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THE NEW AGE

AN INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST REVIEW
OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART

Edited by

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The
SMALL
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By
G. R. S.
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THE OUTLOOK.

South African Prospects.

The outlook in the Transvaal seems gloomy enough, menacing alike to our national interests and to our national honour. On top of the news which we received last week of the use of the military against the Rand strikers, comes the pessimistic speech of Lord Milner to the Yorkshire Liberal Unionist Association. That speech paints the situation in the blackest colours—blacker perhaps than the facts warrant. Lord Milner has always seemed a little too much disposed to assume that the distinction between British and Dutch must be permanently a distinction between loyal and disloyal citizens. Yet there is much force in his contention that a balance of races is necessary to our position in South Africa, and that a Transvaal largely British would be a satisfactory set-off to an Orange River Colony predominantly Dutch. But whose fault will it be if Lord Milner's fears for the stability of our Empire are realised? To answer that question, let us turn to another speech delivered within the last few days. Lord Milner's aspirations and forebodings are by no means shared by Mr. Albu, of the General Mining and Finance Corporation. So far from desiring to increase the British population, that Imperial patriot welcomes the strike, which has "given an opportunity of carrying out far-reaching reforms." The most important of these reforms is to be, according to Mr. Albu, the reduction of from 15 to 20 per cent. of the "highly-paid labourers"—in other words, a reduction by about a fifth of that British population whose increase Lord Milner considers so essential to our safety. Nor is this all. Mr. Albu went on to say that "a prolongation of the strike would result in the men's places being filled by Afrikaners, whose experience in supervising natives would be invaluable, and in the retention in this country of wages which were at present remitted overseas." So that, not only is the proportion of white to coloured labour to be reduced, but even where white men have still to be employed, Englishmen are as soon as possible to be replaced by Dutchmen. Such is the "Imperialism" of the Randlords in action.

British Arms Against British Interests.

It is not, of course, surprising that the mine-owners should pursue such a policy as this. Finance is essentially cosmopolitan, and equally indifferent to considerations of patriotism and public policy. No one ever supposed that the Randlords set any value on the Empire, except such value as they supposed they might extract from it. Nor is it altogether surprising that they should receive, as they seem to be receiving, the unofficial support of the Colonial Government. That Government is predominantly Dutch; in view of the kind offer of Mr. Albu which we have already quoted, it will seem good policy to the Boers leaders to help mine-owners to get rid of that perpetual menace to

Dutch supremacy—the British proletariat of the Rand. What is really both astonishing and disgraceful is that British troops should be used to put British miners under the heel of a combination of Dutch farmers and Jewish speculators. In defending such a monstrous and shameful folly, the apologists of the Government are driven to take up the most extravagant positions. Thus the "Daily Chronicle" pretends that we could not have refused our aid to the mine-owners without interfering with the rights of a self-governing colony. It accuses the critics of the Churchill-Smutz-Albu policy of "seeking to interfere and override the local Government the moment it takes any action which does not commend itself to them." And it goes on to make the same charge against those who have objected to the Transvaal Government's "Bill for the Registration of Asiatics," which, the "Daily Chronicle" itself being witness, "imposes upon Indian subjects of the Crown in the Transvaal serious disabilities and indignities," although the imposition of such disabilities and indignities on British Indians was one of our complaints against the Government of the late President Kruger. This is a kind of "Imperialism" which we confess ourselves totally unable to understand. It is the more curious, since the "Daily Chronicle" was among the strongest supporters in the Press of the South African War. Now, anyone who approved of that war must hold that eight years ago we had the right under certain circumstances to interfere with the internal affairs of the Transvaal. We can only conclude that, according to the "Chronicle," we lost that right when we annexed the country! This would be startling enough, but it is not all. For the new Colony has not only the right to pursue its own policy in opposition to Imperial interests, but it has the right to demand the help of the Imperial forces to enable them to carry out that policy. In other words, the Boers have by their defeat at our hands purchased the absolute control of the British Army! This, we suppose, is what the "Daily Chronicle" calls "Liberal Imperialism." Very "liberal" with the rights of the Empire and the interests of the British population!

The Nonconformist Revolt.

So yet another brigade of the motley forces which brought the Government into power last year is threatening mutiny. The assault of the Labour members on the Budget, the open breach with the Irish over the Council Bill, are to be followed, unless the Ministers walk warily, by a revolt of the Passive Resisters. The situation is not without its perils, for the Nonconformists are probably just strong enough to wreck the Government, but would certainly not be strong enough to save it if, to oblige them, it wasted another session over an Education Bill, which the House of Lords would certainly reject, and would be backed by the country in rejecting. The attempts of Liberal and Free Church publicists to prove that the public mind is violently excited on the subject of Dr. Clifford's wrongs, that

the Peers are panic-stricken at the thought of an outraged electorate, and that the Government has only to sound the trumpet for the walls of the clerical Jericho to fall, are really pathetic. The fact, of course, is that the working class, the class whose children alone attend the schools affected, is utterly indifferent to the whole question. The parent who "will not tolerate clericalism," and the parent who demands "definite religious teaching" are alike figments of the journalistic imagination. We do not say that this is a desirable state of things; but everyone who has done any canvassing in a working class area knows it to be the true one. We fear that we might go further, and say that the working class electorate is indifferent not only to the problem of religious education, but even to that of education itself. They see little good in the elementary instruction given to their children, and who, knowing how bare and futile that instruction often is, dare say that they are wrong? Meanwhile Mr. P. W. Wilson, M.P., in the "Daily News," draws an engaging picture of the Peers, terrified at the sight of "a hundred thousand Primitive Methodists seething with indignation at their camp-meeting in Wales." We do not know what a Primitive Methodist looks like when he "seethes," but we doubt if the sight will much disturb the peace of mind of the Peers, who are probably quite aware to what percentage Primitive Methodists amount among the electorate.

West Ham.

The letter which the Local Government Board has addressed to the Chairman of the West Ham Board of Guardians contains many just criticisms and many reasonable suggestions for improvement. Mr. Paul's reply is also not without point. But neither party appears to have any perception of the real moral of the story. The root of the evil is in the constitution of the Boards of Guardians, and the first and most obvious remedy is the abolition of those Boards and the transfer of their powers to some larger and more responsible authority. The Boards of Guardians, as at present formed, appear expressly devised to secure all the evils without any of the advantages of democracy. They have not the knowledge, swiftness, and efficiency which a frank bureaucracy will often supply; on the other hand, they are not in any real sense representative of the people. Hardly one person in ten even knows when a Guardians' election is taking place, and the number of persons who care enough about it to vote is still smaller.

The only people who do know and care (outside the relatively insignificant minority of keen social reformers) are those who have a private axe to grind. Such people therefore commonly go to the polling booth and elect each other—with what results we see! The whole system is so rotten that the wonder is not that corruption and nepotism exist, but that they are not far more flagrant and universal than they have been proved to be. As it is, we are by no means sure that an equally severe scrutiny of the affairs of other districts might not bring to light facts as startling as those that have shocked us all in the case of West Ham. The fact is that the Boards of Guardians are (now that the School Boards have been destroyed) the last relics of an utterly discredited system of local government—the system of *ad hoc* authorities, which was practically universal in the infancy of modern municipalisation, when lighting and paving boards were the order of the day. It is quite time that such relics of barbarism were swept away, and a properly co-ordinated system, accompanied by a new Poor Law, took their place.

Socialism and the Army Bill.

We are glad to note that there is at least one member of the Labour Party in Parliament whose views on military matters do not materially differ from our own. Mr. Will Thorne attempted to move an amendment to Mr. Haldane's Army Bill declaring in favour of universal military training without martial law or other unnecessary and (for us) undesirable features of Continental conscription. The Speaker's ruling prevented Mr.

Thorne from moving his amendment, and so deprived us of what should have been a most interesting and fruitful debate. But Mr. Thorne retains the credit of having been the first Labour member to put before Parliament on behalf of Socialism a definite constructive policy on the question of national defence. Interviewed on the subject, Mr. Thorne disclaimed any desire to commit his fellow-Labourites to his doctrine; he knew that they differed from him. But he claimed, and claimed justly, that his position was that taken up by the International Socialist Party throughout the world. Being further asked what was the policy of the Labour Party as a whole on the Army, he said, with perfect justice and candour, that they had none. But it will not do for Socialism to have no such policy. What really wants frank and intelligent discussion is the application of Mr. Thorne's policy. Can we, with our vast Empire and our complicated foreign relations, do with a purely citizen army, such as suffices for Switzerland? Or do we want a small professional army as well? And, if so, how is the professional army to be raised, and what are to be its relations to the citizen force? These are the questions which Socialists ought to think out before the time comes when they have to apply their doctrine in concrete practice.

Forgotten Gods.

The death of Karl Blind and the approach of the centenary of Garibaldi recall the great wave of Nationalist and Liberal enthusiasm which swept over Europe half a century ago. Of that movement and of the men that inspired it let no man speak slightly. To us Socialists, indeed, it seems profitless and visionary enough, that Nationalist Utopia of theirs. Its one solid product, United Italy, looks far from Utopian, with its crushing burdens, its frantic speculations, its starving populace, its riots and repressions. Yet, with all their illusions and limitations, they were men of a great epoch, an epoch of high aims and bright swords and of those enthusiasms "which," as Mr. Belloc has said, "from whenever they blow are the fresh winds of the soul." England caught the infection nobly, and we are proud to remember how our volunteers aided Italy, how we welcomed Garibaldi and Kossuth, how the draymen of Wapping avenged the wrongs of Hungary on her oppressor. We have less cause for pride when we look round to-day and note the coldness and indifference with which Englishmen seem to see the unrolling of a far nobler and more significant drama of liberation in Russia. We have not received the Russian Socialists as we received Garibaldi; far otherwise! And a Liberal Government is to conclude an entente with Russia—Russia, which in Kossuth's time as in ours, was the sworn champion of every oppression and of every wrong! But the contrast is too bad to talk about.

Cursed are the Peacemakers.

Our unfortunate attempt to outline a compromise which could be supported alike by the "Suffragettes" proper and by the supporters of Adult Suffrage has met with the usual fate of such well-meant efforts. Both parties have repudiated us with almost equal emphasis. Yet we are unrepentant. With Mrs. Billington-Greig it is extremely difficult to discuss the matter, because she will not even try to imagine the existence of any other point of view than that of the Women's Social and Political Union. Women's Suffrage, she holds, is more important than Democracy, more important than Socialism. Well, for her, doubtless, it is; just as for us Socialism is more important than any mere alteration in the franchise, male or female. But no reform was ever carried solely by the support of those who thought it more important than anything else in the world. If the Suffragettes are to carry their point, it must be by the help of all those who, whatever their views as to its importance relative to other matters, are honestly in favour of the extension of the franchise to women. Exactly the same defect of comprehension vitiates her reply to our statement of the Adult Suffragist position, as we understand it. The class of the women enfranchised is, she says, "immaterial." Doubtless it is

"immaterial," if the only oppression existing to-day be the oppression of women by men, and women's emancipation the only problem with which our nation is faced. But if, as some of us think, the oppression of class by class is an even more serious problem, it is by no means "immaterial" whether a certain measure is likely to strengthen the oppressors or the oppressed. What we want to be assured of, before we support any Bill for the extension of the franchise to women, is that it will enfranchise rich and poor in roughly the proportion in which they exist in the present male electorate. This, we believe, our proposal would accomplish. It would not enfranchise all those who ought to be enfranchised. But we do not think it would strengthen the privileged against the unprivileged or make the eventual obtaining of Adult Suffrage any more difficult.

The Indian Budget Statement.

To-day the Secretary of State for India, during the Indian Budget debate, will explain his submission to the purple Imperialists. His defence is bound to be an eloquent and historic apologia, because he is John Morley and because he must decide the fitness of Liberalism to guide an Eastern Empire on its way to Democracy. The Indian Secretary is in a strange, false position. We feel for him, but more for India, and hope he will rise to greatness by driving out of himself his present miserable spirit of cheap Imperialism that pleases none but the hard-hearted and the suspicious. His task is not easy. It is to be proved that the Liberal Government has done right to take the advice of the men and the newspapers who think they "think imperially," and to reject the warnings of those who demand that the Empire shall be maintained in justice and with sympathy for all its peoples. The "Times" of May 14 said of Mr. Morley: "He is a statesman as well as a theorist, and he knows that the first business and the first duty of a statesman is to defend the State against its enemies, whether they be foreign foes or domestic traitors." The question is, Does the Liberal Government accept that policy or dare it declare that the first duty of the statesman is not to brand patriotic reformers as domestic traitors, but to consider how to remedy the grievances they protest against? One of these "traitors" some time ago said, "The first duty of an Indian politician . . . even if he is a democrat, is to prepare the nation to be fit to ask for a constitution, and to do so with reason." That was Lala Lajpat Rai, the deported barrister of Lahore. Whether that is reason or treason, Gladstone said almost the same. It can be shown that Lajpat Rai was once a most conservative reformer. If Mr. Morley can show that he has lately become violent it must be because of the way the complaints of the moderate party in the Indian Congress have been ignored. That is how the policy advocated by the "Times" condemns itself; it drives moderate men to extremes. Will John Morley uphold or reject that policy? The flattery of the "Times" may be pleasant, but perilous; the rough demands of the "domestic traitors" of India may suggest the true path of Imperial safety and progress. Are we too proud to follow that path? We await Mr. Morley's decision with some anxiety.

Social Democracy in Austria.

THE set-back to Social Democracy recently administered in Germany has been more than retrieved by the success of the Social-Democrats at the Austrian polls last week. The returns are not quite complete, but already it is certain that the Social Democrats have nearly octupled their strength in Parliament. For the first time in Austrian history, and indeed for the first time in the history of any great European Power, the experiment has been tried of universal manhood suffrage. In the recent elections every male citizen over the age of twenty-four was entitled to vote. The results of the experiment, the most daring democratic experiment of modern Europe, have been completely to justify the contention consistently maintained by Social-

ists, namely, that in the absence of a genuine and complete aristocracy, there is no alternative but a genuine and complete democracy. Save for the enormous omission of woman-suffrage—on which not Austria alone has a good deal to learn—Austria is now thoroughly democratic, and her future will be watched with considerable interest by thousands of eyes all over the world.

The immediate inferences to be drawn from the dramatic emergence into power of the Austrian Social-Democrats are plain and unmistakable. The event is indeed all the more vivid because the changes likely to be brought about are so far-reaching. Hitherto, as all Europe knows, the Austrian Parliament has been the scene of the most tragicomic spectacle that Parliamentary history affords. Racial differences when fought out on the field of battle are grandly absurd; but when constantly intruded into discussions concerning the parish-pump, they become grotesquely absurd, and a subject quite proper to Mark Twain's genius for extravaganzas. Even Mark Twain's descriptions, however, fell short of the reality; and nobody could contemplate the Austrian Parliament without a fervent wish that somebody or something should remove this bauble. The Colonel Pride of this racial absurdity has proved to be Social Democracy. Armed with the weapon of manhood suffrage, the people of Austria have emphatically declared against the intrusion of racialism into their social affairs. The Young Czechs and Pan-German parties, which in some respects were the ultra-racialists, have been reduced in numbers from 47 to 19 and 15 to 3 respectively; and at this present moment the Social-Democrats are the strongest individual party in the whole assembly. From such a manifestation of change we may safely draw the conclusion that Socialism, even in the modified form of Austrian Socialism, is in practice as well as in theory anti-racial. It is too much to hope that the racial antagonisms in Austria will entirely die down and drone and cease; but it is plain that the new constitution of parties will introduce a new set of cleavages.

That, in fact, is precisely the fear, as it is also the hope, of reformers in general. So long as by the hypnotising cries of racial or national differences, the capitalists of any nation can distract attention from themselves and the social evil, their handiwork; so long will racial and national differences be sedulously fostered. But, in the long run, such Governments find themselves helpless before the creations of their own black magic. In Austria, for example, not merely social reform was delayed—that would have been tolerated; but every measure of international, national, and financial importance was subjected to an infinity of obstruction at the hands of raging racialists. The deposition of the racial issue from its position of primacy must, however, be followed by the ascent of a new sovereign. The racial king is dead; long live the king. In short, the removal of racial differences paves the way for the manifestation of economic differences; which, in the last resort, are the only political differences that matter a rap to the sober citizen.

We cannot refrain from pointing the moral of Austria to our own Liberal Government. If the Emperor Joseph himself counselled the adoption of manhood suffrage, not as a concession to popular demands, but as a necessary expedient to political progress, may not the Liberals take a leaf out of his book and apply it here in England? It is perfectly certain that the bickerings of Commons and Lords in England are as obstructive as ever the racial bickerings of Austria were to social reform. And the solution is not the solution of the problem of the Lords, any more than the racial solution in Austria was discussion of the racial question. Such problems are best solved by being let alone. The Liberals will be wise to let alone the endless problems of constitutionalism, and solve the problem of the Lords by raising the problem of the people.

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Imperial Education.

THE skeleton of the Empire is being slowly laid down, and the Federal Conference on Education, which came to an end on Saturday, may be said to have contributed the jaw-bone. The Conference was thoroughly representative of everything officially educational in England and in the Colonies; and, as such, we confess that the prospects are not very bright for intelligence. Just when we had hoped that the Oxonisation of the Empire had begun to receive a check on the outskirts of the Empire, we are faced by a recrudescence of the snobbery inherent apparently in the Anglo-Saxon. Without the least doubt colonial education is in many respects different from English education, different and better. Yet the triumphant Oxonian has once more established his claim to set the fashion, and it is probable that henceforth the curricula of the Colonial Universities will be modelled more and more upon the curricula of Oxford and Cambridge. Instead of a commonwealth of nations, each with its own individual spirit exemplified in education and in life, the world at large is threatened with a damnable iteration of the English gentleman here, there, and everywhere.

For it is not to be supposed that Oxford or Cambridge will really consent to learn anything from the young colonial bloods. In practice the proposed exchanges of professors, teachers, and pupils will mean a pretty general immigration to England of colonial parvenus of the second generation; and only an occasional drip in the opposite direction. England will become more than ever the Sir Oracle of the Empire, and Oxford its high priestess. From the standpoint of genuine Imperialists, who believe in the enormous value of the experiment now being made by the Anglo-Saxon race, the fore-closing of the experiment is, as we say, by no means pleasing. While nobody knows what sort of education makes a man, it is plainly absurd to universalise the education that merely makes a "gentleman." We have no quarrel against the English gentleman as a special bye-product of English organisation; but the spectacle of an Empire full of English gentlemen is appalling. Yet that is the apparent issue of such a Federal Conference as that just held.

To counteract the malady—compared with which, by the way, the charge of "levelling" brought against Socialism is insignificant—we can only suggest a vigorous propaganda of internationalism and even of cosmopolitanism. After all we are citizens of the world, or ought to be; and the future of the human race is vastly more important than the future of the Anglo-Saxon section. It is quite possible to think imperially and at the same time humanly; and if there is the slightest chance of imperialism being spoiled and degraded by association with an Oxford steam-roller, the only alternative the true imperialist has is to throw his influence into the opposite camp, and to urge the claims of internationalism. In this sense, a Socialist Congress in Europe is worth, at this moment, a dozen Imperial Conferences; not so much for its intrinsic value, since Socialists are often quite as prone to twaddle as principals of universities; but for its assurance to the world in general that the Jehovah of the future is not necessarily an Oxford graduate or necessarily an Englishman at all.

If, in addition to such international congresses, the elementary teachers of the Empire could arrange for imperial conferences, they would go far to counteract the malign and dessicating influences of the compact majority of the educational mandarins.

The Small Holdings Bill.

THE mountain has laboured once more. I have no intention of following the gossip of mythology to its unromantic conclusion. The Liberal Government has seen fit to present to Parliament a Land Bill; and any seriously-worded attempt to get nearer the solution of the infinitely important problems of rural chaos must be met half way and discussed with the utmost cordiality. To do a fragment of injustice to such an attempt would be to rule oneself outside the somewhat rudimentary principles of political honesty. Faced with the appalling spectre of the staple trade of humanity, the production of food, in a state of threatened dissolution in England, the Government has offered a Small Holdings and Allotments Bill, which has an obvious right to careful consideration. Every Ministry of the last thirty years, at least, has faced the same disquieting spectre, and has borne the spectacle with apparent equanimity. Allotments Acts were certainly passed in 1887 and 1890, and a Small Holdings Act in 1892, but for all they have done they might as well have fallen victims to the House of Lords. The laws of political economy, with that callous disrespect they so often show for the deliberate instructions of Parliament, have gone on their way of emptying the country to desolation and filling the towns to repletion. If the present Bill be not more effective than the Acts of the past, then once more there has been a grievous waste of paper and printer's ink; the waste of Parliamentary time is an uncertain quantity which may be variously estimated.

The Acts of the past said that allotments and small holdings might be created if Parish and County Councils and other local authorities expressed the desire. These Councils, to all intents and purposes, have expressed no desires whatever. In so far as the new Bill is on the same lines as the existing Acts, then it is worthless; it remains, therefore, to see if it is introducing any new principles which are likely to meet the difficulties of the case. There are certainly some new principles, and in the greater number of cases they are apparently capable of successful use. The Acts of 1887, 1890, and 1892 were permissive; they said that electors might ask for allotments and small holdings; and Councils, as I have said, might grant them at a price. The County Councils might certainly compel the District Councils to act, but the force displayed so far has not interfered with the strictest ideals of liberty. The Central Government had no powers of compulsion whatever; it sat silently in its offices in Downing Street and round Whitehall, and waited and watched until the citizens asked to be governed for their good. A somewhat ignoble condition of affairs, when you think of it; that this majestic thing called the State, with all its possibilities of trained experience and knowledge of what is needed, should wait until the untrained democracy led the way. It is not altogether a desirable thing that our governors have the dumb patience of an automatic machine at a railway station, mutely offering its packet in return for the proper coin and the pull of the right lever. But the new Bill opens up an entirely new prospect. The Board of Agriculture will have the power of compelling the County Councils, whether they will it or not, to buy lands for small holdings and allotments (in the latter case, presumably, acting through the Parish Councils); for if the County Councils utterly refuse to act, then the Board can step in, do the work, and charge the expenses on the Councils in default. It is the introduction, or perhaps, strictly, the sudden development of a principle of sane energy which may be the beginning of a new epoch in English affairs. To the Socialist it gives hope of inaugurating that wise paternal despotism which is so effective in some Continental systems of government. Liberty to do nothing is not a form of freedom which appeals to the imagination of men who want their country well governed. This Bill, if it pass, will bring about an exceptionally interesting condition of affairs. The Central Government will have given itself far-reaching powers of com-

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selling the local authorities to provide small holdings and allotments. Never again can a Liberal or Conservative Ministry express pious desire to help in this matter, and regret that the local councils will not move forward. Henceforth, the ultimate responsibility for action will lie with the Government itself. If it does not organise small holdings and allotments, it will be for no other reason than that it does not wish to organise them. The Government, by this Bill, has burned its boats; it has crossed the sea of generous desires; it has landed on the somewhat unsympathetic shore of stern responsibility.

That is the main point about this new Bill. But some of the details are also important. Under the existing law a Council cannot, except in exceptional circumstances, retain control of the freehold of the small holding. It must sell to the farmer. The new Bill allows the holding to be leased to the applicant as a tenant of the public Council. If this clause may be taken as an expression of the policy of the Board of Agriculture, and if it be adopted by the County Councils, and the old system of sale abolished, then it is undoubtedly a step in the right direction. Under the old law the public Council does not go beyond the duties of an estate agent. It merely buys the land and passes it over to the farmer on easy terms. But the new law will allow the Council to constitute itself a permanent landowner on behalf of the community. The difference is important; for under the existing law, a small holder is flung out into the open market, and must ultimately disappear; for exactly the same reason that has caused the disappearance of the yeomen farmers who were absorbed by the large owners. The new system will keep the land in the hands of the community.

Again, and this may be found to be the most effective clause in the new Bill, the State, represented by the Board of Agriculture and the local Councils, is at last to have the power to aid the organisation of co-operative action between farmers, and especially by the establishment of credit banks. Such co-operative working is an established principle of all successful Continental systems of agriculture; and that we in England have not realised this fact, shows with unpleasant conclusiveness that we are dwellers in a land of dreams. Again, land for small holdings may be acquired under compulsion, and there is not to be any added price on that account. Further, the Board of Agriculture, without the intervention of the County Council rates, can buy land and show by the reasoning of hard facts that small holdings are feasible politics for wise men; and the Board can, out of Treasury grants, pay the legal and preliminary expenses attending the purchase of land by a Council, though the Board cannot in such case pay for the land itself.

Now all these various points in the new Bill which I have rapidly sketched in outline, are good after their kind. The sum total effect is that if it be possible for small holdings to exist under present economic conditions, then the machinery for their acquisition will be in a fairly workable state. One very important matter has certainly been forgotten; a small holder requires not merely the bare land; he needs also the capital of stock and implements. And if the Government means serious business it will add a clause which will allow these things to be provided, and the holdings charged with so much additional rent. But assuming for the moment that this Bill is really going to create the small holder and the allotment worker in appreciable quantities, what is going to be the end of them? Have we any reason to believe that the small man in agriculture will survive in the struggle with Capital, when he cannot survive in industry and commerce? The small holder will have to sell his produce in the open market side by side with the man of money. Does this Bill give the poorer man any protection against his economic master? Not much, I fancy. And if the small holder thrive under the new system laid down in this Bill, are we quite sure that it will be for the good of the community? Are small holdings an unnecessary survival of mediæval days? One folds up this Radical scheme of legislation with all kinds of doubts and hesitations.

G. R. S. TAYLOR.

Hustling and Modern Hotel Building.

It is impossible to view the numberless hotels which of late have been springing up all over England, and especially in London, without some feelings of regret at many lost opportunities. If all these buildings had been the best which the age could have produced, they would have created a revolution in popular taste; for what more powerful instrument could there be for the education of public taste than the hotels at which so much leisure is spent? Such a hope, however, is futile. It is what the practical man calls outside of "the sphere of practical politics." These hotels are not built by philanthropists or art enthusiasts anxious to educate the public taste, but for the profits that are to be got out of them. Hotel schemes are not as a rule even promoted by hotel managers or proprietors, but in the vast majority of cases by speculators. A furnishing firm, a building contractor, and sometimes an architect put their heads together and come to the conclusion that a hotel in a certain place might be profitable. They form a syndicate, not by subscribing capital, but by pooling their labour. No one receives payment, but each is allotted shares to the value of his work. When the hotel is built they float a company to take it off their hands, and make as big a profit as possible on the turnover. When they have got their money out of one scheme they set to work on another. And so on and so on, until hotels are overbuilt and a slump arrives which will tie up the capital involved for ever.

Once in possession of these facts and much that is disappointing in hotel building will be understood. To the exigencies of company flotation everything is sacrificed. It is necessary to impress the public with the fact that the scheme has behind it some go-ahead men. The scheme accordingly must be rushed at a tremendous rate. A building which in the ordinary course of things would take four or five years to build, is put up in a twelvemonth. Money is wasted wholesale in the rush; but that doesn't matter. The thing is to impress the public. If that can be done the money will be subscribed. If not, who knows what will happen? These schemes are invariably undertaken in a hurry. A furnishing firm is running short of orders. They have a huge factory to keep going. Something must be done immediately. A hotel scheme is decided upon. An architect is called in and the foundations are laid before there is time to look round. In many of these schemes only very rough drawings are out when the work is commenced; just sufficient to pass the local body. And so from start to finish. There is no time to work out the details properly or to get all the accessory details made in such a way as would exactly suit. There is no alternative but to take the nearest that can be picked up. They telegraph to this firm and to that firm, asking what they have in stock as they run short. Men are working one on the top of the other. Mistakes are made wholesale. That doesn't matter. Get it finished. That is the only thing of consequence.

Needless to say, all this hustle impresses itself on the architecture. A hotel must be designed according to the terms of the hustle. In a really fine piece of architecture the interior and exterior treatment will be organic; but in work of this kind all such treatment is out of the question. Exterior and interior must be designed separately, for the structure will be well on the way before there will be time to consider the interior. If an initial error has been made, then make the best of it. It is too late to change. The interior decorations will be such as can be put into position in the shortest time. It is the last lap. The hotel has been advertised to open on a certain date, and there are endless rooms to finish. Modelling in position is out of the question; only applied work may be used. In a word, anything that can be done in a hurry is done. That is the recipe for hotel decoration.

Compare such conditions with the conditions under which architecture was produced in the past, and you

gain an insight into the cause of much that is bad in modern architecture. The mediæval craftsman worked leisurely. He got his stone from a neighbouring quarry and had time to carefully select it. He hewed his wood from the adjoining forest and had time to season it. He had time to think out every detail properly as he went along, and bought nothing out of stock. His conditions, in fact, were human conditions. Everything helped him. But, then, that was an age of faith and consecration and service, while ours is one of hustle and money-getting, and that makes all the difference. The conditions which I have described of hotel building are in this respect the worst of all, though they apply to a greater or less extent to most of modern work. It is easy to understand why there is so much sloppy design and workmanship about when these conditions are understood. In spite of enormous sums of money spent on such buildings, there is absolutely no prospect of being able to spend to any advantage. In America it is even worse than here. If the architect there does not get his plans out in a week (though they would take six at least to get out properly), his clients take the job away from him. Hustle, hustle, hustle. These are the terms on which the public expect to get architecture in these days. Is it surprising if they don't always get it?

A. J. PENTY.

Socialism and Patriotism.

ON no subject probably is there more loose thinking and loose talking than on this one of Patriotism. The article by "R. M." on "Socialism and Nationalism," which appeared in these columns last week, is an excellent case in point. The main causes of confusion are two. Firstly, a failure to recognise the fact that patriotism is an irrational sentiment, which no sort of rational argument can touch; and, secondly, the careless—or deliberate—trick of using the word to cover all sentiments of a humanitarian or altruistic nature. The first cause is responsible for the extraordinary confusion in "R. M.'s" mind between patriotism itself and its various manifestations. "R. M." suggests that when patriotism expresses itself through ignorant and unenlightened people in the form of an impossible nationalism, it is no longer patriotism at all. That is to say patriotism must produce good results or it is not the genuine article. We are to commit the absurdity of judging the reality—not the value, mind you, but the reality—of an emotion by the ultimate consequences of its action. The corollary of this is that if a man goes out to die for his country in a mistaken cause, he is no patriot; in fact, that no man can be a patriot unless he or his leaders have political foresight.

Now the sentiment patriotism is a perfectly simple thing. It is a love of one's country or race and a desire to see it foremost in any and every field of activity. It is, as I have said, an alogical emotion; without an intellectual or a moral basis. It stands by itself as a phenomenon which may easily be accounted for objectively by National Selection, but which has not necessarily any subjective explanation whatever. All we can say is that we find in most men a quite unreasonable bias in favour of a particular competitor in the international struggle; just as we find in most parents a quite unreasonable bias in favour of their own offspring. To assert that the entities, England, France, or Germany, which are the objects of patriotic feeling, are really non-existent is a mere philosophic futility. Even if it were true, it would be hopelessly irrelevant, for patriotism makes no claim to be logical in its preferences and ambitions. To take a concrete example. Suppose your country is rushing into a war which you regard as morally wrong or as politically foolish. Naturally you do your utmost to stop it. But once the fatal step has been taken, shots have been fired, men have been killed—well, "blood is thicker than water" you remark, or give some other equally inadequate reason for your apparent irresponsibility; and you drop your speechifying and pick up a rifle to help. This is practically what I understand General Botha did at the beginning of the Boer War, and it was the typical patriotic thing to do.

Of course, it's a quick, unreasonable course of action; possibly a stupid one; very likely wrong from the humanitarian point of view—but there's no doubt about its being patriotic.

But, although this patriotism is a sufficiently simple thing in itself, yet in its manifestations it shows unlimited diversity. At the present time it can express itself only in two main forms as Nationalism or as Imperialism, because nations and empires are the only forms of international organisation in existence. But these forms are necessarily altered and varied by many circumstances. Thus Irish Nationalism is a totally different thing from Italian Nationalism, partly because of the difference in the situations of the two nations, and partly because of the difference in their character and political acumen. Besides, patriotism being essentially a prejudice, is often, nay generally, found allied with other local prejudices and conceits of a vulgar and possibly harmful character. And this, I admit, is particularly the case when it expresses itself as Nationalism. Now "R. M." has tried to do what some Socialists in this country are always trying to do. He conceives that patriotism in its ordinary sense may prove an obstacle in the path of Socialism, and so, instead of coming out into the open and boldly saying that it is a superstition and a nuisance, as German—and some English—Socialists are quite prepared to say, he seeks to identify—or at least to incorporate—"true patriotism" with humanitarianism, with "a desire to do one's best for man as a single species." Thus the whole issue—and for Socialists it is a momentous issue—is shirked and jingo brickbats are avoided by the sacrifice of clarity and sense. For the very word patriotism involves a limitation—geographical or racial—of the sentiment which it denotes. It doesn't much matter what the limits are; they may be National, Imperial, Anglo-Saxon, or, as might well happen if the Yellow Peril became a reality, European. But they must be there. To say that true patriotism involves a desire to benefit the whole human race is as absurd as to say that true filial piety should embrace cousins and nieces as well as parents. So clearly is patriotism different from the generalised love of humanity that the two sentiments may often come into conflict in the mind of an intelligent person. Thus, suppose—what is an extreme but perfectly conceivable case—that it was clearly desirable from the point of view of humanity at large that a certain nation or race whose stock was hopelessly depreciated should be prevented from occupying much-needed space and contaminating other stocks, by extermination. Suppose, again, that a certain individual belonging to this race fully realised the position, and rightly concluded that it was his duty to deliver his country to the exterminators. Now, would "R. M." say that this individual's action was patriotic? If he does, I can only reply that he has very little regard for the common decencies of lingual expression.

CLIFFORD SHARP.

Women in Finland.

ON May 29 last year the Finnish nation astonished itself and the civilised world by wresting from his Imperial Majesty the Czar of Russia a new Constitution of a more radical and democratic nature than is enjoyed by any other European country. In March this year the first elections under this new Constitution took place, and we are now able to record the result of the first election in a European country in which all adults over twenty-three voted, and were eligible for election to the Diet, or Parliament. The names of the first women members of Parliament elected in Europe are Minna Sillampaa, Marie Laine, Muna Kanervo, Ida Aalle, Hilja Amanda Parssinen, Jenny Maria Kilpainen, Anna Huotari, Maria Rannio, H. Kalikoski, Ida Wimmelpuu, Alexandra Grippenbergh, Hedwig Gebhardt, Lusi Kivioja, Evelina Ala-Kulju, Dagmar Neovins, and Hilda Rasanen. The first nine belong to the Socialist Party; the next six to the Old Finnish Party; and the two last to the Swedish National Party and the Agrarian Party respectively. The total number of De-

puties is 200, so that nearly a tenth part of the Finnish Parliament is composed of women. To us women who are fighting in this country the cause of equal political rights for women, it is of interest to know that our sisters in Finland have acquitted themselves so well at the ballot-box, and have been so ready to take advantage at once of the privilege to elect their fellow-women, whom they felt would help in wise legislative reforms. As, therefore, I was in Finland last year with the express purpose of studying this infant prodigy so lately born into the prosaic constitutional family of Europe, a few lines on the more recent causes that have led up to this reawakening of a nation may not be out of place at the present moment.

The inhabitants of the country are either pure Finns, pure Swedes, or, in a few cases, a mixture of the two races; for the Finns (a branch of the Mongolian race), having been conquered in the twelfth century by the Swedes, received from their conquerors the Christian religion, with what culture and civilisation the Western world then possessed; and had, as a result, like the Celts, to suffer the rigid suppression of their own religion, tradition, language, and nationality. All through the middle ages any Finn who aspired to learning or to follow a profession had to pursue his purpose through the medium of the Swedish language and culture; the peasantry had to serve as soldiers in the quarrels of their conquerors; and the land of Finland itself became the battlefield during countless generations of the two opposing forces of Sweden and of Russia. When, in 1809, the arms of Russia finally prevailed, and Alexander I annexed the Grand Duchy, he swore to uphold its ancient constitution, under which Sweden had governed and administered; and he and his immediate successors, who, at their coronation took a similar oath, kept faithfully their word. One of the provisions in this oath was that Finnish men should not be called upon to serve in the Imperial Army; and it remained for the Shuffler with Fate, who occupies at the present moment the throne of his ancestors, to be the first to break that oath and to attempt to force the free and educated men of Finland into the ranks of his loathed legionaries. Why he failed in this attempt on the liberties of the Grand Duchy is a good deal due to the action of Alexander I, who, by guaranteeing peace to Finland after centuries of struggle and combat, gave the Finns a chance to recover and develop their national ideal. Modern Finnish culture is of a century's growth only, and dates from the time when Alexander I removed the University from Åbo, the ancient capital, and gave it a splendid home in his new capital of Helsingfors. Co-education of the sexes is the rule through primary, secondary, and university courses, and is practically free to all those who are able to take advantage of it. The girl university students in their white peaked caps are a feature at Helsingfors; and there is little doubt but that the higher standard of education among all classes and both sexes has helped considerably in the political results of the recent elections.

Finland is a land of forests, waterfalls, lakes, and moors, where agriculture, its principal industry, is carried on under conditions that imply a strenuous, and often heartbreaking, struggle with northern nature forces. This struggle has made the race hardy, tenacious, determined, and thoughtful. Their national hero, Wainamöinen (in the epic of Kalevala) was no conquering Viking, but a seer, a poet, renowned for foresight and wisdom. The summer is short and ardent in this land of the north; while winter nights are long, and lend themselves to study and reflection; judging from what I saw of Finland, I should say the Finns were essentially a reading and reflective race, and their eclectic choice in literature is very remarkable. Far and away the best shops in Helsingfors are book shops, and their number, in proportion to the size of the town (of about 140,000 inhabitants), is to us Britons surprising. Though there is no shop in the capital of Finland where diamonds can be bought, there are dozens where one can find translations of the best past and present classics of France, Germany, and England; and as the Swedish language is spoken equally with that of the Finns, the whole of Scandinavian literature,

including, of course, the writings of the Masters, Ibsen and Björnson, is part of their birthright. They are ardent, but often critical, admirers of our modern school of writers; and Professor Wilson, of Cambridge, who holds the appointment at the Helsingfors University of Lecturer on the English language and literature, gave last spring a series of lectures to a public outside university circles on the writings of Mr. George Bernard Shaw, and has promised another on the works of Mr. George Meredith.

Finland not being a rich country, there are no great cleavages between classes, and no great contrasts between the rich and the poor. It is the custom also for women of all classes to work, and they are frankly accepted by men as comrades and fellow workers in most branches of activity. I never once in Finland heard the complaint that one so often hears in England of women "competing" with men or "ousting men from employment." The daughters of landowners and of ministers act as cashiers in banks or as book-keepers and clerks in offices; and when their day's work is over are charming and cultured hostesses in their own homes. Among other employments taken up by the women of the people is that of builder's labourer; they are organised with the rest of the workers in the building trade, and earn better wages than in most other unskilled occupations. During a recent strike in the building trade, based on a demand for a nine hours instead of a ten hours day, the women came out on strike with the rest of the builders and won with them the shorter hours victory. On all the Finnish steamers on which I travelled the cooks and stewards were young girls, who performed, under the orders of an elder woman, their duties both quietly and efficiently.

It was difficult to realise, as I watched the present organised and orderly life of the people, that they had, during the last few years, gone through such political troubles and vicissitudes; yet one had only to talk with some ardent politician (and they were nearly all ardent politicians), or watch the way in which the natives shunned the hated wearers of the Russian uniform, to understand why the names of Bobrikoff, Von Plehve, and the Procurator Johnson were bywords; and why the men who were instrumental in removing them were looked upon as heroes and martyrs in their country's cause. One of my most interesting experiences and memories will always be the witnessing of some of the last sittings of the hereditary Chamber of Nobles, who were voluntarily laying down their privileges and tacitly admitting they were an anachronism, a blot on the democratic scutcheon. With all the old ceremonial observances the stately President Van Born entered the Hall of Assembly, where the members rose and remained standing till he was seated. Around on the walls hung the coats of arms of the three hundred or more noble families sending representatives to the Upper Chamber; below, in a semi-circle, sat these representatives, gravely debating, recording their votes, and taking part in divisions. But the ceremonial I watched was indeed, in every sense of the word, a "passing show," for all around in the galleries was the tense electric atmosphere of radical change. The old order was passing away under my eyes, and the members of that ancient assembly were assisting at their own political funeral. Here was, indeed, modern history in the making, and I held my breath as I glanced round at the galleries, packed to overflowing with the youth of renaissance, triumphant Finland, who were there, like myself, to witness the last throes of legislative privilege. Girl and young men students leant forward, thoughtful and entranced; others exulted and chatted in whispers during the progress of the prolonged and cumbersome divisions. Lusty young Democracy was visibly knocking at the door, and worn out custom was taking a lingering and shivering farewell. . . .

"And just as I am witnessing this last sitting of this hereditary chamber in Finland," was my thought, as I turned from the gallery, leaving the young politicians in possession of the field, "so some day, someone will be watching the last sitting at Westminster of an ancient and hereditary. . . ." But that, like the immediate development of brave little Finland, will be another story! . . .

DORA B. MONTEFIORE.

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THE NEW AGE.

JUNE 6, 1907

No Autumn Session.

THE decision of the Cabinet to hold no autumn sittings this year will come as a sort of mild surprise to some and as a shocking disappointment to others. Coleridge used to scoff at people who sought amusement without ever having served the muses; and the present Government's determination to take a holiday falls under the same category. The indefatigable Labour Party, having no Society fish to fry, petitioned, we observe, to be allowed to labour during the autumn at Westminster; though it could scarcely be with much hope of getting anything done. It becomes increasingly obvious, in fact, even to the Liberals themselves, that the Government can do nothing more than pretend to do something. For the sake of appearances a few Bills must be got through; but for the rest that inert majority of three hundred would induce any Government to take things easily. Why should one exert oneself when one is quite safe?

Thirteen items appeared in the King's Speech for the present Session. Of those thirteen, seven have never been introduced, two have been introduced only to die

of fright on the threshold of their enterprise; and the rest are kicking their heels in the House of Commons somewhere between first and third reading. Among the seven measures promised, but never introduced, are the Miners' Eight Hours Day and the Licensing Reform Bill; it was specially to pass the former that the Labour Party desired an autumn sitting. In addition the country was promised a first rate and no-nonsense attack on the House of Lords; and a wee wee instalment of Old Age Pensions; both of which promises remain, as yet, in the almsbasket of words.

Now we are not so ungenerous as to exult over the slain, more particularly as so many of our friends are among the corpses. In fact, the Socialist Party is daily recruiting dissatisfied and defeated Liberals, who quite naturally expect that Socialists will prove more Liberal than the Liberals. This, of course, is an amiable delusion; for Socialists are not more Liberal than Liberals any more than they are more Tory than Tories. In fact, since the bases of Liberalism and Toryism, whatever they may be politically, are economically identical, our recent Liberal recruits are to be warned that Socialism is opposed to Liberalism and Conservatism in exactly equal measure. That our attention should be directed for the present to the weakness of Liberals is due simply to the defect of Tory power; for we may as well confess that Socialism has rods in pickle for the next Conservative majority compared with which our Liberal rods are merely Jeroboam's whips to Rehoboam's scorpions. This, however, by no means stays our hand in its present task of demonstrating week by week what everybody (except a few of our readers) is about to grasp, namely, that Liberal economics will not reduce by a single unit the army of twelve million paupers and worse that this country allows to remain prisoners of capital and to be treated worse than the natives of the Congo.

That we may be as impartial as most mortals, let us freely admit that the present Government is not without virtues. We count to them for righteousness the granting of Home Rule to the Transvaal, and the promise of Home Rule to the Orange River Colony. Mr. Haldane's Bill for the Army is like the curate's egg—excellent in parts. The Taff Vale decision is reversed, and thanks are due. Altogether, in short, we can make out the respectable total of twenty services rendered by the present Liberal Government. But, on the other side of the shield, what a record. Would that the shield were like Tennyson's Modred's—blank! Is there any balm in Ireland? or in India? or even in South Africa? Nobody doubts that this country and these countries are almost as fatigued with Liberalism as ever they were with Toryism. Everywhere the cry of Tariff Reform is rising; nearly eight hundred petitions for preference were sent by various bodies to the Imperial Conference. Virtuously the Liberals lost heavily on the visit of the Colonial Premiers; and what they lost the Tories won. Ireland—but why drag in Ireland? Again, it is plain that the defeated ranks of the Conservatives are plucking up heart. Mr. Balfour is now among the prophets of Protection; and the great Curzon is expected shortly on the Front Opposition Bench. Incidentally, Mr. Bonar Law is, we understand, becoming quite a Goliath. The omens are indeed bad.

As for the immediate prospects, let us survey them. The Small Holdings Bill is to the good—so far; Mr. McKenna may be trusted to make his peace with the Nonconformists; Mr. Birrell's head is perhaps to be offered on a charger to the daughter of Herodias. And behind all this looms the great House of Lords. Will the Government dissolve on the question, after due snowballing? The House of Lords is at least as popular as the House of Commons; and we can quite realise Aedipus and the Sphinx changing places. Against the drums and trumpets of Imperialism and Tariff Reform it is astonishing what little chance the battle-cry of "Down with the House of Lords" will have.

In the face of all this, with ignominious death staring them eye to eye, the Cabinet has decided to take an autumn holiday. Verily, the cock sparrow plumeth himself while the hunter is drawing the trigger.

The Silence of Adolescence.

MANY philosophers have said that life is a dream, but nobody believes it; not even the young, whose dreams make them a strange, silent race walking among us like reproachful angels. We think them stupid, for I am talking of the young in their early teens, when they are quite unattractive to the rest of the world. From two years old till six every child is a delight; but from the age of seven onwards they become aggressive and a little demonic. But a change comes sooner or later, and long before his relations know it the child finds out that his own imagination is a wonderful fairyland, full of castles in the air, full of enchanted forests and worlds of marvellous adventure. He becomes silent, for with the usual perversity of our race he finds that although his mind is fuller than it ever has been or ever will be again, he can express nothing but the most foolish platitudes, and he feels keenly the contrast between what he feels and what he can express. The time of adolescence is the great blossoming time of subjective life; all the dreams that go to form the character and tastes of the future man or woman are crowding each other in their haste to be chosen.

What do we do to help our girls and boys at this time? We simply pity them and say: "they are at the awkward age." We try to escape their silent presence; we feel they are beginning to criticise our conversation and manners and we revenge ourselves by ordering them about and laughing at their uncouth ways. We are only really happy if we can send them to school and get them out of the way. Yet this awkward, dangerous age is one in which nearly everyone remembers having experienced wonderful emotions of enthusiasm, and turmoils of spiritual doubts and hopes. One is generally more or less of an outcast; one is expected to do one's lessons and get on with one's arithmetic just at the time when one would desire above all things to listen to the discourses of Socrates on the nature of the soul or dream over the passionate poetry which makes reality so dim by comparison. The adolescent is not given a chance in the modern world; but if clever people take the trouble to overcome the difficulty of winning his confidence, they find him the best of listeners and the most intelligent of disciples. It is only a clever talker that can really be of any service to the adolescent; it is only someone that will accept a little tedious adoration who can endure children just leaving childhood and waiting in the wonderland of poetry and romance. All the possibilities of life are seen then under the magnifying glass of the future; just as in old age life is minimised and existence looks grey and small seen in the dim failing vision of the past.

Some people keep young and become permanent adolescents; and they are considered a little wanting; their interests lie in what are considered unimportant things; but the culture of their souls progresses far more during a life spent in making enthusiastic mistakes than in a life spent in getting on in the world. "After all, what are we here for, that's what I want to know," said a London cabman one day last summer; and another one replied:

"Well, we've got to get something to eat and drink, I suppose." That seems to be most people's idea of the reason of existence nowadays. But it only seems to be so. We all know very well that we should be leading very empty lives if the end of life was to keep up a race whose only object was to renew itself from day to day and from generation to generation. We must be conscious of some spiritual quest, because not one of us is born that has not gone through a spiritual crisis some time between the ages of twelve and eighteen. We each write our own book of Ecclesiastes during those bitter silent years. Our ideals fail us, and we know our dreams are vanity; then we are said to have arrived at years of discretion. And we go on (unless, indeed, we refuse to grow up) propagating and nourishing, nourishing and propagating.

Why cannot more of us refuse to grow up? It is, after all, quite unnecessary. Most successful women

succeed because they have never grown up; and a kind Providence sees them through all sorts of dangers and difficulties. They keep the charm of adolescence all through their lives. The wonderful richness of the adolescent life is used by artists and poets who have common sense enough to remember the visions they saw when they were young; but, unhappily, all successful men and unsuccessful women choose to grow up; and to grow up means that "we've got to get something to eat and drink." When once that conviction is fixed in the mind the subjective life sickens and dies by degrees, and adolescence is gone from us. The nature of this strange emotional state, which is an enormous force and has powers a little akin to the abnormal powers of a person under the influence of hypnotism has been studied by many psychologists in its abnormal manifestations. I think they have agreed to call the state subliminal, and they admit that in it very nearly any undertaking or process of reasoning can be carried through, if the incipient idea has been suggested to it. The incipient idea may be true or false, but it will be manifested successfully if the subliminal mind is left to work it out on its own lines. If we recognise that this extraordinary power of the mind called faith or imagination is in its full power during the period of adolescence it will at once be seen how very necessary it is that right ideas should be made available at this really impressionable period. Instead of shutting up the young and herding them together in the schools, they should travel and associate with people of exceptional brilliancy. They should be encouraged to read the biographies of great men, and everything possible should be done to impress them with ideas that will tinge their minds with the real aristocracy that gives value to any particular human being.

To give practical effect to a scheme of this kind it would be necessary for the big public schools to institute a travelling staff of men who were keen original observers with a critical appreciation of art and letters, who could travel with a few boys at a time. Adolescence lasts for a very short while, but it is the most important period in life. If it were generally recognised how much the future development depends on it, most parents would be willing to make a special effort to see their children taking full advantage of the great opportunity: the great opportunity of moulding their characters and tastes for good or evil. The impressions are now generally left altogether to chance, with the disastrous result that endless money is spent on young people at the universities long after all possibility of influencing them is over.

It is not much use when the period of calf-love has set in for any wise person to intervene; but that is the time which most attracts the attention of parents and guardians. Its results are apparent to the eye, and everything is done that can be done to avert its dangers—too late. If the care had been taken a year or two before, the disasters might have been avoided, the standards would have been raised, and indiscriminate, stupid vice would have become impossible because the nature of the child would have received the impression of a clean, temperate life while the mind was, as it were, liquid enough to take the shape of the mould. I have known parents who brought their children up without religion who have been glad to allow them to become Catholics in order to counteract the dangers of the calf-love period. But we have none of us hitherto realised that calf-love would not be the cause of so many disasters if the period of adolescence had been spent under the guidance of a Socratic leader.

FLORENCE FARR.

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Real Plays and "My Wife."

Our age is very poor, so we are all compelled to be making money in great haste. Our whole economic structure is unsafe, so we are all compelled to hurriedly pass on counterfeit credit to one another in order to avoid getting left. The art of "getting on" is the art of deceiving other people, and to do that adequately one must first deceive oneself, and so be sincere. With this "sincerity" one proceeds to make a mess of all human and social relationships, and produces something like an inebriated hash of cinematograph pictures, sizzling and flickering across a screen. This cinematographic welter of fear, pretence, and primitive necessity is imagined to be life, and wanting amusement for that life, and drama for it, "My Wife" is conceived and born in the dramatic author's brain. But every kind of necessity is left out.

It is astonishing what an entirely blank effect the display of wit in "My Wife" does create. Grins and chuckles and laughs abound in the theatre, but it is all the time as though some invisible physiologist were flitting about, stimulating the laugh muscles with an electric battery. If the play were about something, or getting at something, the laughter and grins would be flourishes around some satisfying central emotion. As the play is a reflex of shams, the laughter and grins become as the symbols of a vain worship.

The play is capitalist art in excelsis, and the length of run will be a good test of the strength and vitality of the mirage of capitalism in the realm of ideas. The play is well acted; it is smart and bright and snappy, the machine goes clicking away on oiled cogs; it has many advantages; it lacks only an intelligent scheme of ideas. And the manner in which this affected the acting was most remarkable. The actors were very perfect in their parts, but yet they distinctly failed to get into relationship with each other. Each individual had studied each individual part, and acted individually. For instance, Mr. A. G. Mathews, as "Gibby," interrupted a scene between Mr. Aubrey Smith and Miss Marie Löhr as Gerald Eversleigh and Trixie, and the scene was no longer interrupted but transferred to him. When Mr. Matthews had finished acting, the scene between Mr. Smith and Miss Löhr proceeded. This was in no way the fault of the actors; it was a matter of the fundamental dramatic construction. The play is not one thing made up of a number of things welded together; it is many scenes cemented tile-like into a mosaic. Quite possibly the authors think otherwise; they may easily make the same mistake as politicians, who think they are appealing to a collectively conscious meeting, when they are addressing a mob of separate individuals standing near together. Perhaps even the actors may disagree, although the mechanical perfection which they are obliged to achieve in order to do their work and at the same time the comparative ease of that attainment ought to hold revelations. But no one of the audience who chooses to try and think below the surface of the play can come to any other conclusion. And herein is the secret of the possible safety of the production; there is not the slightest inducement to anyone to think about the play at all. The usual criticism of the play would be to say nothing about it and to remember it only as one remembers a bright window in Regent street. Unfortunately for the actors, the excessive individualisation of the play is achieved at a sacrifice of any living personality. Compare for a moment the acting in "Man and Superman" at the Court with that in "My Wife." The plays themselves are in such utterly different worlds that to compare them is impossible. In "My Wife" externals are everything; in "Man and Superman" externals are the fantastic garb of real things. Now in "My Wife" every actor's self stands out clear and distinctly illuminated; in "Man and Superman" every actor is a part of the others, and yet the result in the first play is an effect of no personality at all and in the second one of tremendous individuality. The actors in the Court play are people; in the Haymarket production

they are actors, not on their own merits, but on the demerits of the play. Beyond a certain point, in fact, the better "My Wife" is acted the worse the general effect. To have a detailed conception of a part of which a mere outline exists is obviously to strain the structure of the play past bearing. Mr. A. G. Mathews, for his virtues, does this several times. To get "My Wife" acted so as to present it to the audience as conceived and written by the authors, it would be necessary to secure a cast of Japanese or other foreign actors, none of whom understood a word of French or English. This cast could then be taught the sounds they must produce and the gestures they must use, and all would go swimmingly.

"My Wife" is the kind of play that leads theatrical managers searching for successes astray. They perceive in it all the elements of the artificial life capitalism produces, they recognise the cleverness of construction and the witty dialogue, and they think it will pay. Sometimes, I suppose, this kind of play does pay. In London at any rate there is such a large mass of unsocial and parasitic persons that comparatively few of them seeking bored amusement may keep things going. But at the best this type of stuff, with no backbone and no vitality, cannot succeed as well as the play which is founded upon a definite scheme of ideas.

The points that make a play successful are in reality glaringly obvious; it is the sweet-champagne atmosphere that surrounds all things theatrical that obscures the vision. Anyone who will compare "Charley's Aunt," "Man and Superman," "The Walls of Jericho," and "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch"—to take a few plays entirely at random—will soon see what these points are. That these plays are greatly different from one another is not the question; where they all succeed is in a certain plain and direct appeal to real human people. The appeal of "The Walls of Jericho" may be partly spurious, but nowadays, when we are all hungry and thirsty for some touch of reality, even the approaches in that play are received with enthusiasm. Possibly the philosophy of "Man and Superman" may appeal and repel some people, but its simple human appeal brushes their repulsion on one side. "Charley's Aunt" may be futile and parts of "Mrs. Wiggs" crude melodrama; nevertheless, as they deal with obviously real men and women in an environment easily realised, they go like wildfire. In fact, it does not matter a dump what is the subject of a play, in what stratum of life it takes place, or whether it has a plot or not, so long as somehow or another it gets into relation with ordinary human people. And the easiest way to do this is to have a play founded on some definite and intelligible philosophy of life. If someone, who may at the present time believe in a hell of fire and brimstone after death and the judgment, would write a play about these things that play would be an unqualified success, just as is "Man and Superman," written from a different standpoint. I have not mentioned the literary part of the business, the equipment of industry, capacity for experience and style, because those things are antecedent to any writing at all, and just as necessary for "My Wife" as for a real play. But I have a strong suspicion that even a baddish real play would go better than a quite decent production of the Haymarket type. What men and women are interested in is real men and women and ideas about them. Give them these, and plays will go. L. HADEN GUEST.



ART.

The New English Art Club.

THERE is very little that is obviously bad work in the New English Art Club Spring Exhibition; there is much that is quite interesting; there are just one or two pictures of value. And that is saying a good deal for one of the annual shows. Art is not something which is certain to happen in time for the hanging committee. Indeed, when the great picture is painted, it is scarcely an ideal arrangement to place it to tell its message on the somewhat heterogeneously decorated walls of a mixed gallery. There is usually something about the master's work which is too finely balanced to stand the jolts and jars of a rough-and-tumble scramble for the attention of passing strangers at a picture show. The best work is not understood at a glance; it is subtle and elusive, or whatever may be their equivalents in art circles. All which semi-theological exercises are not easily performed in a Bond Street Gallery. Which leads me to write of Mr. Rothenstein's "Reading the Megillap" (109). It is probably the most important picture in the room; it has the air which suggest enduring interest, probably because it deals with nothing less passing than the essentials of human nature. There are three men whom I take to be Jewish priests (I may be entirely mistaken, for my encyclopædia offers no hint as to the nature of the book). Each seems a type specimen of human character, put down with the knowledge of a psychologist and the technical skill of an artist. I confess that it needed a second visit before the intellectual mine in this picture began to open up to me. It is a three act drama condensed, without confusion, into one scene. If you desire a wide contrast to this soberly coloured (richly toned, withal) and sombre work, go straight over to Mr. L. A. Harrison's "Portrait Sketch" (144). It is not a sketch in any real sense of that word, but a brilliantly finished picture that apparently went down on the canvas with the almost startling vivacity that alone could seize that vivacious pose. It is quite successful. Mr. John also shows several studies and sketches in pencil; but they are little else than what he claims for them. I venture to think that they have small right to a place in a public gallery. Of course, they exhibit Mr. John's skill of drawing, but I fail to see that they have that quality of finished work which alone should appear before the world. There is, after all, a real boundary between the school and the exhibition room. The manuscripts of Shakespeare, with the poet's interlinings and corrections would have a technical interest, doubtless, but not on the stage, surely. Mr. Sickert's (37) and (48) are both things of few strokes, nevertheless they give complete ideas, and there is no dissipation of the attention by speculations concerning the finished picture. Go to the drawings of Holbein if you would find the proper standard in these matters: each line in them seems ready to face the Recording Angel without a further word of excuse or explanation. Each is a finished work.

There are three landscapes by Mr. W. G. von Glehn, which must not be overlooked; indeed they insist on recognition by the sheer boldness of their handling of colour and composition. "The Road to Bury" is, perhaps, lit with the "light that never was on land or sea"; but one always suspected that any special revelations vouchsafed would be granted in the neighbourhood of the Sussex Downs. And this same artist has seen great ideas of atmosphere in the vicinity of Battersea Birdge (108). But perhaps the most satisfying landscape in the room is Mr. David Muirhead's "Meadows" (145); there is a fine feeling of restfulness in its classic composition and silvery green trees. There is much magical light of the subtlest kind in Mr. Holmes' "On the Grand Junction Canal" (103); and it is strange to consider how he has so missed success in his (149) with its disagreeable sense of smooth paint and a splash of white smoke to disturb the unity of the picture. Mr. Muirhead Bone's "View near Leeds" (42) has that touch of uniqueness and rich tone which makes it one of the most remarkable works of the show.

G. R. S. T.

MUSIC.

A Note on Mischa Elman.

OF Mischa Elman it may now be said that he has won for himself a place amongst the greatest violinists of our time. When he made his first appearance in London he was considered by many tired people as being merely another symptom of the dreadful epidemic of wonder-children that has warred furiously in the Metropolis on and off for the past ten years or so. Prodigies have come and gone as frequently and regularly as influenza; we suffer from them and recover, having learned, if we are wise, the necessity of patience and toleration. Mischa Elman is not a malady, nor a symptom of one. He is an artist, an individualist, and one whose maturity of style and expression entitles him to all the serious consideration we give to a Ternina or a Paderewski. In other words, he matters very much. In mere technique his skill is phenomenal, but in these days of the culture of high speed in everything—in automobiles and Chopin's Study in Black Notes—we do not attach anything more than secondary importance to his technical attainments. We are tired of the tyranny of the virtuoso, but we must nevertheless thank him in that he has made high technique a necessity. It is obvious that technique was always a necessity. But the inordinate worship of technique for its own sake, as in Mark Hambourg or Cinquevalli, is surely a terrible prostration, a dreadful form of fetish worship. Personally it amuses me very much to watch Mr. Horace Goldin's "mysteries" at the Palace Theatre. I like it; but then no claim is made to my æsthetic sense, and I merely take a childish pleasure in following with my eyes all the movements on the stage, only to be finally bewildered and confounded by the sheer perfection of the man's technique. I applaud, but I know that Mr. Goldin has committed no crime against the canons of true art. Our musical mountebanks should really be asked to perform at Olympia or the Hippodrome, in the centre of the arena with, say, a lady in tights on a white horse cantering round during the recital and a baby elephant to assist in a tarantella.

When we listen to Mischa Elman or Fritz Kreisler executive difficulties are forgotten. But in listening to Mark Hambourg one forgets that the acrobat at the piano may be an artist. For one has precisely the same feeling as a spectator at some athletic tourney where the problem is one of physical science rather than demonstration of æsthetic feeling. We are struck with his amazing agility, his perfectly astounding technique, while all our sense of music is revolted. But when Elman plays his fiddle we think of his agility afterwards, marvelling, when he is playing, upon the new beauties that he displays to us in works that we thought we knew very well, such as the great Beethoven Concerto or even the hackneyed Concerto of Mendelssohn. And Elman has one other great gift which makes him almost unique as a violinist. It is that he can make absurd music like Wieniawski's sound quite charming by the sheer quality of his tone. By his phrasing of passages in Mendelssohn he endows them with an importance they never seem to possess when played sweetly by the average good violinist. It is like listening to a beautiful voice speak some lines of Longfellow or Tennyson—some banal sentiment, maybe. The words, as words, receive some new beauty in utterance, the vowels ring with some new sensuousness, and what was before but a borrowed beauty of thought, but the duldest of middle-class philosophy, becomes imbued with dignity, seems profound and noble. This is hypnotic art. But let us afterwards take up the same poem or the same sonata, analyse carefully in the cold light of reason, and we shall find again only the counterfeit, only the bourgeois sentiment. This is disillusion. And what does this mean, all this enchantment? It is the test of genius. Elman's art is that he makes you believe that what he is playing is beautiful, when (as in parts of the concertos of Beethoven and Tchaikowski which I heard him play recently) it is often nonsense. They are few indeed who have this wonderful power, but this youth, still in his teens, is one of the few. X.

LITERATURE.

Superman Consciousness.

"Consciousness: Animal, Human, and Superman." By A. R. Orage. 2s. net. (T.P.S., Bond Street, London.)

England has been trembling on the verge of the Socialism that levels down for half a century; and the shade of Nietzsche, more powerful in death than ever in life, overshadows the great reforming movement and informs it with the aristocratic spirit. Mr. A. R. Orage, who rides on the wings of many storms, has already made clear this great mission of the dead master in his little book on Nietzsche; and now in this book on "Consciousness: Animal, Human, and Superman," we realise that Mr. Orage's mind is equipped by nature and subtle Eastern practices to give us a far clearer idea of Superhuman or Aristocratic Consciousness than we gather from the songs of Nietzsche or from Shaw's great classic, "Man and Superman," with its preface, notes, and appendix. Mr. Orage is more intimately in touch with Greek and Brahmic traditions than Mr. Shaw; he has the knack of entering into such phases of existence and holding them up to our view, warm and throbbing with their own ecstasies; whereas Mr. Shaw has such an antipathy to vivisection in any form that he often loses these qualities of lifelike representation, and examines the dead forms of things with a critical distaste quite alien to Mr. Orage's instincts.

The Superman or Hero-Aristocrat is, then, according to Mr. Orage, to be identified with the transcendental consciousness; the morning star which precedes the dawn of day. Curiously enough, in many systems of mysticism this state of consciousness which guides us in spite of ourselves is the forerunner of a more supreme state still. This state of consciousness, now identified by leading modern thinkers as the state called superman, is mystically feminine. It is Isis, who will bring forth Horus the Saviour; in later systems, the virgin of the world; the wisdom praised by the writer of Ecclesiastes. It has often been said jokingly that Superman is Woman; but it is only woman in her symbolic sense of wisdom as the field of the new birth we all await. The Transcendental Consciousness is fully defined in Mr. Orage's book. In one passage he says:—

"The ecstatic state of perception is insight, which is swift winged judgment; the ecstatic state of reasoning is imagination which is a swift-winged process of deduction and induction. The swift summing of what in human consciousness is a series constitutes in short the superman faculties in relation to our own."

The great question for us is insight of what? Intuition of what? That is why we seek to become supermen. We seek to know even as we are known; and perhaps that time will come when we have practised long enough in this world of dreams when our illusionary sense of free will bestowed on us by the superman, the lord of our prison house, has been exercised, and wisdom blossoms on our graves.

FLORENCE FARR.

Sixty Years.

"Sixty Years of Citizen Work and Play." By William Phillips. (London: Alexander and Shephard.)

The author of this volume of miscellaneous good things was a born citizen. Educated in the school of Bright and Cobden, he became an earnest and uncompromising supporter of Free Trade; and in all matters relating to the moral and industrial welfare of the people he was an ardent advocate. He was firmly convinced that Trades Unions were the only means by which working men could secure justice from their

employers, and his sense of fairness was never more shown than on one occasion when he considered the men of the Midlands were in the wrong, and got George Potter to interview the men, and thus averted the impending strike.

Among other papers the book contains Mr. Phillips's contributions to "Punch," a large number of lively "bits" called Divagations, and letters from men of note, including such diverse characters as Richard Cobden, Herbert Spencer, Shirley Brookes, Chas. S. Parnell, and Sir Wilfrid Lawson.

In his old age Mr. Phillips, though an optimist at heart, utters one note of lament; he regrets that the young men of the present day do not read books that nourish thought, and too frequently make sport their fetish.

Continuation Schools.

Social Questions of the Day, No. 5. "Continuation Schools from a Higher Point of View." By J. B. Paton, M.A., D.D. New Edition. 6d. net. (James Clarke and Co.)

We doubt whether a single living soul has any complete idea of modern education, either as regards its present influence or as regards its needs. Dr. Paton is honourably distinguished among educationists for his insistence on "recreative education," but he is almost a Baptist in the Wilderness. Unfortunately he falls into the common error of imagining that codes and administrative machinery can improve things. The fact, of course, is that persons alone determine the social value of education. Design a perfect code and leave it to be administered by stupid teachers, and the effect is appalling; make a bad code and give it to intelligent teachers, they will make a good code of it. Dr. Paton apparently overlooks the need for a superior personnel in our schools, both day and continuation.

The Samurai Press.

Under the title of the "Samurai Press" is an interesting experiment which, if moving to larger premises is any indication, would seem to have had some considerable measure of success; for it is but a matter of months since the Press was first established. Already its unostentatious grey covered books are to be seen on the shelves and tables of the best booksellers; and some of them bear the opulent legend "second edition." The aim of Mr. Maurice Browne, the founder of the Samurai Press, has in it an element of intellectual adventure. It is no less than an attempt at the discovery and organisation of all who have an inspiring ideal in life and literature, and who endeavour to give their ideals practical form. This aim is closely associated with the much-discussed idea of an order of Samurai in Mr. H. G. Wells' book, "A Modern Utopia." For, like Mr. Wells, the Samurai Press believes that "dispersed, hidden, disorganised, undiscovered, unsuspected even by themselves, the Samurai of Utopia are in this world."

It is perhaps too early in the career of the Press to ask pertinent questions as to progress made towards the discovery of this hidden race of fine spirits—and, judging from the books issued, there is very little to encourage one. This does not mean that the books are not worthy, but simply that they betray very little evidence of the Samuraian aspirations of the original prospectus of the Press. One of them, however, entitled "Proposals for a Voluntary Nobility," strikes a new note. By forcing the growth of the Samurai idea, analysing its nature, and forecasting its future, it co-ordinates and throws open to discussion what promises to be one of the absorbing questions of the immediate

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future. There is no doubt that such ideas as that contained in the Samurai, and again in that of the Superman, bear a close relationship, if not with actual politics of to-day, with the near development of the saner political outlook. And it is quite a hopeful sign of the times that there should be so much enthusiasm for such things, combined with the administrative ability which is exemplified in the establishment and success of the Samurai Press. It is just such attempts at giving a local habitation and a name to what is sincere and ambitious in the realms of thought and imagination, that aid the world in its struggle towards the realisation of newer and finer conditions. The new premises of the Samurai Press are established at Harting, Petersfield, Hants, where one may imagine them pursuing a long and prosperous career.

BOOK NOTES.

Mr. John Murray has just issued a volume which has an important bearing upon the question of the legislation of the liquor traffic. It is made up of articles which have appeared in the "Monthly Review," "The Times," and the "Daily Telegraph," from the pen of Edwin A. Pratt, author of "Licensing and Temperance in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark." The volume is called "The Licensed Trade," and deals with the problem from the point of view of the actual traders as seen by an independent investigator.

An interesting biography of the late Principal Rainy, by Rev. R. Mackintosh, D.D., has just been issued (Melrose, 2s. 6d. net.). The volume has many personal reminiscences of the famous ecclesiastical statesman whose death last year removed a valuable leader of the Free Church, as well as one of the chief figures in intellectual circles of the North. Principal Rainy was head of New College, Edinburgh, from 1874 to 1900.

The additions to the World's Classics announced by Mr. Frowde for next month are: Smollett's "Travels Through France and Italy," with an introduction by T. Seccombe; George Herbert's Poems, with an introduction by Arthur Waugh; Cobbold's "Margaret Catchpole," with an introduction by Clement Shorter; Horne's "New Spirit of the Age," with an introduction by Walter Jerrold; Leigh Hunt's "The Town," with an introduction and notes by Austin Dobson; Frere's translation of the "Acharnians, Knights, Birds, and Frogs" of Aristophanes, with an introduction by W. W. Merry; Gibbon's "Autobiography," with an introduction by J. B. Bury.

On June 10th Messrs. Chapman and Hall will publish a new novel by Mr. Arnold Bennet. The title of the book is "The Grim Smile of the Five Towns." In this volume Mr. Bennet returns to the Potteries, a district he is rapidly annexing for his scenario, after his recent departure into the realms of fantastic romance as exemplified in "The Ghost," which, of course, is but one of many of its kind by the same writer. Mr. Bennet is a writer with at least two quite distinct styles, that which produced the admirably observed Five Towns series of novels, and that which produced the amazing "Grand Babylon Hotel" and its other ingenious fellows. Besides this he is an essayist of no mean order, as readers of "The Truth about an Author" and "The Reasonable Life" will acknowledge.

Just over ten years ago a slender volume of poems, called "A Shropshire Lad," by A. E. Housman, was issued. Those who have an instinct for genuine poetry knew at a glance that this was no ordinary volume. Since its first issue it has been reprinted several times by Mr. Grant Richards, who is still responsible for a well-printed edition at one shilling. I have just been re-reading the volume, and find the poems with their almost unconscious yet fine art and passionate simplicity as fascinating as ever. "A Shropshire Lad" is indeed a modern classic.

Throughout all literature there are hints and glimpses of the ideas which found expression in the egoistic philosophy of Nietzsche. But in no pre-Nietzschean English writer do we find so much in keeping with the Dionysian attitude of the author of "Thus Spake Zarathustra," as in the work of William Blake. Particularly is this the case in his "Marriage of Heaven and Hell," which is not only similar in idea, but it has the aphoristic form which Nietzsche practised. An excellent edition of this prophetic book of Blake's forms one of the volumes of Mr. Grant Richards's Venetian Series (6d. net.).

The visit of the Irish National Theatre to London next week is a literary event of note, and visitors to the plays will naturally desire some knowledge of the pieces they are to witness. Most of the plays are to be had in the Abbey Theatre Series (Maunsell, 1s. net.). "The Playboy of the Western World," by J. M. Synge, will be produced on Monday, June 10th. The book is also issued by Maunsell, whilst Mr. Synge's "Riders to the Sea" and "Shadow of the Glen," are issued in one volume by Elkin Matthews, for one shilling.

Mr. A. H. Bullen has in the press Mr. W. B. Yeats's play, "Deirdre," which although new to print, is not new to the stage, it having been produced in Dublin at the Abbey Street Theatre. Lady Gregory, who is also closely associated with Mr. Yeats and his work at the Irish National Theatre, has in the press a volume entitled, "Saints and Wonders: According to the Memory of the People of Ireland." This book will be issued almost immediately by Mr. John Murray.

Miss Florence Farr, who elaborated a good-tempered and truthful joke apropos of Mr. Shaw in our number for May 23rd, finds to her annoyance that indiscriminating people suppose she is responsible for the anonymous twaddle that appeared this month in a contemporary over the initial "Z." She hopes that none of the readers of THE NEW AGE will believe her opinions about Mr. Shaw are quite so wildly silly as those expressed by "Z."

A new novel by Mr. Edgar Jepson, author of "The Lady Noggs" and "The Admirable Tinker," has just been published by Mr. T. Fisher Unwin. "The Four Philanthropists" is its title, the philanthropy being of a somewhat novel kind, a scheme conceived by four young men for the painless removal of harmful members of society, and for founding a hospital with the proceeds of their wealth. From the same house, also this week, is published Mr. Haldane's volume, "Army Reform, and other Addresses." It contains three speeches on the reform of the army, three on fiscal policy, and two miscellaneous addresses H. J.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

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THE POLITICAL SOCIALIST.
TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE."

Please let me thank "R. M." for his admirable article on "The Political Socialist." There seems a disposition in some Socialist quarters to ignore politics and to regard Socialism as something too sacred to be touched by the crudities of ordinary political turmoil. This section (happily diminishing) would leave the hewing of wood and drawing of water to the Liberal, Tory, or Labour parties. "Let us," they say in effect, "keep Socialist thought clear of political complications; let us discuss social and economic problems; let us permeate the thought and literature of the country with Socialist ideas; but politics is really too dirty a business for us to soil our hands with."

The call to the Fabian Society to go enthusiastically into politics is peculiarly clear and insistent. From no Socialist section has issued such a body of constructive thought and of definite political proposals; whilst in any department of political activity, no group possesses such a number of efficient students and administrators.

Twenty years of rough and tumble in the Socialist movement have taught me at least one lesson: If you want a thing done, do it yourself. One instance will suffice:—

A former Fabian executive spent much valuable time on elaborating a new programme of local government. Part of the work done found expression in the "New Heptarchy" series of Fabian Tracts. Now we have practically reached the limits of municipal Socialism until the machinery of local government has been largely reconstructed. This involves aggressive Parliamentary action. Municipal Socialism as distinct from municipal capitalism (a vital distinction) is doomed to languish until this change is effected. Already both Liberalism and Toryism are frightened at the possibilities of further municipal encroachments upon what they term "the function of capital." The Labour party is alive to the importance of the subject, but has other fish to fry. Mr. F. W. Jowett is almost the only municipal expert in its ranks, although several other members have had useful training as Town Councillors or Guardians. Who, then, will bring about the legislative changes outlined in the Fabian New Heptarchy? Mr. John Burns? He is much too busy extolling the virtues of total abstinence and deriding the infirmities of the unemployed. The Liberal-Labour section? Mules have no progeny. The Radicals? As soon gather grapes off thistles. The moral is obvious. We want a group of Fabians in the Commons, who realise that Socialism spells revolution which must assert itself locally as well as nationally. Hence the necessity of a revolution in local government before we can compass the economic revolution. If the Fabian Society waits for some other political party or section to give substantial effect to these proposals, it had better give Mr. Pease a holiday until the Greek Kalends.

It is significant that the real moral of West Ham and Poplar has not been loudly proclaimed. With a Fabian group in Parliament to drive that lesson home we should have been well on our way to the abrogation of the Poor Law Act of 1834 and the abolition of Boards of Guardians. That would have rendered Old Age Pensions an urgent issue.

I write of a Fabian group in Parliament for simplicity's sake. Really I mean a revolutionary Socialist party in Parliament. But that raises immensely difficult problems as to our relations with the Labour party which are not germane to this discussion. In any event, the Labour party, the I.L.P., and the S.D.F. are already in politics. It is the Fabians who at present are outside. For them, therefore, fabula narratur.

Two final remarks:—

"R. M." fears that a political Socialist movement might exclude the Romantics. They really make excellent politicians. Imagination is a rich factor in politics, even if it creates occasional tin gods.

Lastly, is it not a profound blunder to regard practical politics as more degrading and impure than academic thinking? If the one is sometimes repulsive, the other is often cowardly. The distinction between thought and politics seems to me to be as false and dangerous as the conventional distinction between religion and business.

S. G. HOBSON.

TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE."

I should be greatly obliged if you could find it possible to publish these few lines.

For the information of the increasing number of those who are interested in the Congo question, I beg to state that the

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* * *

"H. H." AND SEX DEMANDS.
TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE."

If "H. H." will have patience he may find it more than rewarded. I can assure him that I have no intention of burking sex-issues. When one particular MS. of mine has completed the round of the British publishers, perhaps "H. H." will raise a subscription fund to print it? It may be necessary. But meanwhile there are many problems to deal with, and sex-problems can but have their turn. They shall have it. Is this enough?

TERESA BILLINGTON-GREIG.

* * *

TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE."

In your issue of May 16 you say, "The demand of the majority of the Irish people is for an independent legislature. If this demand is a just one and one that we can safely concede, it ought to be conceded." That is to say, the question of justice is only a secondary consideration, the main question is "can we safely concede it?" That is not Socialism, it is rank Imperialism.

Again you say: "The evil has lain not so much in English rule as in Orange rule, in the delegation of English powers to the stupid and intemperate garrison of loyalists." That is wholly wrong: the evil has lain, and still lies, in English rule. The throwing open of posts in the Executive Government might lead to the corruption of many of them, but it would not bribe the Irish people into the Empire. They are not prepared to enter that Empire willingly at any price.

You infer that in a free Ireland the Ulster Orangemen would be oppressed. They would not. Whatever oppression exists in Ireland is the creation of the British Government, brought into play by the forces it controls. The Irish Nationalist has no hatred for the Orangeman, but only a great pity, for he has been England's tool in Ireland for generations. But that day, too, is passing, and the Boyne shall presently be securely bridged: "Orange and Green shall carry the day."

The Irish Problem, in effect, resolves itself to this: Has a nation any right to govern another nation against its will? If you say "Yes," well and good; but for heaven's sake don't call yourself a Socialist, for you are an Imperialist. If you say "No," then give up discussing the "Irish Problem" and advocate the only possible Socialist position, viz., that the English shall clear out and let the Irish solve their own problems. We are quite willing and able: and we recognise no right on the part of any other nation to interfere. Recollect always that we do not object to the misgovernment of Ireland by England, but to the government. Whether that government is good or bad, we object to it. In a nutshell, we want independence, and we mean to have it.

P. S. O'HEIGEARTAIGH.

* * *

TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE."

What is all this strange talk about the superstition of nationality being fatal to progress? What has this got to do with Socialism, especially the true blend of it which we find in THE NEW AGE? Surely we have enough evils to tilt at without such a quixotic crusade as "R. M." seems to suggest. If "R. M." wants to overthrow nationalism, let him join the Rhodes-Breit-Milner school of scientific intellectual jingoism, their Socialism interpreted by money-lenders and their Darwinism interpreted by devils. It is they who overthrow nationality in the name of "Empire." "R. M." seems to want to overthrow nationality in the name of humanity. The Pope (to take another instance) would like to overthrow nationality in the name of the Catholic Church. None of them, I hope, will be successful. No doubt the average Britisher is terribly stupid in his ideas of nationality; he is also stupid about the claims of Socialism. But true na-

tionalism is no more opposed to true Socialism than the love of one's wife is opposed to the love of one's neighbour. True nationalism is the enemy of Imperialism and of commercialism. Why should a Socialist give up his English or Irish inheritance in favour of the somewhat colourless "humanity" suggested by "R. M."? If "R. M." means race-prejudice or racial supremacy as the accursed things, I am heart and soul with him; but these are the counterfeits of nationalism. Real nationalism is that which loves England without necessarily admiring her conduct—nay, which is prepared to oppose her policy; false nationalism is that which does not love England, but only admires her—for her banks and battleships and Colonies—and cannot bear opposition to her policy because once the mere admiration is gone, there is no love to fall back upon. THE NEW AGE has taken a sensible line on the question of militarism and war. Let us hope for an equally reasonable treatment of nationality.

A. H. LEE.

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