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SOCIALIST
IMPERIAL-
ISM.By
FRANK
HOLMES.

THE

NEW AGEAN INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST REVIEW
OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART

Edited by

A. R. ORAGE and HOLBROOK JACKSON

DELICIOUS

COFFEE**RED****WHITE****& BLUE**

FOR BREAKFAST & AFTER DINNER

In making, use less quantity, it
being so much stronger than
ordinary **COFFEE**.No. 668 [New Series. Vol. I. No. 9.] THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 1907. [Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper.] ~~ONE PENNY~~ 2**THE OUTLOOK.****Thanks to the Tsar!**

The representatives of the civilised world, duly assembled at the Hague, adopted unanimously a resolution that the following message should be telegraphed to the Emperor of Russia:—

At the commencement of its labours, the second Peace Conference lays at the feet of your Majesty its respectful homage, and expresses to your Majesty its profound gratitude for having taken the initiative in continuing the work begun in 1899. The Conference begs your Majesty to believe in its sincere desire to work with all its strength to accomplish the delicate and at the same time arduous task which has been confided to it.

We print this remarkable communication in full, for we would not have a word of its shameful servility and nauseous hypocrisy missed by Englishmen who care for the traditions of their country. Though the sovereign treated to this exhibition of "profound homage" and "respectful gratitude" was at that very moment declaring war upon the representatives of his people and preparing for them a régime of fire and sword, slavery and torture, with the incidents of which they are only too familiar, no minister of a free people at the Hague dared to rise and say that permanent peace was only possible on a basis of justice. On the contrary, the Tsar's ambassador, M. Nelidoff, actually took the chair, and the Conference proceeded to business, having forfeited by its first act the respect of all free men. No one will care what it may do or leave undone. The only ultimate security for the peace of the world would be the creation of an international police force to keep order and see that justice was done between nation and nation. And, if such a force existed, it would clearly be obliged to regard the existence of a government like that of Russia as an outrage on civilisation, which the united forces of all the civilised nations must suppress as our police would suppress a gang of thieves. Therefore the Tsar does not want an international police force, but only such trifling as may secure him a breathing space, during which he may repair the damage inflicted by the Japanese War, negotiate a loan or two, crush the insurrectionary movement, and recur to his old policy of oppression in domestic and bad faith in foreign affairs, with which a century's experience has made us sufficiently acquainted.

Labour and the Army Bill.

Well, if the Peace Conference is to prove nothing better than a dull and somewhat immoral farce, we must see to our own weapons of defence. The Army Bill has passed its third reading in the Commons by an

overwhelming majority, and, though the Lords may amend, they are not likely to reject it. The most unfortunate feature of the third reading debate was the intervention of Mr. Arthur Henderson on behalf of the Labour Party. It is most regrettable that the representative of that party could make no more valuable contribution to the debate than a feeble echo of Radical negations. Mr. Henderson said, quite truly, that it was "the poor who felt most heavily the tremendous increase in our military expenditure," but instead of drawing the obvious moral that our public burdens ought to be more equitably adjusted, he appeared to plead merely for a reduction of expenditure, though he must know (or at least if he does not, many of his colleagues do) that there are more than £600,000,000 of unearned rent and interest going yearly to support the idle rich, all of which ought to be available for public purposes. For the rest he talked vaguely about "militarism" like any Byles or Lupton, and does not seem to have said one word as to the necessity of democratising the army—the one point on which the Labour Party ought always to be insisting. What a pity that the party did not select Mr. Thorne for their spokesman!

A Class Trick.

How unfortunate for the cause they have at heart is the tendency of democratic politicians to think about how they shall oppose "militarism," when they ought to be thinking about how they shall oppose oligarchy, is shown most strikingly by one little incident in connection with the Army Bill. It will be remembered that Mr. Haldane was induced, largely by the pressure of Radical and Labour members, to provide that the County Associations, in the exercise of their powers to encourage cadet corps and rifle clubs, should give no assistance "in respect of any person in a battalion or corps in a school in receipt of a Parliamentary grant until such person has attained the age of sixteen." In defending this limitation Mr. Haldane was perfectly explicit as to the reasons which had led him to accept it, and very remarkable reasons they were. The children in elementary schools would be of no use for his purpose. What he wanted was public school boys of between sixteen and eighteen, "about the time when a public school boy proceeded to the University." These he wanted as "a reserve of officers" for his new army. So that the net result of the concession wrung by the anti-militarists from Mr. Haldane is that the new army is to be put as completely under the heel of the leisured classes as ever the old army was. Had the Labour Party pinned Mr. Haldane to his own original policy, and insisted on military training being encouraged, if not enforced, in every elementary school, we should have a "reserve of officers" drawn from the democracy and an army commanded by the best men, irrespective of class. But it does not suit the governing classes that an officer's training should cease to be a class monopoly. What they want is a "military" upper and a "peaceful and unaggressive" lower order,

And they are only too glad when the Labour Party plays their game for them. It is a deplorable but an undeniable fact that the only really democratic contribution to the debate came, not from a Labour member, not even from a Radical, but from Mr. George Wyndham.

Held Up.

Lord Robert Cecil is to be congratulated on having scored very effectively off the Government by blocking their House of Lords Resolution. Nor can it be said that the fate of the Ministers—was undeserved. Lord Robert and Mr. Balfour between them made out an unanswerable case against their activity, if not against their good faith in the matter of "blocking motions." As long ago as March 27 the House unanimously passed a resolution condemning the practice, and Mr. Asquith pledged himself that the matter should be dealt with as soon as possible. Yet, though three months have passed, nothing has been done. The Premier's plea that Mr. Asquith only promised to see what could be done by negotiation is rendered nugatory by the fact that no negotiations have been entered into or even attempted. It was only on the day before Lord Robert Cecil's coup was discussed in the House that the Government Whip approached the Opposition Whip on the subject—a very obvious repentance under duress. However, having struck his blow and kept the Government in suspense for forty-eight hours, Lord Robert was merciful and withdrew his obstructive Bill. But nobody can pretend that the prestige of the Ministry is raised by the incident.

A Bad Fall.

Thursday was an unlucky night for the Ministers. Scarcely had they got out of Lord Robert Cecil's hands than they were confronted with a much more damaging exposure. A contract for supplying beer to the Navy had been placed with Meux and Co., and several Opposition speakers were unkind enough to point out that the largest shareholder in Meux and Co. was Lord Tweedmouth, the First Lord of the Admiralty. Mr. Austen Chamberlain naturally recalled the attacks made upon him and upon his father in connection with Kynochs, attacks which culminated in a resolution supported by the whole Liberal Party, a resolution which clearly condemns Lord Tweedmouth no less than Mr. Chamberlain. Mr. Haldane's attempt to draw a distinction between the two cases was a ludicrous failure, and only served to bring out the fact that Lord Tweedmouth held more than half the ordinary shares in the company, and could practically control its policy. We do not attach extravagant importance to the question. The plutocracy and the indirect corruption which are too real a feature of our political system do not arise from any particular Minister holding shares in any particular company, but in the fact that practically all Ministers belong to the shareholding class. Still the principle for which the Liberals contended when in opposition seems to us a sound one, and even if we thought it an unsound one, we should protest against its cynical abandonment as soon as it had served its turn.

Jarrow and Its Consequences.

We do not know precisely how many candidates are standing for Jarrow at the present moment. They come and go daily. But if every Socialist and trade unionist will vote straight for Mr. Pete Curran, the one candidate who has anything hopeful or intelligible to offer him, the very multitude of his competitors should ensure his return. Mr. Curran's chances seem good, to judge by the vigour with which all the other parties join in attacking him, the most ferocious attacks coming from his fellow-countrymen. As we said last week, we are not going to blame the Nationalists. We suppose they know their business best. We have never regarded them as friends, so we will not now reproach them as traitors. On the whole, indeed, we are rather grateful to them for demonstrating once and for all to the over-

trustful Socialist how inveterately hostile they are to all his aspirations. But the anger of those Socialists and Labourites who have put trust in the alleged "democratic sympathies" of the Irish Party is very natural, and it found expression in their successful support of the Bill for the inspection of convents. Meanwhile, even the proceedings of the Directory of the United Irish League show signs of the unrest which is being felt within the ranks of Irish Nationalism. A very significant motion of Mr. O'Donnell, practically demanding the recall of the Irish contingent from Westminster, was defeated, but it foreshadows a policy of which we shall certainly hear more. The fact is that the Nationalist Party has never had any real vitality since its betrayal of Parnell. It has gone on by the momentum which he gave it, and now that momentum is all but exhausted. Hence the "something-must-be-done" mood which is clearly overtaking the Nationalist leaders, the "something" turning out to be, it would seem, a quarrel with English democracy, carefully fomented to prevent the Irish democracy from coming by its own.

Moderate Futilities.

Really the Moderate majority on the L.C.C. must be careful if they do not want to make their party the laughing-stock of London and of the world. The Progressives extinguished themselves in 1895 by their schemes for protecting our morals by examining Zaeo's back and compelling the ladies of the Empire promenade to wear hats, but they were never guilty of any action at once so monstrous and so grotesque as the exclusion of "Mary Barton" from the school libraries. Still more serious in some ways is the threat that the parks will be closed against Socialist speakers. This would, of course, be nothing short of shameless persecution—none the less disagreeable because it would quite certainly prove ineffective. We suggest that, before the Moderates enter into a "Dodd Street" war they should make enquiries at Scotland Yard and take the advice of experienced police officers. They will probably hear of something to their advantage. Meanwhile do not these petty tyrannies and follies suggest to "progressive" persons the desirability of respecting liberty a little more strictly when they are in power? After all, if a municipal body is justified in blacking out betting news in a public library because it thinks it demoralising, it is not a very big step for another to exclude a book or suppress a speaker because it thinks them demoralising. For ourselves, we confess we prefer English to Russian methods of government.

Medical Inspection.

The International Conference on School Hygiene, which is to meet under the presidency of Sir Lauder Brunton, will bring prominently before the public the pressing need for medical inspection in our elementary schools. There is hardly a country in Europe save ours which has not made some provision in this respect, and the Continent has therefore at least the satisfaction of knowing exactly how bad things are with it. We, on the other hand, have no facts to go upon, only guesses and estimates. The great disadvantage of such guesses is that they often create an impression of exaggeration, although examination generally proves that they fall short of the truth. We want "a stream of facts," ascertained, indisputable, given with all the unemotional coldness of a Blue-Book, to make us realise how we are wasting and corrupting the young life of the nation.

The Vineyard War.

The struggle between the vine-growers and the Government shows no sign of abating its violence. To the English the most striking feature will appear to be the readiness of the Radical-Republican Ministry to fall back on armed force at the first hint of provocation. M. Clemenceau is clearly one of those who "do not

hesitate to shoot." An English Minister who had treated the demonstrations, say, of the Unemployed as he has treated the men of the Midi would have found public opinion so vehemently opposed to him that he could hardly have retained his position for twenty-four hours. At the same time we must not too hastily congratulate ourselves on our superior humanity. The salient fact about France is that it is a country where, within living memory, the Government has been more than once overturned by popular insurrection. The severity of the French Government rests upon a knowledge of what the French people can do. The humanity and moderation of ours rests, we fear, upon a conviction that the English people will never do anything. One incident illustrates the whole. If no English regiment would under such circumstances be called upon to fire on the populace, it is, we fear, safe to say that, if it were called upon, no English regiment would refuse to do so.

The Indian Mystery of Silence.

The chief fact concerning India this week is the lack of news. It is surprising that for nearly a week the only news Reuter finds worth a cable is the arrest of two Mahomedans for alleged complicity in a seditious plot, which not one London daily considered worth a comment. Who is to believe that in an Empire of three hundred million souls, in a time of trouble or just after trouble, this is the only event important enough for England to know about? What is India doing? What is India thinking? Have the monsoons broken yet? How is Lajpat Rai liking Mandalay? What did the "Pioneer" and the "Times of India" and the "Civil and Military Gazette" have to say yesterday?; the "Indian People," the "Mahratha," and the "Punjabi" in reply to-day? Have the "Englishman," the "Bengali," and the "Patrika" settled all their differences, and have Bengal and the Punjab gone against Swadeshi and sworn eternal fealty to the British Raj? What are Reuter doing and the Indian correspondents of all the other London papers? Has the hot weather been too much for them? Or have the rains already drowned them all? Seriously, this everlasting silence is mysterious. Another point to be noted is Mr. Morley's growing impatience with his questioners. His replies about Lajpat Rai and to other questions a few days ago were exceeding curt and high-souled. Why does he seem to think England need not concern herself about the Empire? Is he Tzar-ing India? Have Englishmen no right to know what he is doing and why? Of course we can understand that he must have been hurt by the unkind words used against him lately in India—(not a word from Reuter again about this). Sir Henry Fowler even was not so sternly rebuked as Mr. Morley has been, and was not half so much disliked. All the same, England has a duty to India as well as the Tzar-like Secretary of State, and we want information. And what is Lord Ripon doing? He is in the same Cabinet. What does he think of Morley's policy?—he, the Delight of Indian-India in 1884, the Anti-Christ of Anglo-India; the hero of the Ilbert Bill, the great Viceroy—what is he doing now? No one is more responsible than he for the present state of Indian opinion. Does he acquiesce in the anti-Midlothian policy of repression? Can he sit still and see his noble works destroyed? In the name of all India, the old Viceroy must be called upon to champion the cause of his Indian friends, who saved him from the fury of European-Calcutta, and sent him safely out of India; atoned for the hatred and contempt of Simla by their overwhelming devotion to his name and to his person. We may never know how near India was then to a British Mutiny, but it is whispered about sometimes. Anyway, the Viceroy stood firm, and did what he could, and so his farewell to India was the most glorious event in the annals of the century—so honoured was he for his devotion to the people of a grateful country. All the more strange, then, is the seeming agreement with the present policy of the India Office and the Indian Government. When will Lord Ripon break his mysterious silence?

Doctors as Dictators.

WE understand easily enough why doctors have always been regarded with a certain distrust and suspicion in the Socialist ranks. Medical men belong to a "mystery" and make their livings by preserving that "mystery" from the general public. But if this suspicion is carried so far as to engender a fear of the dictatorship of doctors and an opposition to the appointment of school doctors, then it has gone beyond the bounds of common sense. We must not lose sight of the fact that medical men at the present time are as much the victims of the economic system as dock labourers or coal miners. To be really successful a doctor must have his patients among the wealthier classes, and to succeed in this implies a more or less marked parasitic relationship with those classes. Socialists often complain that doctors are reactionary or indifferent in their politics; it would save much trouble if it could be recognised that doctors have the politics of the servants' hall. Essentially the doctor nowadays is an upper servant. As long, therefore, as we have a system which makes success in the medical profession a matter of very delicate social tact it is impossible to expect any very great degree of help for Socialism. But it is not medical science that we should suspect, for the science of medicine that is now growing up is as much outside our social system as any scheme of Socialist reform. And if we Socialists want the co-operation of doctors equipped with scientific medical knowledge, then we must emancipate them from the social parasitism of their surroundings. The way of emancipation is fortunately plain, it lies in the creation of positions in the public service where the only call on the doctor will be a call for the best use of his knowledge for the public advantage. But if one may judge from correspondence in the "Labour Leader," this proposal is likely to be construed as an attempt by the classes "to create new positions with vested interests for their own set." Is it necessary to point out that this is about as intelligent as the aristocrat's objection to Socialism that it will make "soft jobs" for the working man on very good pay? "Under Socialism" very much fewer doctors will be needed, but that will be because everyone will have a great deal more knowledge of their own bodies than they have at present. What our children need is "better food, better housing, better clothes, and better air"; we know that because medical science has pointed it out. But we shall not get these things unless we are able to clinch the argument by the absolutely overwhelming statistics medical inspection of schools will place at our disposal. It must not be forgotten that if we create a large number of school doctors we are taking a considerable step in the direction of nationalisation of the medical profession. Any large degree of nationalisation will not only place medical knowledge more readily at the disposal of the public, but will go a long way to emancipate the scientific mind. The whole training of a doctor nowadays is scientific and anti-commercial. The whole training fits him to give service because it is good service and for the love of so doing. But when he becomes qualified the doctor finds he must learn another kind of thing altogether, viz., how to get money from people in return for giving them scraps of his knowledge. No doctor likes doing this, every young doctor feels more or less ashamed to take a fee, but it is forced upon him. If, however, we emancipate the doctor from this commercial system by making him a public servant, we allow the growth of the scientific mind and the scientific spirit to go on unchecked. It is the scientific spirit applied to mechanical inventions that has in the hands of capitalism changed the whole surface of the world in the last 50 years. It will be the scientific spirit applied to the life of human beings that will again change the whole face of the world in the next 50 years. But this time, not in the hands of and for the benefit of capitalism, but in the hands of and for the benefit of every community. Under emancipated economic conditions there need be no fear of a dictatorship of doctors, for the spirit of science is essentially the spirit of service, and is opposed to the spirit of gain.

The Nationalisation of Mothers.

SOCIAL axioms are always misleading, but it is safe to admit that the State which survives best is that which devotes most care to its women and children. This is not chivalry but economics; for with the degradation of the mother comes the neglect of the child, and no State can be securely built out of a people who are the degenerate outcome of an uncared-for infancy and adolescence. This question is so vital that it is amazing, to anyone possessed of even the barest imagination, that it does not stand in the very foremost place of social endeavour. The question is without doubt both complex and difficult; and it is entrenched behind all the outworn traditions and fossilised faiths in history. But this should not prevent us doing our utmost to bring it up to the point of intelligent discussion, so that as soon as society is ripe for betterment in this respect we shall have some chance of knowing in what direction to move. Mr. H. G. Wells has spoken of the deep folly of a careworn motherhood more practically than any other modern, and his phrase "the strike against parentage" is significant of a marked and growing tendency in modern life; and Mr. Bernard Shaw has rightly recognised in this tendency, which he calls "the sterilisation of marriage," the most revolutionary discovery of the age. Moreover, quite recently Mr. Shaw, reviewing the degradation of womanhood in that most insidious of sweating institutions, the home, received an encouraging show of approval from a West End audience when he frankly advocated a general strike of women.

Administrators are notoriously late in learning, but they will have to learn sooner or later that motherhood is the most important fact in life. That this is not recognised to-day should be patent to all. The cry of decreasing population fills the Press and our statesmen with a remote awe, yet never a word escapes them as to the means of remedying the evil. It is safe to suppose that few are so blind as to under-estimate the importance of motherhood, and yet the ignoble and meagrely rewarded position of mothers suggests that their value has been forgotten in talk. No more serious reflection can be passed upon a State than that which charges it with having left the happiness of its mothers to fate. That is really what has happened. There is no provision in the State for the mothers of men. According to the way we are constituted, we look upon motherhood as a privilege, a duty, an incident, or an unpleasant accident, but there is no doubt that, with the increase of economic freedom among women, a new point of view will come into existence. Already women who are capable of earning a living show little haste to marry. They think twice before exchanging the comparative freedom of a trade or a profession for the bloomless romance of married bliss. They have had an opportunity of comparing the two states—and they prefer the rewards and risks of commerce to the rewardless risks of the home life they see around them. And when they do marry, there is an increasing disinclination to celebrate the passing of every second year with an addition to the family, as was the custom in the days of their mothers.

This fact is but an incident in the most far-reaching revolution of modern times. The baby habit is passing away; in the future babies will only come when they are invited. Women are at last beginning to realise that they need not have so many. Before long we may expect two excellent results from the growth of this idea. The first is that, owing to decreasing population, we shall be forced to make more serious provision for the preservation of our infants; and the second is that we shall find it necessary to make marriage and the family more worth a woman's time. So long as, for the vast majority of women, marriage offers no further reward than drudgery and (in the event of the husband's death) the possibility of that most bitter and abominable of all conditions, an impecunious widowhood, the more intelligent and capable women will refuse to form a marriage contract on the old lines. This means that we are gradually forcing out of the sphere of motherhood just those independently capable women

who should become mothers if the excellence of the race is to be maintained.

The state of the future, and of the not very distant future, will have to subsidise mothers just as it will have to subsidise other necessities. It has already recognised the evil of leaving education, and in a minor way, sustenance, to private enterprise. And it interferes with the grosser forms of cruelty to children. It has yet to learn the deeper truth, that the root principle of social growth lies in the health and happiness of women; particularly of women who are worthy of becoming capable mothers. For those women who lack the instinct of maternity there will be no other treatment at the hands of the community than that meted out to men. But when we deal with mothers the case is altered. Then it is not only the present that is involved, but the future. The women who are to bear the next generation, and who must not only give it birth, but form its mind during some of the most impressionable years of its growth, should be entirely free of all those petty yet, in effect, monstrous cares incidental to the competitive struggle upon which our society is built. If we do not make some provision for them, a provision which they must be able to take by right of motherhood without any stigma of pauperism, we are not only breeding again in a more degraded form the dulness and incapacity which are the characteristics of modern populations; we are gradually determining the political existence of the race, as well as its physical and mental balance, in a far more expeditious and effective way than any amount of volitional regulation. The addition of Mr. Bernard Shaw's excellent suggestion that women, particularly domestic women, should strike for a proper recognition of the wage rights of the home is perhaps too good to expect for the present. The social consciousness of women is too primordial for the fine concerted action required to bring a strike to a successful issue. But in the meantime women who are already conscious of a desire for greater freedom might easily be worse employed than in formulating schemes for the adjustment of society towards the fullest economic freedom for mothers. E. H.

Back to Manchesterism.

MR. SHARP* tells us, "the more we progress in intellectual and æsthetic culture the less we shall care whether the things which belong to us are unique or not." This is "back to Manchesterism" with a vengeance—and like all the Manchester philosophy is based upon a fallacy. Its weakness lies in the fact that the best standards of beauty and utility have always been unique. There is in handicraft a substratum of traditional forms for simple things which do not admit of a variety of shapes. A dinner plate or a tea-pot will serve as illustrations. The shapes of these will perhaps always remain very much what they are to-day. But within the limits of their more or less fixed outlines infinite variety is possible in the treatment and decoration of them. The point therefore is not that every dinner plate or tea-pot shall be a different shape, but that the individuality of the worker shall be allowed its utmost scope within the limits its use proscribes. If you condemn the worker to repeat the same pattern time after time he becomes a machine, and the work he does will cease to interest him and us on that account. It is not a craving that every single thing shall be unique which makes us object to the factory system, but the fact that the factory system precludes the possibility of what may be called natural variety in production by degrading the worker in such a way as to render him incapable of even making simple and beautiful forms.

It is important that the Socialist movement should make up its mind upon this point, for it all depends upon whether the quantitative or qualitative ideal of production be accepted whether we pursue a policy which reaches out to an indefinite future or retrace our steps back to the Middle Ages. If we demand qualita-

* NEW AGE, June 20th.

tive production we have no alternative but to pursue a policy which from the ultra-Collectivist position is reactionary, because we shall find that the system of industrial organisation under which our cathedrals were built is the only system under which qualitative production is possible. The Socialist movement would probably frankly accept this position were it not that it is unfortunately obsessed by the idea of evolution. The factory system, we are told, is the product of evolution; to abolish it would be to set the clock back. But the sweating system is likewise the product of evolution, yet no one suggests it would be setting the clock back to abolish it. And why? Because on such a question as sweating every man's ordinary humanity enables him to come to just conclusions, whereas on this question of the relative value of small workshops and factories a measure of practical experience is demanded such as is only possessed by a few.

Of all the senseless ways of justifying things, I think this appeal to the evidence of evolution is the most senseless of all. It is only another way of saying that what has already come by drifting should be allowed to continue drifting. I apprehend, however, that this appeal to evolution is only a bluff, and that the real issue is the future of machinery. When we get to the bottom of it, a kind of obsession respecting the value of machinery is the very essence of progressivism. Progressivists talk about the need of controlling machinery, but they are very jealous of anyone who would be definite on such an issue. Any suggestion he makes for the regulation of machinery is always interpreted as a desire to abolish machinery entirely. Yet it is the craftsman who will have to determine its rightful application, because no one else has the requisite knowledge. The Socialist as such must for ever remain incapable of throwing light on this problem. The Arts and Crafts movement is awakening to this fact, and is claiming to-day that the Socialist shall respect the craftsman's opinion on a question of which craftsmen have made a special study. It is the recognition of the incapacity of the Socialist movement to deal with this and kindred subjects which is forcing craftsmen into politics at this moment.

Mr. Sharp appears to resent the Artist and Craftsman having political ideas, much as the Manchester School Economists resented Ruskin's having ideas on political economy. He regards such ideas as trespassing on his own territory. He would have the Artist and Craftsman stick to art. Thus, he tells us: "It is unfortunate that the Arts and Crafts movement, which has a valuable function of its own to perform, should be side-tracked and rendered helpless by this grafting on to it of a reactionary and practically absurd political programme." What this valuable function is, apart from those ideas the usefulness of which he emphatically denies, I should very much like to know. When Mr. Sharp says that "the movement is being side-tracked and rendered helpless by this grafting on to it of a 'political programme'" he is simply talking nonsense since, as a matter of fact, the very reverse is true. The Arts and Crafts movement had already become side-tracked by its neglect of the political and economic implications of its position. Commencing as a protest against the dependency of art upon luxury, it gradually became one of its feeders. It was a growing consciousness of failure on the part of the movement to achieve its central purpose of bringing back art to the lives of the people which forced upon it the necessity of political action. One would have thought that Socialists would have welcomed the light which specialists can throw upon social questions, instead of making ignorant attacks on positions which are fortified by knowledge and experience.

But we are not without hope for Mr. Sharp's salvation. He admits that "there are moments when the great Past seems finer and worthier than the small Present in which our lives are cast." Evidently he shares the same impulse as ourselves; only we have learnt to trust our best instincts, while he is determined to trample on his. Such is the blight of "progressivism" and an undue anxiety to be broad-minded.

A. J. PENTY.

The Great Unborn.

HE is quite a common type,—the Great Unborn; undoubtedly the commonest type of all. He is to be found in every walk of life. He belongs to every rank and station. He sits in the seats of the mighty and in the village pothouse. His presence pervades very workshop, every office, every drawing-room, every assemblage of whatsoever kind. You meet him in the train, in the street, in the theatre and music hall and art gallery and museum, and in the bosom of your family. You can no more hope to escape from him than to shake off your own shadow. Sometimes indeed he bears more than a shadowy resemblance to yourself. He preaches at you from the pulpit, harangues you from the platform, argues with you in the club, beguiles you in books, charms your ear in the concert hall and your eye on the walls of Burlington House. He is everywhere; and there are as many varieties of him as there are shades of light and darkness. He is sometimes a gentleman, sometimes a cad, sometimes a fool, sometimes a man of intelligence. He is rich and poor, and strong and weak, and agreeable and obnoxious, a pleasant companion and an unmitigated bore, a boor and a man of the world, a Socialist, an Individualist, a Whig, a Tory, a Christian, Atheist, Agnostic, Quietist, ascetic, sybarite, philosopher, nincompoop, optimist, and pessimist. And if there is any other kind of man that exists he is that kind as well. He is every kind of man, except a genius. And he is indifferently spoken of as the Man in the Street, the Average Man, the Popular Mind, and Public Opinion. He typifies all those massed forces of humanity; and often has a filmy private individuality besides. But there is one personality that he does not express, and that is his own. "To thine own self be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man." This is an axiom he has never laid to his own soul. Either he is afraid, and dares not be true to himself; or he has failed to discover which is his true self; or having discovered it, he is ashamed of it. Yet it has been said that he has an individuality. He achieves this by an ingenious method that it is rather hard to explain. He is really made up of odds and ends. He is a sort of patchwork, made up of all sorts of material. His moral code is based on a heterogeneous fabric of prejudice and instincts; his mind is a sketchy compendium of all manner of rudimentary and ill-assorted ideas; and he is distinguishable from his fellows, if at all, only in so far as he has mixed the ingredients of his composition in new proportions. There may be a pound of pride to an ounce of commonsense in him as contrasted with his neighbour's pound of commonsense to an ounce of pride. And so on. The quantity and the quality of the essential parts vary in each man; but they are always the same essentials: it is only in the blending that they take on a character of their own.

All this, however, is merely to say that the man is human. There is nothing in this description of him which would not apply to any mortal being. We are all of us inexplicable mixtures of all sorts of passions and moods and prepossessions and impulses, of good and bad, folly and wisdom, weakness and strength. We are all (according to our fancy) the creatures of heredity and environment, or the children of God, with Satan as our wicked uncle. But there are strictly defined limits within which this man, whom I am setting up to knock down, lives and moves and has his being. And it is possible—though exceedingly difficult, no doubt—for some of us to move outside those limits. At least we can extend our borders to include some scope for higher development, for the exercise of even a little originality and enterprise. We can provide ourselves with more room in which to grow and attain to our full size. And that is precisely what the type I am holding up for your consideration never dreams of doing. He is born and lives and diés—all very comfortably, as a rule—in a mould which shapes and circumscribes him. And as he grows older, so the mould hardens more and more. To break it requires an ever-increasing effort. And the longer he postpones the effort the less likely is he to assume a different shape. If he delays too long he

usually dies of a failure to adapt himself to new conditions; or does the best he can in the way of piecing together the broken fragments again, and covering himself with them. Occasionally it happens that his mould is rudely broken from the outside; but this is a very painful process of emancipation. A better way is to tap the mould gently—as I am doing in this article—and thus to rouse the prisoner within to a consciousness of the world outside his shell, which is so full of beauty and adventure and the means of joy. Then he may emerge by dint of his own exertions.

And when he has emerged, and has stretched his limbs in the full light of day, and has looked around and seen that the world is good and fair, then we may expect him to begin to do something worth while. He will surely want to enlarge himself. He will look down on the shattered morsels of his former tenement, and wonder how it contained him. He will marvel that he should have been content to stifle in that narrow cell whilst all the world belonged to him. And very likely he will be filled with an exigent zeal which will impel him to attack all the other unbroken shells which strew the ground on every side with the first weapon to his hand, even though the weapon of his choice may be woefully inadequate to the task, or one that he has not yet learned to wield effectively. Or, if he is another kind of man, he may be filled with fear at finding himself naked and unarmed in a new, strange universe, among giants of a strength and stature such as he has had no previous conception of. But he will find the giants quite willing to be friendly, to play with him—perhaps a little roughly; but he will get used to that—and then to instruct him, and finally to work with him. By that time he will have survived his birth, and belong to the race of the giants himself.

EDWIN PUGH.

Nationality in British Music.

Of late years much has been written and talked about the British School of musical art, the compositions of a handful of living composers being sufficient, in the opinion of the Press, to designate a school—Wales, Scotland, and Ireland giving each her representatives to the "British" company. The combined genius of the four countries has resulted, however, in scarcely more than this—that one is able confidently to place Great Britain last of the great nations of the world in the culture of music. In the works of the more eminent living writers the subject matter is always time-worn and thread-bare, and the manner academic and prosy to a degree; what is lacking of the divine fire is made up for by noisy rhetoric and by a careful and punctilious style in the saying of serious platitudes. Vulgarly is generally absent—nobody in England has the courage of Tchaikowsky's exuberant convictions—and the snobbery of the polite Englishman incites him to follow the fashions set by his leaders in the continental schools, absorbing, with his inordinate love of etiquette, the externals of their art, but copying these and failing to comprehend the essential qualities of their genius, their true-born divinity, their personality. Great art is never, can never be, impersonal. And much of what is accepted as valuable art in England is devoid of personal expression. The most striking exception to this is to be found in the work of Edward Elgar, where, in one of his Military Marches, you discover the finest expression of Democracy in all modern music (for the "Meistersinger" overture is rather bourgeois than democratic in its exuberance), and in the "Dream of Gerontius" an extraordinary elevation of religious sentiment. In the latter composition there is an atmosphere of true devotion and thought not to be found in the works of his English predecessors, and as an art work, apart from these qualities and from any independent spiritual mission, it is the only important achievement since Purcell. These two works may be considered as great art because they, differing so much from each other, express with distinction and in a purely personal manner, thoughts and emotions that are worthy of utterance. Elgar is alone among his contemporaries;

he found no school here when he began to write, but he may leave one behind him.

This great English people is so heterogeneous that it is impossible to say where the true nationality is to be found and how we are to know the true nationalism when it is expressed. To take London into consideration is to include the scrapings of all the ends of the earth—good, bad, and indifferent, from every country in the world. A popular demonstration in England's capital means a cosmopolitan mob. Possibly it is this very cosmopolitanism which the alleged British "school" seeks to proclaim; at any rate, the song, such as it is, is vague, incoherent, sexless.

It is a truism that art is cosmopolitan, but cosmopolitanism in art is only a bewildering confusion of ideas—futile and foolish as a crocodile in the Serpentine. Nationalism cannot be expressed merely by taking up the war-whoop and playing the local tom-tom, as many of our distinguished academicians fancy when they employ an odd folk tune or two, and, when in an Imperial mood, a bar or so of "Rule Britannia." Nationality in art can only be attained when the utterance itself is the expression of a sincere individualism, regardless of idiom and obvious other characteristics. When artists become self-consciously national, or, rather, nationalistic, in their art, it is surely the beginning of their decadence; and to-day in England it seems that nationality amongst the younger writers has become almost a cult, if not a frenzy. They forget that in all art there is an inevitable moment, the supreme moment, and that this will never be attained by the conscious deliberation of analytical crescendos or careful chromatics. Perhaps it is felt that there is a poverty of ideas in the existing art music, that the English "school" is not a truly national group of writers, and that matters will be mended by going straight to the folk for inspiration. True, but there is a right way and a wrong way. The right way to be national is not to think about it at all, and the wrong way is to go down to Devon or Norfolk or Yorkshire, take down an old tune from some old peasant and then translate it into terms of modern symphonic art. And this is what is happening in the British school to-day; not having the cleverness or the inclination of a Strauss to be national, the young composer becomes nationalistic instead, and the classicist nods his head and says: "Ah, here you will find real melody, my boy; here you will find simplicity and beauty, limpid and clear as the purest mountain brook." But is it not a cheap way out of the difficulty? Is it not a confession of weakness? Is it not a poor thing to have to build your symphony upon a quotation?—to gain a reputation as a philosopher and wit by repeating what someone else has said? It is obviously the last refuge of the impotent mind when Sir Michael Balfe Slumford is reduced to take some Hibernian melodies and label them, after careful distillation in his orchestral crucible, as a "Fantasy," and when Sir Andrew MacIntosh, Mus.Doc., by the same token, desires to hand on "Bonnie Dundee" to posterity like a patent medicine.

I do not plead that it is a particularly vicious thing to orchestrate a folk-tune. It is often quite useful (except in the case of the old Irish and Scotch Gaelic airs composed in an untempered scale, when it is merely stupid), for it gives the student an opportunity of inventing variations when he possesses no natural creative gift. The Theme with Variations is an art form brought to such perfection by Brahms that he proved finally and incontrovertibly its limitations, his own capacity for boring his audience to distraction, and at the same time sending the be-lettered professors into ecstasies of delight and admiration. English music seems to have received the Calvinistic cloak from Brahms, and English professors with unctuous solemnity do gravely pronounce the decrees of the great apostle of Don't-do-it! Oh! for an English Nietzsche, who would make music while the kettle was boiling over; who wouldn't care whether they liked his "programmes" or not; who could put the Labour Party to music; who could leave his little wooden hut and ask for a gin-and-bitters in dotted crotchets and quavers; who could solve the Education problem in a

"Scherzo"; who could expose the immorality of "Parsifal" in a "Danse Macabre"!

I have said that Elgar is alone among his contemporaries; but there is a still younger group of writers, amongst whom may be mentioned Joseph Holbrooke, Cecil Forsyth, and Hubert Bath. Holbrooke's setting of "The Bells" of Edgar Allen Poe is sufficient in itself to justify a continental reputation, and, while some of the more perspicacious among the concert reporters have taken exception to the unusually large orchestra required and the different kinds of bells to be employed, the music itself has such qualities of nobility and beauty and strength that the bickering critic is disarmed. If an artist is not allowed to be an egotist what is he to be? It is really in egotism, i.e., in personality, you have the only possible chance for nationality. Just as in the ideal community anarchy is the supreme state of social order, consisting of perfectly controlled individualism, so in Art, by perfectly expressed personality, will be attained something approaching a well-ordered and truly musical nationhood, a system that will voice the best characteristics, the best traditions, the best thoughts, and the best feelings of the English race. Not by making nationality to order, as Dibdin, at so much a ballad; not by meanly delving for inspiration in other people's collections of folk-tunes; not by being sentimental about "Sally in our Alley," or patriotic about the "Absent Minded Beggar." But by playing the game like men. X.

Engineers and Art.

It is sufficiently obvious, even if it were not proclaimed on all sides by the engineers, that engineering is work demanding a high degree of intelligence. The engineer-designer, his draughtsmen, his superintendent engineers, his foremen, the mechanics—all must be shrewd and intelligent men, with all their wits about them. As I say, this is sufficiently obvious, and it is idle to deny it. It may also be allowed, for the sake of argument, though this is much more open to doubt, that even the lowest grades of unskilled engineering workmen are, and must be, men of intelligence. But what, on the other hand, is, or should be, quite equally obvious is the fact that modern engineering not only does not demand that every individual workman shall be an artist—in any sense of that word—but, on the contrary, sees to it very thoroughly that he shall be no such thing.

I am not denying that the engineer-designer (as distinct from the men who work for him) may himself be an artist in the sense that his work is in a large degree self-expression, and therefore of the nature of art. Neither do I deny that engineering work is often work of extraordinary beauty in the living sense that beauty is power made visible and, for that matter, in the formal sense also; but I do deny that the individual engineering workman is an artist, that he is more than an intelligent living tool. I deny that he is an artist because his work is not, and cannot be, the expression of himself.

Now, I do not propose, in this paper at any rate, to claim that it is a bad thing for men, however intelligent, to be merely tools. I do not propose to claim that all men should be artists. Those claims must wait. What I do propose to attempt here and now is to make it clear that engineers, as little as other people, can afford to pass over the fact that in every detail of human life something more than mere utility, something in the nature of art, in fact, is demanded.

Si monumentum acquiris, circumspice! It is not possible to walk a hundred yards in any English town without being confronted at every step, and in whatever direction one may look, with buildings and objects literally plastered over—it is not possible to say adorned—with evidences of man's desire and demand for ornament.

Ornamentation, decoration, colour—these things, it would seem, are part of the nature of man. Good or bad—have them he will. And yet it is just these things that engineers and machines cannot supply, though engineers and mechanics make just the same demand for them, in their homes and elsewhere, as other people.

But perhaps it will not be obvious to everyone why machines cannot produce good ornament—not to say works of art. It will be said—I know it will be said—have we not the pianola? Have we not the gramophone and the machine wood-carver—to say nothing of the men who, by training, are themselves machines?

Well, in the first place, the pianola is, at most, only a reproductive machine. It does not create. It only reproduces, and that, even in the best hands, not exactly perfectly. In the second place it does not produce or reproduce ornament, and it is to ornament and decoration that I am more particularly referring. So we may safely dismiss the pianola from the discussion. But what of the machine wood-carver, whether of flesh or metal? Well, the root mistake is this: that beauty is assumed to be a matter of form. Beauty is not entirely a matter of form. Beauty is first and foremost the expression of life. It is only when this fact is thoroughly grasped that it can be understood why it is impossible to produce beauty by machinery, and that it is because most modern work is hopelessly dead and hopelessly dull that most modern work is hopelessly bad and hopelessly ugly.

Modern work is dead because the men who do it are mere copyists, mere machines, without any individuality or souls that they have any right to call their own. Modern work is dull for precisely the same reasons.

Whether or no engineering methods will, or can, so far change in the future that, while the same amount of thought and care is given to the science of construction, it is also possible for the individual workman to be a living soul as well as an intelligent tool, remains to be seen. But my quarrel is not with the engineers—so long as they confine themselves to plain utilitarian work and see to it that their human tools are not slaves. Indeed, under modern conditions, plain engineering is the only work that can be said to be done even apparently well. Engineering is, in fact, the product of modern conditions. My contention is, that unless we are content, and, whatever individuals may feel, it is quite certain that most men and women are not content, that everything used by man—bridges and tea-pots, tables, chairs, and everything else—shall be made by engineers by machinery and shall, consequently, be frankly plain and straightforward, without colour or ornament or decoration of any kind, then it is an absolute necessity that the conditions of industry be re-organised so as to allow of the human demand for what, for the sake of narrowing the issue, I will call ornament, being not merely complied with, but complied with in such a way that such ornament be not, as at present, sham ornament, but the real and living expression of "fine mind and sweet spirit."

A. E. R. GILL.

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THE NEW AGE

JUNE 27, 1907

Battledore and Shuttlecock.

WE do not think that any moderately impartial person will rise from reading the first night's debate on the Lords Resolution without a sense that the Premier was hopelessly worsted in his encounter with the Leader of the Opposition. This was not due, we think, to Mr. Balfour's superiority as a debater; still less was it due to the strength of his case—for, indeed, his case was fundamentally a weak one. It was due to the fact that the Government's proposals were so illogical and inadequate that it was an easy matter for Mr. Balfour to tear them in pieces, and at the same time to avoid defending what is really indefensible in the present position of the Peers.

The case of the House of Lords may be fairly stated thus. It is an institution vicious in principle and productive of much serious mischief. Occasionally it is productive of some incidental good. The mischief consists in the rejection and mutilation of important social reforms in deference to the properties which the Lords represent, and, as an incidental consequence, in the facility which this gives to Liberal Governments to plead the existence of the Lords as an excuse for not grappling with questions which they themselves are

unwilling to face. The occasional beneficence consists in the power which the Lords possess and sometimes exercise of enabling the country to reconsider measures which it has too hastily sanctioned, or of referring to the electorate questions which have never really been before it. And Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's plan is a scheme for permitting the Lords to continue their mischievous work, for the sake of preventing them from rendering their occasional services to the country.

To justify this statement, let us consider the Premier's proposals. He suggests that, when a difference of opinion occurs between the Houses a Conference of Peers and Commons shall be held. If that Conference fails to come to an agreement, the Commons must wait six months, pass the Bill again through all its stages, and send it up once more to the Peers. If the Peers are obdurate the process is to be repeated; there is to be another Conference, another passage of the Bill through the Commons, a third Conference. Then the measure will become law whether the consent of the Peers be given or withheld.

Now it is quite clear that nine Bills out of ten will perish or be mutilated out of recognition in the course of this battledore and shuttlecock process. And the Bills which will so perish will be the Bills that the Government does not really want to pass, but has been forced by electoral necessity to propose—the useful measures of social reform which excite no enthusiasm, and even a good deal of secret hostility, in the breasts of party leaders. On the other hand, the proposed machinery might enable the Government to force through without an appeal to the country useless partisan Bills, about which the electorate cares nothing, though the party leaders care much. Under the present system, faulty as it is, the Education Bill was rejected and the Trades Disputes Bill passed—a very satisfactory result. Under the proposed arrangement, the sting having been taken out of the attack on the Lords and their lordships accordingly feeling more secure, we are inclined to think that the Education Bill would be forced through and the Trades Disputes Bill dropped.

The real objection to the House of Lords is not to its powers, but to its composition. We are disposed to concede the desirability of retaining a second chamber, because we recognise that, at present at any rate, the will of the House of Commons is by no means necessarily identical with the will of the people. The referendum, the favourite democratic alternative, we reject, because it is part of an absolute *ad hoc* type of democracy, whereas Socialist Democracy must needs be of a representative type, and because in practice it always works out as an ultra-Conservative arrangement, a dead weight on all innovation, good and bad. But nothing can be said for a second chamber representing, not the settled mind of the whole nation, but the private interests of the land-owning and property-owning classes. What we want is not any tinkering with the powers of the present House of Lords, but a complete change in its composition.

If That Your Love

If that your love to me made consecrate
Should shrink before some awful sacrifice,
As 'twere decreed by unrelenting Fate
That you alone should enter Paradise,
Myself debarred from that most happy state,
Doomed in some alien land of barren ice
To wander, or in Pluto's realm to wait
Until my tears God's anger should suffice—
Would you not turn away with downcast head
Remembering him who shared your earthly years,
With you has wept and with you broken bread?
In heat and cold together, joys and fears?—
Ah love! among the throng of risen dead
You would not see the glory for your tears.

FREDERICK RICHARDSON,

Socialist Imperialism.

UPON no subject of public discussion is there displayed such an amount of loose thinking and unbalanced opinion as upon that of Imperialism, and upon none is it more urgent that the nation should deliberate intelligently and sincerely; especially as the question of the permanence of the Empire has been dragged into the arena of party, and made the unhappy sport of Tweedledum and Tweedledee. They are doubtless mistaken who in an era of Capitalism hope to abolish war and its horrors altogether; nevertheless they are entitled to our fullest respect. It must be admitted that there is no logical answer possible to the contentions of Tolstoy, just as there is no logical answer to the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount. All that can be usefully said here is that mankind cannot be persuaded to follow them out. The reason for this must be supplied by the theologian, not by myself. And Imperialism is just one of those things that are not amenable to logic; the Empire is here, and the British nation has no mind to relinquish any part of it. This situation and all it implies must be frankly accepted by the Socialist Party, since no Socialist Government would survive a week that proposed to surrender any part of our possessions. Ample provision would have to be made by them, if not for defiance, at least for defence; and greater sacrifices than any we now endure would be necessary, for reasons that will be mentioned presently. Meanwhile we should make it clear that our criticisms of existing Governments and policy are not made merely at random, but are the expression of a fixed and consistent attitude.

To the lover of peace the prospect is far from hopeless. War has now happily become such a ruinous business financially that few nations will enter upon it with a light heart. Not only is there in every country a small but earnest section in favour of peace on humanitarian grounds, but of more importance still, not alone in this country, but in Germany, France, Italy, Austria, and soon, we hope, in Russia a growing body of Socialists which can be trusted to impose a salutary and efficient check upon any wild schemes of military glory and economic exploitation. For the Socialists are not in the least perturbed by the imputations of disloyalty so freely and ignorantly urged against them; they are as devoted to their country as any other class. "This precious stone set in the silver sea" is as dear to them as to the most professional patriot. Indeed, the only genuine Imperialist is the Socialist, since he alone has an enlightened conception of what Imperialism should really denote, and the courage to conceive and work out his ideals. The only Empire worth fighting or working for would consist of a community of free men working in harmony for the highest possible development of each individual capacity, both physical and intellectual.

On general grounds it cannot be seriously contended that the Anglo-Saxon race is destined to dominate the rest of mankind; a single glance at the map of the world would be sufficient to dispel any such illusion. Neither can it be truthfully said that success in arms is any adequate measure of the valour of the respective combatants. Battles are now, and in the future must increasingly be, won by science and money. In this domain, as in most others, the longest purse will win. It may be objected that these are merely theoretical considerations, but the practical ones are equally formidable. If our colonies and over-sea dependencies are to be called upon in the defence of the Empire, they will rightly demand to be consulted in all matters of Imperial policy, and will, moreover, claim to be represented in our Houses of Parliament. Such a claim none of our statesmen in their present temper would seriously consider; and even if conceded, it could easily open up vistas of future trouble that might well appal us. Even now our relations with Japan are not likely to be improved by the evident desire of Australia and the United States to exclude our allies from these countries as undesirable aliens. And just as parental control becomes gradually relaxed as the members of a family approach manhood, so our dominions are less likely as

time goes on to take their cue from the Mother Country. But the vital Socialist objection to current Imperialism is that England, so far from realising our ideal of a great nation, is in reality a mean nation of impoverished men; and however rapidly the expansion of the Empire on present lines might proceed, that would bring it no amelioration of the condition of the workers. If we annexed the whole of Europe that would not appreciably improve the lot of the match-box maker, the shirt maker, and the casual million workers receiving under 20s. per week. We are too mean even to pay a decent price for the tools we are employing in the process.

Lest this language should appear extravagant, let us consider for a moment our attitude towards the army, upon which in the last resort our very existence depends. However else Liberals and Tories differ, they show a remarkable unanimity in this, that, to employ a vulgarism, they are resolved to run the Empire on the cheap. Our attitude as a nation towards the army is a disgrace to any intelligent patriotic community; our occasional fits of caressing appearing as mere fitful gleams of sunshine in a black waste of neglect and indifference. For our soldiers are not regarded as citizens at all, but as outlaws; they are herded together apart from the rest of the community; we do not allow them to vote or take any part in the social life of the nation; they are subject to a retrograde metallic system of discipline, and their pay is an exact illustration of the classic "iron law of wages." A man who risks his life in the defence of his country is surely as valuable as a footman or a groom; but where the supply of workless men is superabundant and the demand for honourable treatment practically non-existent, any political economist can foretell what will happen.

Neither, after centuries of Whig and Tory rule, can we honestly commend our country as an example for other nations to follow, nor wish to see the conditions prevailing here reproduced elsewhere. For we have in a population of a little over 40 millions 12 million workers who habitually do not get enough to eat, and at least 12 millions more who are uncertain whether in six months' time they will have enough to eat. Many of them are wretchedly housed; they are so miserably paid that they cannot possibly save; and their plight when pushed out of employment by younger men cannot be described in language of moderation. These facts are perfectly well known to the responsible statesmen of both parties. Even if this poverty were irremediable (which it is not), we could forgive our statesmen if they were using any intelligent means of alleviating it. But they are wickedly neglecting it. They are attempting to consolidate our Imperial race by assisting the sturdiest of our rural-born population to emigrate, while encouraging the immigration of aliens, whose sole recommendation is that they steadily reduce the standard of living in our already congested cities. In Leeds and elsewhere whole colonies of these aliens exist; a class apart, indifferent to our national interests, attached to the country by the flimsiest "cash nexus." The Tory Party, with a superficial air of stupidity, which in reality masks a serious purpose, endeavours to distract the attention of the proletariat from its own parlous condition by glowing prophecies of the destiny of the Anglo-Saxon race. The Liberal Party, bound hand and foot by abstract propositions, dare not move lest it fracture any of its own principles. At all hazards it must keep inviolate the liberty of the subject, the sacredness of contract, and the right of the individual to the undivided result of his labour, which for all practical purposes is equivalent to saying that a Yorkshire collier dissatisfied with his wages is at perfect liberty to carry his house on his back to Northumberland, to be offered there the same rate of wages or even less.

The abject failure of Liberalism and Toryism to sustain the real interests of the nation makes a change of ideal and practice imperative. Therefore we urge Socialism. And the Socialist attitude towards Imperialism can be defined in a sentence: Provide a worthy nation, and then defend it to the last drop of blood. With a prosperous population here, we could with clean

hands devote ourselves to the welfare of our own race in other parts of the world. In the long run this will turn out to be the real solution of our Imperialistic difficulties; a loyal union of these peoples with ourselves upon the basis of unfettered self-government under equitable economic conditions. Were these granted now, our troubles in Ireland, South Africa, and India would cease almost immediately. It is economic pressure that threatens Imperialism now, and may in the end prove fatal to it. For since we are too niggardly to pay an equitable price for the protection of our Empire, anxious eyes are being cast in the direction of the only alternatives—conscription and a citizen army. But conscription is as enthusiastically opposed by the working classes as Imperialism is enthusiastically supported by the capitalists. The real alternative—the ideal system—the system which every sane nation would adopt, would be the creation of a voluntary democratic citizen army, freed from our present reactionary and stupid system of caste. But the obstacles in the way of realising this ideal are at present insurmountable, for, as Mr. Balfour says, there are limits to the forbearance of human nature. And it is not in human nature to expect that a free man will deliberately offer to be shot for the purpose of protecting the property of another person. Now the average British citizen has at present no country to die for. It is not in any sense his. Before he can even sleep in it he is obliged to pay rent to somebody else. The high roads, it is true, are partly his; but if he sleep there he will be arrested as a vagabond.

Under Socialism, of course, the provision of a citizen army would present no difficulties, neither would the provision of forces for active foreign service, were they ever required. Even now the difficulties of Mr. Haldane and his advisers would disappear if they would approach the subject in the spirit of generous men and not as misers. If our Empire be worth having at all, it is worth paying for. To speak plainly, our soldiers must be paid a living wage of at least 30s. a week; their welfare and the welfare of the families of those who might perish in their country's defence must become a sacred obligation on the State. This just provision already obtains in the case of our generals, and must be extended to the rank and file. To many people this commonsense proposal will savour of farce, but it is put forward in all seriousness; for the workhouse is emphatically the last place in which any self-respecting nation would willingly see its defenders end their days. Happily the alternative is easy. Just as all roads lead to Rome, so all economic speculation directs us to one goal. Nine-tenths of the population have no property to defend; we must therefore revert to the old order of things under which the great landlords were held responsible to the Crown for the maintenance of the national forces. In brief, we must tax the owners of land, raw material, and ground rents, and tax them heavily. The Duke of Westminster, for instance, could easily afford out of his ground rents to maintain a whole battalion without being appreciably the poorer. Neither would such a procedure be inequitable. For our great landlords hold their land under contract with the State; in consideration of a quite inadequate tax the State backed up if necessary by the police and army, guarantees to them undisturbed possession of their property; and the State itself (like the landlords with their own tenant) is quite at liberty to revise its terms whenever the necessity arises.

Military glory may be good, but there is another ideal better worth the energies of a nation like ours. For this reason the Socialist, in his modest way, demands that Imperialism, like charity and every other virtue, shall begin at home. To this end he demands that the State shall undertake that every citizen shall be not only

properly taxed, but also properly fed, clothed, and housed, and that the production of commodities (the only wealth that matters) shall be released from the maw of private cupidity, and be taken in hand by the nation for the use of the nation. Doubtless this will involve many changes, and much mental and moral conflict. But done it must be if we are to be released from our disgraceful pauperism and squalor.

We do not share the gloomy prognostications of our public men, since their despair is but the measure of their own inefficiency and cowardice. There is still in us a virility of fibre to withstand the worst that fate can impose, and we are not of the stuff of which decaying nations are made. The future is with us, and not with our enemies, if we will but bestir ourselves to prepare for our descendants an inheritance fit for free men. This inheritance is Britain itself. Therefore we labour that our land

“No longer bound in with shame,

With inky blots, and rotten parchment-bonds”

shall really belong to the people that inhabit it. For such a Fatherland none but the craven would refuse to die, none but the unworthy could refuse to live.

FRANK HOLMES.

LITERATURE.

Cursed are the Poor.

“John Bull's Other Island,” etc. Bernard Shaw. (Constable. 6s.)

Everybody, probably, has had the experience of nightmare. The details differ in different cases, but the ground-plan is the same; an enormous horror or an approaching calamity, and absolute paralysis of limbs and speech. That, in brief, is Mr. Shaw's vision of the mind of England at this moment. To him as to every other sensitive in the land, the appalling spectacle of twelve millions of men, women and children starving in the midst of plenty while reformers and all sorts and conditions of men prate and pray and vapour and piffle has become a veritable obsession, an *idée fixe*, a rooted brain-image that nothing can remove. Contemplate, if you can, the meaning of such an event as the writing of the Preface to “Major Barbara.” There is nothing in the whole of modern literature to equal it for intensity and passion. The man who wrote “Major Barbara” is a dramatist of the rank of Euripides; but the man who wrote the preface to the same play is no other than a modern Micah, Job and Isaiah rolled into one for passion. Others may admire or condemn the style, but we have been more moved by the force of the sentiments expressed, by the vision they reveal of a tormented and almost agonised soul, and by the reflection that this England of ours is still sufficiently base and cloddish to provide food for a lust for destruction so raging as Mr. Shaw's. The fact is that Mr. Shaw has realised, as few have realised, the worse than brutish cruelty of our civilisation. More than most men he has all his life devoted himself to the task of abolishing the more outrageous survivals of cultivated barbarity, and has tried by means of politics, criticism, drama and personal example, to induce in the general mind some realisation of the world as it is and as it might be. But for all his pains, and despite his genius, the world has listened as little to him as to any of his predecessors. For all the effect he has had upon England, he might never have been born. Hundreds have laughed at his sallies, hundreds have even seriously taken his ideas; but comprehension of his meaning is still almost confined to the few in whom that comprehension was inborn. And Mr. Shaw, recognising this, now turns, as it were, upon himself and declares that all the ways hitherto adopted by himself are failures. Revolution is useless. Fabianism is useless. Restoration of the Drama is useless. Personal example is useless. We have established conclusively, fully, and unanswerably, that poverty is caused by private property; we have demonstrated therefore that poverty is remediable; that poverty need not exist; that not a single child need go starving to bed, starv-

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ing to school, and starving to its grave; we have in our hands absolute guides to the removal of poverty for ever from our midst; and yet—the nightmare!—the world will not, apparently cannot, stir. Is there anybody or anything that can move England from her fatal lethargy? Is there a clarion voice that can awaken these half-dead, altogether stupefied brains and hearts? Play to them the revolutionary music of Wagner, and they flock in their hundreds to Bayreuth—to hear more. Pour upon them the thunder of Carlyle, the organ pealing of Milton, the execrations of Ruskin, the passionate reproofs of Shelley, the dramas of Shaw, and they simper and giggle like school girls. Organise a revolution, and the revolutionaries quarrel among themselves; plot and plan in a Fabian Society, and the progress made is at the pace of the glacier; democratise institutions, create Progressives, Labour M.P.'s, and all the modern appliances; and the net result is—the status quo.

As we have said, Mr. Shaw's second preface is his apologia; it is also his resolution. For in the section "Barbara's Return to the Colours" we have what may be called "Shaw's Return to the Colours." There, if we mistake not, we hear the voice of a profounder, more serious Shaw than ever has been heard before. Not that in heaven's name Shaw has been anything but serious before; but he has come at length to a seriousness which cannot fail to be apparent even to the dullest wit. Revolutionist Shaw has always been; but we warn those whom it may concern that Shaw was never a more dangerous revolutionist than when he wrote the preface to "Major Barbara."

The Small Holdings of England. By L. Jebb. (John Murray. 10s. 6d. net.)

I have at the back of my mind the story of a German scientist who once climbed a tower, by the Hegelian spiral, and on the top he sat down to write the history of the giraffe. I don't really believe the tale; but had it been told of English politicians discussing the matter of small holdings then I should have been inclined to accept it as gospel. Indeed, this rural subject of agriculture is mainly debated in all sorts of urban haunts, by committees who would not be prepared hastily to draw fine distinctions between turnips and mangolds. A giraffe, from the inner consciousness, is a comparatively harmless literary adventure; but abstract small holdings may lead to quite serious waste of energy and confusion. However, Miss Jebb's extraordinarily valuable book was not spun on a tower. It is a close study of the facts which face the man who seeks a living from a small holding; the facts of rent, markets, soils, climate, local customs, and the various conditions which make agriculture possible or impossible on the small scale. Every important group of small holdings in England has been visited and described in this book by a wonderfully clear statement of the essential characteristics of each group and illuminating comparisons with others. It is a book of which the value can only be appreciated when one has grasped what a storehouse of information is opened to the reader who desires to have an intelligent opinion on this matter of small holdings and the wider agricultural problem which lies beyond. There are few books which it is so necessary that the citizen shall read if he wishes to be more than an automatic voting machine when this question is decided. Rightly or wrongly, the small holder has become one of the chief pieces of the political board, and we have to estimate his importance and place in a wise community, and vote at the polls accordingly. The book, the whole book, undoubtedly; but there are some points which must be especially considered with the Socialist bias. For example, Miss Jebb's facts are, I think, quite conclusive on one thing: the small holding can be a successful business concern; it is already in existence in many places. But whether it be the best form of agricultural existence in the best of possible communities is another matter. The Socialist is not prepared to admit that there is any better prima facie case for individualist agriculture than there is for individualist industry and commerce. To maintain the small holder against the large farm will apparently lead

to a stern struggle, and we must be quite sure that it is worth the fight. To deal a blow at the capitalist landlord by buying his land under compulsion may be so far good; but, remember, we are seeking a sound agricultural system for the sake of the community, and the small farmer is not an end in himself. Unless it can be shown that the small holder is a happier craftsman and more productive than the worker on a large farm, then, probably, there is no case for small holdings as an ultimate necessity. But it is also probable that we must accept them as a transition; if only as a concession to that rather vulgar craving to call a plot of earth one's own. Miss Jebb says that the Board of Agriculture and the local Councils must have drastic powers of buying land and leasing it to the holders; but she scarcely seems to fully realise that the poor man must have working capital as well as the bare land. He must have live-stock, implements, and seeds. The County Councils should provide these for exactly the same reason that they provide the land. Now the Bill before Parliament which is really based on Miss Jebb's arguments, allows the Council to lend money to credit banks and co-operative societies; which is a step in the right direction. But to lend money to a private bank is little better than leasing the municipal tram lines. Why should we go through the stages of private co-operation if we can organise it through our County Councils? This, of course, means that we should have public colonies of agriculturists under the control of public officials. That means that we must capture the Councils from the hands of short-sighted councillors, and find expert officials. Both of which things we must ultimately do; and the sooner the better. Perhaps the first advantage of public farms would be the opportunities they would offer for agricultural education.

"The Industrial Republic, a Study of America Ten Years Hence." By Upton Sinclair.

It was not Mr. Upton Sinclair's fault that "The Jungle" missed fire as a piece of Socialist propaganda, but he has taken care that there shall be no mistaking his meaning in his new work. "The Industrial Republic" is not an attack upon any specific phase of industrialism, therefore there is no opportunity for the smugly inclined, among those who are not attacked, to be complacent. It does not deal specifically with the commissariat department, therefore the serious questions involved cannot be shelved by such self-denial as abstinence from canned beef or sausage. Everybody is involved in this book. It is an indictment of the entire

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By H. CROFT HILLER,

Author of "Against Dogma and Freewill," "Heresies" (5 vols.), "Meta-Christianity," "The New Science of Causation," "Meta-Christian Catechism," and Appendices, etc.

The author contemplates publishing the above book himself. Before arranging about quantities, he makes an experiment by asking readers of "THE NEW AGE" intending to buy the book, which will cost not more than 1s., to send him applications on postcards, addressed H. CROFT HILLER, Didsbury, Manchester.

commercial system which Mr. Sinclair analyses with unrelenting logic and despatches with a prophetic faith which is almost like a fate. He sees in the commercial machinery in America an evolutionary tendency working towards Collectivism, and working with such certitude that he is able to fix the exact date at which the transformation from competitive to collective commerce will take place. "I believe," he says, "that the economic process is whirling us on with terrific momentum toward the crisis; and I look to see the most essential features of the great transformation accomplished in America within one year after the Presidential election of 1912": that is to say, that in five or six years from now America will be a collectivist republic. It is a good thing for the Socialist to be sanguine, but such colossal hope will, we fear, be treated largely as a curiosity. It is also a pity, yet inevitable, that it should have come from America. Yet Mr. Upton Sinclair is no mere tub-thumper, his statements are by no means blatant, they are based upon serious study, a keen power of observation, and set forth with convincing logic. "The Industrial Republic" is one of the most thoughtful and informative Socialist books that have appeared, and it will rank high among propaganda books. At the same time, the quality of Mr. Sinclair's Socialism will not make quite the same appeal in Britain as presumably it does in America. The British Socialist has fired his imagination at the shrine of Ruskin and Morris, and the departmental dreams of the followers of Bellamy leave him unmoved. The difference between the Socialism of America, so well set forth in "The Industrial Republic," and our Socialism, lies in the former's faith in political and bureaucratic institutions. Mr. Sinclair has this faith also; he believes that Socialism will be born of a financial crisis; whereas we believe that the financial crash, which we agree is inevitable in the near future, will not necessarily bring about Socialism, but that it will make Socialism a more imminent possibility. This is a vital question which the reading of "The Industrial Republic" urges to the front of the mind, but its pros and cons do not affect the validity of Mr. Sinclair's criticism of modern social conditions nor the picturesque vigour of his style. The final chapter in the book is a descriptive account of the interesting co-operative experiment at Helicon Hall, which came to an untimely end, it will be remembered, by fire in the early part of the present year.

"Israel in Europe." By G. F. Abbott. (Macmillan. 10s. net.)

The above volume will be found a singularly useful guide to those interested in that Jewish question which, at present merely in its infancy, is destined to be one of the gravest and most complex problems of the twentieth century. The value of the book lies not only in its able and lucid exposition of the recent situation, but in its vivid and efficient narrative of those preceding nineteen centuries in the light of which alone that situation can be clearly realised. Starting with the Jew at the time of the early Roman Empire, we find that until the supremacy of Christianity he enjoyed considerable prosperity under the toleration of that facile polytheism and divine freemasonry which admitted with complacency outside deities into its ever-widening circle, though viewing, no doubt, from the fixed standpoint of its wide anthropomorphism the highly abstract Hebrew Jehovah with no small amount of suspicion. With the accession of Constantine, however, the Jews enter on that period of almost chronic and universal persecution which to the present day has served but to whet the edge of their intellect and to stimulate their consciousness of their race. Speaking roughly, in fact, the cardinal features of mediæval are the cardinal features of modern Jewry—the pre-eminence of the Jew in finance, the isolation of the Jew in society, and the detestation of the Jew by the Gentile, due to his superior efficiency in the struggle for existence. It is, however, after we have passed the period of so-called emancipation and pass into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries that we come to the most important chapters in the book, which deal with Russia, Roumania, Anti-Semitism, and Zionism.

We would point in particular to the following quotation from the reply of the now executed De Plehve to a Jewish deputation in 1904:—"If free entrance to the high school were accorded to you, you would obtain, although by worthy and honest means, too much power. It is not just that the minority should overrule the majority." This invincibility of Jewish competition is the key to both Anti-Semitism and the Jewish retort thereto, Zionism. Both movements are in their origin essentially economic. In both cases religious and national ideals are merely the poetic veils employed, as in the case of Imperialism, to cover the nakedness of crude prosaic facts. With regard to the peculiarly interesting problem of the Jewish relation to Socialism Mr. Abbott says little. In regard to Socialism, in fact, the Jews' position is even unusually paradoxical: on the one hand they form the blood and brain of the Bund in Russia and the Social Democrats in Germany; on the other they represent with equal efficiency that individualist and capitalistic system which it is the Socialistic ideal to displace. Be then the victory with the angels or the devils, they are equally saved and equally damned.

The style of the author exhibits a vividness and a conciseness phenomenal in so serious a work. It is noticeable, however, that in spite of the vehement Judæophilism of his denunciations of the anti-aliens in England, he merely states the problem; he offers no attempt at its solution.

"The Four Philanthropists." By Edgar Jepson. 6s. (T. Fisher Unwin, London.)

Mr. Edgar Jepson called his most brilliant book "The Passion for Romance." That title might in truth be written across his collected works. He is one of the very few writers of the present day who can really touch the romantic chord so as to set it vibrating. Romance may be described as a sense of the unexplored possibilities of existence. These possibilities include love; also assassination. They are never absent from the mind of Mr. Jepson.

"The Four Philanthropists" is a London fantasy, reminding one more of Stevenson's "Dynamiter" than of any other book of this age. But Mr. Jepson's attitude towards the homicidal reformer is more sympathetic than Stevenson's was. Briefly, the story deals with the adventures of three young men of the noblest public spirit and enterprise, who conceive the brilliant idea of "removing"—not mere Kings and Kaisers, who matter little in these days—but mighty Kings of Finance and Captains of Industry. They do not succeed in killing anybody (which we take to be rather a concession to the unenlightened public than a satire upon the efficiency of social reformers), but they frustrate the designs of several high-minded, Imperial-thinking money-lenders, and secure the removal of one wealthy old lady to a madhouse.

It need hardly be said that the fourth philanthropist is of the other sex—a girl befriended by the hero in her necessity. The love story which follows is treated with a delicacy of touch and a sympathetic observation which seem almost too subtle for so riotous a comedy, but it makes very charming reading. The gem of the book, however, is, we think, Chelubai Kearsage, the high-souled American Theosophist and the most energetic of the little band of philanthropic assassins. We could spend hours over Chelubai, his noble idealism, his fears lest he should accumulate bad Karma, his chivalrous respect for Womanhood, and his skill in wielding the sand-bag. But for all that we must refer you to the book. So also for Honest John Driver, Financier and Whole Hog Whapshott. But we must not pass the hero without remark, the plain "gas and water Socialist," who insists upon putting the assassinations on a sound, practical, business-like footing. He is a man of whom our party may well be proud.

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BOOK NOTES.

Among the books in the press, or on the eve of publication by Mr. T. Fisher Unwin, are "The Marionettes, A Puppet-Show in Two Acts," a volume of poems by John Presland; a new volume for the "Climber's Guides" series, on the West Wing of the Bernese Oberland, by H. Dubi; "Woodlanders and Field Folk," sketches of wild life in Britain, by John Watson; and "The Red Sphinx," a novel dealing with the artistic temperament, the action of which takes place in Paris: it is by Edward U. Valentine and S. Eccleston Harper.

* * *

The new volume of the popular "Stars of the Stage" series published by Mr. John Lane ought to be both interesting and useful, it being no less than a monograph on W. S. Gilbert. The author is Edith A. Browne, and her book is described as "an impressionistic sketch of the actor, and an analytic study of his work." The price of the books in this series is 2s. 6d. net.

* * *

Humanitarians and sociologists interested in abattoir reform should read Mr. Cash's "Our Slaughter-House System, a Plea for Reform," with which is included "The German Abattoir," by Hugo Heiss, published by Messrs. Bell and Co. Mr. Cash makes a comparative study between the antiquated system of private abattoirs, which are now peculiar to England, and the state regulated systems of the Continent, particularly of Germany, in reference to whose methods we are some thirty years out of date.

* * *

Messrs. Maunsel and Co., of Dublin, will publish on the 25th inst. the summer number of their illustrated quarterly, "The Shanachie," to which Mr. J. M. Synge (author of "The Playboy of the Western World") contributes an article on West Kerry. This is the first of a series which will describe the people of this district and the adjacent Blasquet Islands. Mr. Synge has already written about island life in his recently-published "Arran Island," but we understand life on the Blasquets is even still more primitive. Amongst the other contributors to this number are George A. Birmingham, J. B. Yeats, R.H.A., and Professor Horowitz.

* * *

The same firm also announces for immediate publication a book of verse by Charles Weekes, "About Women." This is the first number of the new series of "Tower Press Booklets," which are issued monthly to subscribers, and are mainly devoted to the work of younger Irish writers, the other numbers announced for the series are by Eva Gore-Booth, Seumas O'Sullivan, Padraic Colum, George Roberts, and Maurice Joy.

* * *

Students of Russian life and literature will look forward to Miss Rosa Newmarch's "Poetry and Progress in Russia" (John Lane, 7s. 6d. net). This book deals with an aspect of Russian literature hitherto unjustly neglected in favour of the school of realistic fiction. Miss Newmarch's volume covers a period extending from the first publications of Poushkin, in 1814, to the death of Nadson, in 1886, and consists of an Introduction and six studies, as follows: Poushkin, the first and greatest of the Russian national poets; Lermontov, the meteoric poet of the Romantic School; Koltsov, the Russian Burns; Nikitin, the singer of Russian rural life; Nekrassov, the poet of revolution; and Nadson, whose work is characteristic of the decadence of Russian poetry.

* * *

Mr. Francis Griffiths announces for immediate publication an original work, entitled "John Bull's Army from Within." The book is described as a terrible exposure of British military law and army methods; the publisher expects it will take rank with Lieutenant Bilsle's exposure of the German army, although the present book is even more sensational. The author, ex-Serjeant-Major Edmondson, is a soldier of great experience and a writer of ability. An introduction to the work is contributed by Mr. Arnold White.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

- "Sweden's Rights." By Anders Svenske. (Unwin. 2s. 6d. net.)
 "Sixty Years in the Social Democratic Movement." By Frederick Lessner. (Twentieth Century Press. 6d.)
 "Traditions and Beliefs of Ancient Israel." By Rev. T. K. Cheyne. (Black. 15s. net.)
 "Hindu Superiority." By Har Bilas Sarada, B.A. (Ajmer. 6 Rs.)
 "The Simple Life on Four Acres." By F. A. Morton. (Fifield. 6d. net.)
 "Six Acres by Hand Labour." By Harold Moore. (Fifield. 6d. net.)

- "The Dimensional Idea, an Aid to Religion." By W. F. Tyler. (Fifield. 1s. net.)
 "Alfred Bruneau." By Arthur Hervey. (Living Masters of Music Series. Lane. 2s. 6d. net.)
 "The Court of the Tuileries (1852-1870)." By Le Petit Homme Rouge. (Chatto and Windus. 7s. 6d. net.)
 "The Industrial Republic." By Upton Sinclair. (Heinemann. 6s.)
 "The Pilgrimage." By C. E. Lawrence. (Murray. 6s.)
 "The Licensed Trade." By Edwin A. Pratt. (Murray. 5s. net.)
 "Small Holdings." By L. Jebb. (Murray. 10s. 6d. net.)
 "John Bull's Other Island and Major Barbara: also How He Lied to Her Husband." By Bernard Shaw. (Constable. 6s.)
 "Pioneers of Humanity." By Howard Williams. (Humanitarian League. 6d. net.)
 "Economics for Irishmen." By "Pat." (Maunsel. 1s. net.)
 "The New Ireland." By Sydney Brooks. (Maunsel. 1s. net.)
 "A Literary History of India." New edition. By R. W. Frazer. (Unwin. 12s. 6d. net.)
 "Life's Pilgrimage." By Edwin H. Eland. (George Allen. 2s. 6d. net.)
 "Dr. Gordon." By Mary E. Wilkins. (Unwin. 6s.)
 "Swords and Plowshares." By Ernest Sydney Evans. (Stockwell. 1s. 6d. net.)
 "Memoirs of Miles Byrne." Edited by his widow. Introduction by Stephen Gwynn, M.P. (Maunsel. 2 vols., 15s.)
 Reviews, Magazines, etc.—"Hindustan Review" (Allahabad); "Indian Review" (Madras); "Literary Digest" (New York).
 "The Samhain." (Dublin. 6d. net.) "The Shanachie." (Dublin. 1s. net.); "The Crank." (June. 3d.)

DRAMA.

"Divorcons" and Grace George and the Municipal Theatre.

A dreadful suspicion begins to dawn upon me. A desperately regular attendance at the theatre begins to sap my belief in our only modern belief, that in the "struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest." On the stage, at least, while there is some struggle everything survives. Old words and passions and ideas that ought to be all decently interred persist in romping about in the most malignantly active manner. The Court Theatre has been created, the founders even are to be publicly dined, but other theatres remain and prosper more and more. Progress in the drama does not kill the lower species, any more than the evolution of man kills monkeys. And the question becomes: is it possible to progress without killing? This being a Socialist paper, perhaps it is as well to explain that I have no designs on individual actors and actresses. In the case of Miss Grace George, for instance, I should very much like to kill the play in order that the actress might become alive. For it is really piteous to see a capable person struggle desperately in the conventional meshwork of a conventional intrigue. How do authors manage to produce works like this? The material consists of a husband and wife, her lover, and her entirely artificial emotions. The wife loves the lover because she is bored of married life, the husband conceives the plan of getting divorced, marrying his wife to her lover, and then, in his turn, becoming her lover himself. Impossibly complex, of course, from the legal point of view, and impossibly simple from the emotional; for in order to make the business at all feasible it is necessary to assume that the wife is an utterly brainless vanity-swayed, jealousy-swayed female lay figure. It was Nietzsche, I believe, who was in the habit of comparing women to monkeys, and a philosopher of this kind would have been delighted by the play's confirmation of his views. Perhaps plays of this kind are written for the benefit of philosophers. At any rate, since the time of John the Baptist, who lost his head, to that of Schopenhauer, who kicked his landlady downstairs, the relations of women and philosophers have not been of the kind calculated to increase the stock of knowledge on either side. But this has not been the case with playwrights. If women are still represented on the stage as dolls of rather simple mechanism, it is because for some inscrutable reason to

so represent them pays. And so I come back to my suspicion. Is there to be a permanent place on the stage for this kind of thing? Cannot we somehow or another sweep it off? It certainly affects the honour of women. Have not the W.S.P.U., the rebel women, any suggestion to offer? It is really dangerous to us to allow this kind of play to continue. It is a bribe to men's stupidity that women should be so sweet and sugary. I am quite convinced that after a performance of "Divorçons" every stall-holder who escorts a lady puts on her cloak for her with a more tender, more courteous, and more contemptuous feeling. And no doubt every woman looks a little more adorably trustful.

To say that Miss Grace George acts the part of the wife very well is not really a compliment. It would be very much more so if Miss George found it impossible to act the part at all. The wife is so much less an individual than any person ever was that it is only necessary to have a few technical accomplishments—to walk in a certain way, and speak with a certain clearness—and everything that can be done with the part is done. To make a display of superficial moods, of vanity, affection, and petulance is all that is required. Not to act the part would require a certain amount of artistic independence, a certain degree of depth of feeling, and a certain study of life at first hand. But then not to act the part would quite probably mean not to get the chance of acting at all. So once more the dead wall of economic necessity.

Both from the point of view of the public wanting good plays and the actor wanting good parts, it is fairly clear that present theatrical conditions are against them. The theatre now is in the hands of the commercial manager, who is compelled to put as his first consideration that of profit. He dare not try experiments, because they might land him in the workhouse. Where experiments, like the Court Theatre once was, have succeeded it has been because they have been altogether exceptionally backed against failure. And this all means that plays which are quite hopelessly out of date and out of touch with modern people will go on being produced because their like have succeeded in the past, and the habits of playgoers may make them succeed again in the future. For not every manager can have the luck to get properly backed from private sources, and if we want good plays we shall have to back the managers in our corporate capacity as citizens. If we want good plays we must have a Municipal Theatre. Perhaps a strong trades union of actors, if they took it into their heads to strike against inferior plays, could materially assist us to get good plays. But they could not emancipate us from the necessity of theatrical investors being paid interest on their capital. An actors' trade union could only help us in fact by ruining the managers, by forcing the formation of the theatrical trusts, and compelling us to take the business over in self-defence. I have been searching lately in quite curious places to find the real drama, and what I have found everywhere is excellent acting burlesquing itself in extraordinary plays. Mr. Martin Harvey swaggers before me as Rat Reresby in the "Breed of the Treshams," Mr. Cyril Maude has waved his slippered foot from under the bedclothes at me as Toddles, and I really refuse to believe either one or the other can wish to do these things. Give either one or the other a free hand with a municipal theatre, fetter him only by the obligation to produce good plays, and the mere artistic delight in producing good things will prevail. The trust is not apparently going to give him any such opening, for, of course, Mr. Frohman is at the back of "Divorçons." Production on a big scale is apparently no more a guarantee of excellence in a theatre than in a Chicago packing company, which reminds me that a correspondent from the North has been trying to slaughter me by saying that I do not criticise the drama. At this point I can only say I do—rather severely. I shall keep my correspondent's letter for use on a future occasion. Meanwhile let me suggest that excellent theatrical critiques are purveyed in quite a large number of the other weekly and daily journals.

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A NOTE ON METHODS OF CONTROVERSY.

TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE."

I hesitate to understand the controversial standards of Mr. Chesterton. He has written an article in which he does not so much discuss this proposed new Socialist party as seek to ascribe wanton inconsistency to me. I do not think his method of doing so a justifiable one. He puts together clipped quotations from my article in your issue of June 13th which was addressed to convinced Socialists and concerned party politics only, with passages from my propaganda tract "This Misery of Boots," addressed to the unconverted, he twists the necessary difference of tone between these two into an apparent contradiction and works his way laboriously to the imputation of bad sense and bad faith. He accuses me of going over "bag and baggage" to permeation, and he does this in the face of an article in which I insist, as plainly, if not as rhetorically, as I do in my tract, upon the supreme need of outspoken statement and open confession of our Socialist faith, and in which there occurs such a passage as this:—

"Now you may say this is the old doctrine of permeation. I do not think so. The conception of permeation carries with it to my mind, and I think to many other minds, a flavour of insidious substitution, a suggestion of wire-pulling and trickery, and what I propose is the open and triumphant imposition of ideas."

I ask your readers, what do they make of Mr. Chesterton's device of avoiding this passage altogether in his reply to my article? The whole of his argument against me is in fact a strained attempt to make out that my exhortation to all those who acquiesce in the general theory of Socialism to call themselves Socialists, was an exhortation to separatism in party politics. I find it hard to believe, and I school myself with difficulty to believe, that Mr. Chesterton is capable of such extreme clumsiness of apprehension.

But his clumsiness of apprehension becomes still more difficult to credit when he drags in my book, "In the Days of the Comet," as a book advocating polygamy. That issue had been discussed I had hoped sufficiently fully, and I find it difficult to suppose that Mr. Chesterton is unaware of that discussion. But he must be unaware of it, or otherwise this new attack would be just wanton and unjustifiable mud-throwing. I imagined when I published "In the Days of the Comet," that even without discussion no intelligent person could mistake the idealised representation of my comet-struck world for a definite Socialist proposal. But Mr. Chesterton, Mr. Shaw, and the Anti-Socialist expert of the "Daily Express" disillusioned me. Let me, therefore, repeat that not only is this confusion made without any countenance from me, but after I have been at great pains and trouble to insist upon what I had once imagined were the obvious facts of the case. I cannot, of course, supply Mr. Chesterton with general understanding, but I may, at any rate, do my best to deprive him of the excuse of ignorance for any further offence in this direction. The comet-changed world of "In the Days of the Comet" has not, and never was intended to have, any closer relation to what I regard as practicable and desirable in the sexual institutions of contemporary human beings than has Mr. Coburn's recent photograph of "The Thinker" to what he and his sitters consider a desirable costume for a Socialist soirée. There are very definite limits upon conduct, costume, and so forth, in the actual practical world that have no value in the world of imaginative art. For example, I think myself that the idealised nude human form is nearly the most beautiful thing in the whole imagination of man, but that does not mean that I would incite Mr. Chesterton and his associates of the Anti-Puritan League to dance along the Strand in their native buff. Mr. Chesterton must really try to grasp this very simple and generally understood distinction, and when he does so thoroughly, then he will go on to realise that this particular controversial device is incompatible with his self-respect.

There gleams, too, in Mr. Chesterton's paper a third and more excusable—what shall I call it?—controversial indistinctness. It will, I think, be plain to everyone who read my paper in your issue of the 13th, with an unprejudiced mind, that I was writing of Fabian *collective* political activity, and using the word "political," not in its etymological sense which would make "politics" nearly an equivalent of "sociology," but in its common accepted English sense as an affair of party organisation and electioneering. It will be quite easy—but I think it will be rather silly—for anyone to pretend that I want to disavow any attempts whatever to secure Socialist legislation, and to seem to score a brilliant victory on that misunderstanding.

H. G. WELLS.

LORDS AND WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE.

TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE."

The Prime Minister, in attempting so to restrict the veto of the House of Lords as to secure that the final decision of the House of Commons shall prevail, forgets that his first duty is that of setting his own house in order. That is to say, he ought, before dealing with the House of Lords, to make the House of Commons itself thoroughly representative of the people by extending the Parliamentary Franchise to the women of the nation. The Government appear to overlook the fact that those principles on which they claim that their attack upon the House of Lords is based, call even more directly for the abolition of the political disability of sex.

In the eyes of voteless women, the House of Commons has no higher authority than the House of Lords, since both branches of the legislature are equally irresponsible to women.

CHRISTABEL H. PANKHURST.

* * *

THE CHURCH SOCIALIST LEAGUE.

TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE."

We are forming a London and Home Counties branch of the League, and should be glad of the names of Church people, clergy or laity, who accept Socialism as defined by the League or any other accredited Socialist body, and who are willing by use of prayer and sacrament, by conversation, public speaking, or financial aid—by considerable sacrifices of one kind or another—to forward the object of the League, which is the destruction of the present system of industrial anarchy by means of a social revolution, and the establishment of international, interdependent co-operative commonwealths.

We have, for practical purposes, confined membership of the League to members of the Church of England, but we have wished to be at least as wide as the accredited theologians of the historic church in our interpretation of Churchmanship. We, therefore, open the door to all christened people, whether they be very regular churchgoers or no, so long as they wish to claim their rights and do their duties within the Church, and are in general agreement with its creeds rationally interpreted, and its Socialist aims. Further particulars on application to

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NEED FOR A SOCIALIST PARTY.

TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE."

How can Mr. Chesterton expect to organise a middle-class Socialist Party without a Socialist programme for the middle classes? As a matter of fact, Socialists have nothing at present to offer the middle classes but euthanasia; and this can only be brought about by a propaganda of ideas. To offer the middle classes relief from labourers' grievances is to offer them remedies for ills that do not exist for them. Pity alone induces them to join in the present Socialist movement. What, exactly, is Mr. Chesterton's, or, for the matter of that, the Fabians', programme for the middle classes?

A. J. P.

* * *

TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE."

It would be interesting to know what Mr. Cecil Chesterton means by the statement that "the present constitution of the Labour Party excludes the Social Democratic Federation." One would have thought it a matter of common knowledge among Socialists that the "exclusion" of the S.D.F. is quite voluntary, and that it is just as eligible for affiliation under the present constitution as are the I.L.P. and the Fabian Society. It is true that there is still a certain suspicion of the "middle-class" Socialist in the minds of the older trade unionists, but this is dying away more rapidly than might reasonably have been expected, and the establishment of a "middle-class" party of Socialists, separate from and independent of the Labour Party, can only lead to its revival with greater force than it ever possessed before. On the other hand, the establishment of the party proposed by Mr. Chesterton seems a trifle superfluous, because the Social Democratic Federation already is such an one, and there is nothing to prevent any Fabian sharing his view from joining it.

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