the page facing the table of contents. It runs, in part,

Grateful recognition is given by the author to the popular French astronomer Camille Flammarion, whose works have influenced considerably the writing of this book.

This appears to be no more than the truth. In its general theme, its speculative strain, the strenuously "popular" style of writing (Flammarion himself was regarded by his contemporaries as *un astronome vulgarisateur*), *Men of Other Planets* is remarkably similar to *Dreams of an Astronomer*. In some places the resemblance goes even deeper.

For example, on page 39 of the English translation of *Dreams of an Astronomer*, one reads:

These are very different conditions of existence from those which govern the destinies of the Earth and of the planets of our group. Two suns! What curious alternations of seasons! What variations in the climates! What transformations in the doubtlessly very rapid changes of their vitality! What complications of their calendars.

The corresponding passage in the gospel according to Heuer runs:

These are very different conditions of existence from those which govern the destinies of the earth and other planets of our group. Two suns! What curious alternations of seasons! What variations in the climates! What strange lighting, abolishing the shadows and creating contrasts of which we can hardly imagine the effect! What complications of their calendars.

In his transcription, Mr. Heuer includes the so Gallic exclamation marks, but quite omits inverted commas. Nor is this a solitary example. On page 99 of *Men of Other Planets* there is a much lengthier passage which gives the period of the Martian year "according to Flammarion," and follows that with 150 words of romantic speculation lifted almost verbatim from pages 114-115 of *Dreams of an Astronomer*. Here again quotation marks are not employed—though Mr. Heuer is more careful with quotations from his contemporaries.

His book, in fact, is Flammarion brought up to date—and he should have said so plainly. It is entertaining reading—a diverting survey of the theories men have formed in all ages concerning the universe—but since Mr. Heuer has not acknowledged the full extent of his indebtedness by footnote or bibliography it is not possible to say how much of it is his own.

—J.M.

A POLITICAL FIGURE

LLOYD GEORGE, by Thomas Jones; Oxford University Press. English price, 21/-.

WHEN Lloyd George entered Parliament he found there Gladstone, Goschen, Joseph Chamberlain and Lord Randolph Churchill; by 1908 he was Chancellor of the Exchequer; in 1918

he was known as the British War Prime Minister of ruthless energy; during the "phoney" period of the 1939-45 war, at a small lunch party, the hostess, Lady Astor, asked him whether he would again accept the office of Prime Minister; in 1945, when he died, he was chiefly known to readers of *Picture Post* as the man who grew Cox's Orange pippins.

What kind of a man was this? Hal-dane described him as "an illiterate with an unbalanced mind"; Lenin regarded him as the greatest political leader Britain had known; Keynes said he was "rooted in nothing . . . void and without content"; the author writes that he was "untroubled by scepticism or self-criticism, or remorse or conviction of sin," and, speaking as the one-time assistant secretary to Lloyd George's War Cabinet, cautiously grants that he was a "significant political innovator who has been much lauded and decried and who has been the subject of violent controversy."

From all accounts, as a person, Lloyd George didn't exist, and all one gets, as Keynes said, is "that flavour of final purposelessness." But the future historian will not be concerned so much with personality, and may agree with Jones that Lloyd George's achievement by spiking "the Socialist guns with essentially Conservative social measures" . . . "anticipated and prevented revolution by successfully attacking the privileged classes and comforting the poor." The historian will quote the shocking conditions described in the Report on Sweating (1888), give facts on metropolitan misery in Booth's *Life and Labour of the People in London* (1889-1903), point to the famous Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission, 1909, describe the effective and large-scale agitation of the Fabians against unemployment and destitution and show how Lloyd George's Insurance Acts of

(continued on next page)



SIR DOUGLAS COPLAND, whose book *"Inflation and Expansion"* will be reviewed by Martin Nestor in the ZB Book Review Session on April 20. Other books for review that evening are: *"Human Fertility,"* by Robert C. Cook (Donald McKenzie); *"India and the Passing of Empire,"* by Sir George Dunbar (J. J. Saunders); and *"Decline and Fall of British Capitalism,"* by Keith Hutchison (A. J. Danks)




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