WILL EMPLOYERS EMIGRATE? by BERNARD SHAW

THE NEW AGE

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART

Edited by A. R. Orage and Holbrook Jackson

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NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.—All Business Communications must be addressed to Publisher, "New Age," 139, Fleet Street, E.C.; communications for the Editors to 1 & 2, Took's Court, Furnival Street, E.C.

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

Reuter, telegraphing on Nov. 13, announced that Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh, the two Hindus deported in connection with the riots in the Punjab last May, have been released. This is the best news we have heard from India for a long while. And, as everybody knows, there was need of some good news to counterbalance the monotonous stories of blunder piled upon blunder and official stupidity followed by official stupidity. We congratulate Mr. John Morley on the return of his philosophic spirit; and sincerely hope it may have returned for good.

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At the same time, we cannot help observing signs that Mr. Morley has not completely recovered. His recent refusal to interfere in the illegal sentence of flogging passed upon native Indians is calculated to cancel the excellent effects of his release of Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh. Moreover, the extremely foolish choice he has made for his native additions to the India Council show him to be at least without imagination, if not definitely cynical. Of the two Indian gentlemen appointed to represent the rising tide of Indian nationalism, Mr. K. G. Gupta frankly admits he has "no idea" of the nature of his new duties, and the second, Mr. Bilgrami, takes quite the English official view that all this Indian agitation is no more than "theatrical attitudinising." We need hardly say that this is an unfortunate spirit with which to begin the infinitely difficult task of allaying the just fears and guiding the honourable ambitions of our three hundred million fellow-subjects.

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If Mr. Morley had possessed some imagination,—as much, even, as Mr. Balfour showed when he persuaded Lord Roberts to go out to South Africa in the very blackest period of the Boer War—we might have seen Lajpat Rai recalled from exile in order to serve on the India Council. That would have been a stroke of genuine statesmanship, which would have gone further to bring peace in political India than all the repressions and revivals of Sedition Acts which Mr. Morley has permitted himself to accept.

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The visit of the German Emperor and Empress to England has been the occasion of a good deal of perfectly genuine demonstrations of mutual goodwill. The Teutophobes have temporarily ceased from their baying, and even the Social Democratic Federation failed at the last moment to carry out its original proposal to hold a counter demonstration. The nearest approach to this was an unemployed procession, under the leadership of the indefatigible Mr. Jack Williams, which came into collision with the police, who, as usual on such occasions, were made almost hysterical by the sight of starving men. It is fortunate, perhaps, that the German Emperor did not see our slums. He might have concluded that the conquest of England would be in the interests of humanity as well as of the German Empire!

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Mr. Balfour's speech at Birmingham on Thursday may not have elucidated his position on the subject of Tariff Reform, but with rare perspicacity he put his finger on what we may be permitted to regard as a defect in the exposition rather than in the nature of Socialism. Discussing the subject at an altitude beyond the reach of most of our opponents, Mr. Balfour urged that the more pressing problem of society was always production rather than distribution. He foresaw that under Socialism the sum total of production might be reduced, with the result that however equitable the distribution, the standard of living might be generally reduced. His remedy for the present evils of poverty was to drive always at production, and at the same time by slow and cautious steps gradually to reduce the more glaring effects of competitive distribution. The point is well taken, and we shall have pleasure in discussing the subject in succeeding numbers of THE NEW AGE.

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It will not be for lack of warning that Sir Edward Grey remains stubborn on the subject of the Denshawai prisoners. Doubtless he thinks it a fine noble English trait to keep a stiff upper lip and to ignore almost universal criticism. We English are so constructed that we almost necessarily believe ourselves to be right just when everybody else knows us to be wrong. To the warning voices of Socialists and reformers of all types, Mr. G. K. Chesterton, the ardent apostle of Democracy, has added his powerful support in the pages of the "Daily News" (Nov. 18):—

> For us the great fact is that our English history has been suddenly blasted by a quite extraordinary crime. I cannot suppose that anybody doubts what is the crime to which I refer The fact that men in the Denshawai affair were flogged and hanged, the fact that some of them still remain in prison, is by far the blackest fact that can definitely be proved from English history against the English people.
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> We are continuing a piece of open injustice literally because we are too languid to stop it. Nobody really pretends, Sir Edward Grey and Lord Cromer do not really pretend, that those dead peasants ought to be dead; that those tortured peasants ought to have been tortured. Everybody knows now that the thing was at the very best a brutal mistake, a case of error far clearer than the Beck case. Yet the British Empire goes on imprisoning precisely because

the British Empire is too weak and unwieldy to make a second decision; it has exhausted all its energy in getting the wrong men into gaol, and has (apparently) none left to get them out again. This is the strange and sickening quality that separates this wrong from most of the wrongs alleged against great nations. The terrible fact is not that its accusers are hot; it is that its defenders are luke-warm. Denshawai is worse than indefensible: it is undefended.

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The annual outbreak of "ragging" on the occasion of Gunpowder Night seems this year, both at Oxford and Cambridge, to have resulted in some detestable scenes. We are not in the least moved by the "ragging" itself, but by the uniformly superficial, if not base, motives that seem to have inspired it. Seldom or never has it happened that the young bloods at Oxford or Cambridge have "ragged" anything or anybody on behalf of a generous idea. Everywhere on the Continent it is expected as a matter of course that students should be on the side of great ideas. At Oxford and Cambridge they appear always to be on the side of the House of Lords in its most reactionary moods. It is this that keeps Oxford and Cambridge in the eyes of the intellectual revolutionaries on a level with the Leeds University, whose students had the chivalrous notion of sprinkling a Suffragette meeting with cayenne pepper. The courage of the proceeding is, of course, prodigious.

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Writing of Suffragettes, we observe that both Mr. McKenna and Mr. Asquith, as well as the Magistrate at Bow Street, have come in for some well-merited Suffragette opposition. At Nuneaton it is pretty certain that the defence of Mr. Asquith by a hundred or so brawny miners, officered by stewards apparently trained in Sir Edward Grey's Denshawai spirit, was as brutal as it will prove ineffective. Mr. Asquith has the reputation of frequenting the company of the "Smart Set"; and we should have thought that his fastidiousness might have hit upon a more ingenious device for preserving order than the employment of male bullies. As it turned out, his speech when delivered was scarcely worth killing a fly to hear.

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The return as to the proceedings of distress committees under the Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905, during the year ended March 31, has just been issued. We merely note that statistics are notoriously the superlative degree of misinformation. Doubtless the figures are correct, but nobody who has had his eyes open during the last twelve months can believe that things are as rosy as the return makes them out to be. Of the sixty thousand persons who applied to distress committees, rather more than half were provided with work of some kind. In many cases the work was for as long a period as two days, and the wage no less than fourpence an hour, or about 13s. a week. Twice thirteen are twenty-six, and twenty-six shillings for a whole season's income may be regarded as the reductio ad absurdam of the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905. West Hartlepool, we observe, took no action whatever under the Bill. That was not "practical," but it showed a proper contempt.

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We desire to draw particular attention to the following circular letter issued by the Trade Union Congress Parliamentary Committee on the subject of the fair wages resolution of the House of Commons:—

It will be remembered that in our report to the Trade Union Congress at Bath we drew attention to the fact that the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury had appointed a committee to consider the working of the fair wages resolution of the House of Commons of February 13, 1891, as embodied in Government contracts, and to report whether any administrative changes, especially with a view to the prevention of evasion, the enforcement of the rate current in the district, and greater uniformity of interpretation and working, are desirable in order to enable the objects of the resolution to be more effectually attained. We now wish to point out that this committee is prepared to take evidence from representatives of trade unions. All trade union officials, therefore, having any complaints to make against the working of the fair wages resolution, and desiring to give evidence, should apply at once in writing to Mr. J. G. Wills, Board of Trade, Whitehall, London, who is secretary to the committee. In view of the urgent need for amending the fair wages resolution on the lines laid down at the last Trade Union Congress, we sincerely trust that all those who have had experience of the unsatisfactory results of the resolution as it now stands will avail themselves of this opportunity of giving evidence on the subject.

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A Committee has been formed to consider a scheme for the useful employment of vacant land within London. In several American cities such vacant land has been lately devoted to the production of vegetables, mainly by the unemployed; and it has been found actually to pay. Allotments in the heart of London sound attractive but incredible; yet Mr. Fels informs us that 10,000 acres of available vacant land are to be found within a 'bus ride of the Bank.

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On Friday evening, Sir Alfred Keogh, Director-General of the Army Medical Staff, read a paper before the Incorporated Society of Medical Officers of Health in which he suggested the formation of a National Medical Corps for the Territorial Army. The Corps should consist of Volunteer Medical Officers of Health, who should superintend and control all the sanitary arrangements for the new civil Army. They would have nothing to do with the sick, as such, but be confined to such work as they are now performing. The idea is excellent. Medical Officers of Health may by such means acquire one day a sufficient status to enable them peremptorily to order the abolition of poverty and slums.

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Dr. Macnamara's experience as an elementary teacher stands him in good stead as a political speaker (we should not think of calling him an orator). His speech of Monday last, at Reading, must have cost him an unusual effort of sentiment. He proved to understand Socialism, but only to resent it because "it was detaching the working classes from a practicable programme of social reform" (alias the programme of the Liberal party). He enumerated the great Liberals of the past "who thought every day misspent of which a portion had not been devoted to the cause of the poor." Of the eight names he mentioned, four were of Liberal Premiers whose aggregate term of office was over half a century. Strange, that with such devotion to the cause of the poor and with such power, their successor, C-B., should find twelve million poor still remaining! We suggest that Dr. Macnamara might give himself a lesson in the difference between such amelioration and downright cynical neglect. The latter could scarcely have produced worse results.

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The crisis in the American financial world is distinctly less acute. The abuse to which hoarders have been subjected, together with the high premium on currency have sufficed to restore some measure of confidence, and considerable deposits are now being again made in the savings banks. The curtailment of business is decidedly less general than in the earlier American crises. The refusal of the Banque de France to ship gold on the sole guarantee of the American Government has aroused some resentment in the States, and the "New York Herald" threatens a retaliation on the part of the American public which will affect French trade. The tragic end of Mr. Barney, the ex-president of the Knickerbocker Trust, has had little or no effect on the financial position, but prosecutions of two of the Trusts are pending, and Mr. Hughes, the Governor of New York, is contemplating State legislation which will raise the proportion of securities which so-called Trusts are compelled to deposit with the Treasury. This proportion is at present only 15 per cent. of the paid-up capital—an absurdly low figure, which is explained by the fact that these Trusts were in their origin merely firms engaged in financial business. Trouble came when they assumed the rôle of deposit bankers, and took to gambling with other people's money.

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The Duma reassembled on Thursday. Long live the Duma! This is the third trial since that hopeful day in May of last year—only eighteen months ago! Al-

though twice repeated failure and the arbitrary "making" of the elections by the Government have alienated popular sympathy from the new assembly, much is hoped from it in some quarters, where it is declared that the period of revolution is now giving way to one of construction. It is impossible to speak thus early with precision in regard to the currents in the Assembly, but three parties are clearly outlined, and the policy of each can be stated with more or less certainty. On the Left are the Constitutional Democrats, some 100 strong, led by the distinguished publicist, M. Miliukoff, well known in England. They stand for the jealous preservation of the rights of the National Assembly, as conceded by the Tsar in his original constitutional manifesto, and also for "irreconcilable struggle against administrative arbitrariness." In the Centre is the party of the Octobrists, with 150 adherents, under the leadership of M. Guchkoff, for many years a persistent Anglophobe. He regarded our Boer War as a crime, and fought with the Boers against us. Latterly, since the grant of the Transvaal Constitution, his attitude to this country has changed, and he is a supporter of the recent Anglo-Russian understanding. The aims of the Octobrists are almost identical with those of the Constitutional Democrats, but they put order first; repression of anarchy and firmness combined with slow constitutional growth, may be said to express their attitude.

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The Right consists of about 120 members, all of them more or less reactionary, and many of them desiring the withdrawal of the constitution by the Tsar. The latest news to hand as we go to press indicates a rapprochement between this party and the Centre (the Octobrists), the basis of union being a compromise by which the Right agree to regard the Duma as something more than a merely consultative body, and the Octobrists concede something in the matter of concessions to the Jews, whom they have hitherto regarded in a more liberal manner than does the Right. The bloc would seem to be a mixture of oil and vinegar, which cannot possibly result in a success, and will probably further discredit the Octobrist (or Centre) Party in the country. The Centre hold the key to the situation. The new president was drawn from their party, and we should have preferred to see some understanding between them and the Constitutional Democrats, which resulting in an effective fire of criticism on bureaucratic methods, might have eventually produced a real Parliamentary régime in Russia.

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The first session of the new Finnish Diet has recently closed, and the "Times" correspondent at Helsingfors provides a summary of the work it has accomplished. This, as perhaps throwing some small light on the influence of woman's suffrage, is interesting, the Finnish Diet being chosen by every sane, native-born or naturalised inhabitant of Finland, male and female, who has attained his or her twenty-fourth year. Furthermore, women are eligible for membership of the Diet, and sit there to the number of ten or more. The chief item of legislation would seem to have been a law totally prohibiting the possession or sale of any alcoholic liquor except as medicine, but as this needs the consent of the Russian Government before it becomes law, it is doubtful whether it will ever be enforced, as the importation clauses conflict with the treaty rights of Powers possessing tariff agreements with Russia. The Social Democrats are the strongest party numerically in the House, numbering some 80 out of 200 members.

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The following letter appeared in the "Spectator" of Nov. 9:—

SOCIALISM AND SEX RELATIONS.

Sir,—In mercy to terrified Socialists, may I ask you to allow me to say I am the mouthpiece of my own opinions? My articles in THE NEW AGE are signed, and I have never pretended to express the policy of any association of people. Outcasts cannot speak for themselves, it is invidious for men to speak for them, so other women must if public opinion is to be brought to bear on one of the most important dangers to the race. That is all. FLORENCE FARR

The Parliamentary Paper issued by Lord Elgin detailing the steps that have been taken to reorganise the Colonial Office on the lines suggested by the recent Imperial Conference, make it clear that the new "Dominions Department" will be new in name only. So far as we can discover, no additions have been made to the present staff, and except for a good deal of overwork and double duty, things will continue very much as before.

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What will Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman say to the deputation of playwrights that is to approach him shortly to ask him to abolish the Censorship of Plays? In principle he must be with the oppressed playwrights; for the Censorship, like the House of Lords, is one of the few remaining institutions far enough behind the times to make the old-fashioned Liberal view of them quite up to date still. Fiercely as the playwrights will no doubt be opposed by crude coercionists like Mr. John Morley, and open supporters of despotism and torture like Sir Edward Grey, it is hardly conceivable that Mr. Birrell, Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Burns, Lord Carrington, Mr. Sidney Buxton, perhaps even Mr. Asquith, can be in favour of the Censorship. Mr. Herbert Gladstone, as a sound mid-Victorian Anarchist, ought to be as useful on this question as he is mischievous when he is trying to nullify the Factory code. There is, it is true, no reason to suppose that he and his two Tsarist colleagues regard dramatic authors as superior to Indians, Egyptians, or factory hands; but, after all, the Tsarists are not the majority; and all the real Liberals are asking what in the name of political consistency they are doing in the Liberal Cabinet when their hearts are so evidently with Mr. Lyttelton and Lord Cromer.

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And here are the views of Mr. George Meredith, as expressed in a letter to the "Daily Telegraph":—

Under a censorship the English theatre has no chance of coming to such full bloom as we see in France. The mind of the people is unexpressed in it. The authorities who maintain the Censor of Plays in his office appear to have lost knowledge of the temper and nature of our public.

An immoral play, or a play with suggestions of indecency, would have a poor chance of weathering a night, and managers would be taught a profitable lesson in their having produced it. As it is, we have savourless adaptations, hypocritically clothed to pass the Censor, and sometimes aided by gestures and winks to give the spice of the original foulness.

What the unhappy Censor may think of these dramas or farces which have slipped through his hands would, assuming him ever to be one of the audience, form an agonising psychological monologue.

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A long letter from Mr. Bernard Shaw on "The Censorship of Plays" appeared in the "Nation" of Nov. 16. We take the liberty of printing the following extracts:—

Sometimes new emergencies arise for which there are no rules; and then Mr. Redford has to legislate for the drama of this unhappy realm out of his own head, which was never made to bear such a strain. On the whole, he is happiest when he has office rules or traditions to fall back on.

What are these rules? First and most intolerable, the infamous rule that dramatic art is too unclean a thing to be allowed to be religious. It may be lewd, and it may be silly; but it must not dare touch anything sacred. The Bible is to be a closed book to it. It may send the blackguard to the drinking bar between every act, and to a worse place at the end of the play; but it must not send him to church or to prayer, or even into the street to do good works.

Here are the three great taboos on the question of sex:—

1. You must never mention an illegal obstetric operation.
2. You must never mention incest.
3. You must never mention venereal disease.

"And," Mr. Redford will exclaim, "would any gentleman desire to mention them on the public stage?" The reply, which will shock Mr Redford, is Yes. If gentlemen do not deal energetically with these subjects in public, they will be dealt with by blackguards in private.

For instance, take the play called Waste, by Mr. Granville Barker, Mr Redford's latest victim. Consider the position into which the refusal of a licence for that play has put Mr Barker! The public knows that Mr. Redford has licensed plays so abominable that I myself, when trying to bring the question of the Censorship before the public

through the Press, have failed to induce editors to allow me to describe them in their papers. There is also the well-known protest from the judicial bench cited above. The inevitable conclusion drawn by the man in the street is that if Mr. Barker has gone beyond the tolerance that licensed these indescribable and unmentionable plays, he must have produced something quite hideously filthy. But I can tell the story of Waste here without the smallest offence, and, with Mr. Barker's permission, I will.

Waste is a play about the disestablishment of the Church. The hero is an able Parliamentary leader who has crossed the floor of the House from the Radical side to the Conservative, because he has induced the Conservatives to dish the Liberals by dealing with the Church themselves. One can quite conceive Mr. Sidney Webb getting round Mr. Balfour in this way (after all, the Irish Local Government Act passed by the Unionists was not less likely on the face of it) if Mr. Balfour would give Mr. Webb the revenues of the Church for some of his Collectivist projects—which, by the way, is just what the Conservative leader in Waste proposes to do. Mr. Barker has dramatized this amusing and suggestive political situation with real political insight and first-hand knowledge of our political personnel. But the scheme fails in the play through a private indiscretion of the sort that has ruined two political careers and crippled another in our own time. The protagonist becomes the father of the unborn child of a married lady. The lady avoids the birth by an illegal operation which kills her. The scandal makes the hero politically impossible, just as the O'Shea divorce made Parnell politically impossible. The great scheme for disestablishing the Church is wasted. The political services of the man who devised it are wasted. Hence the title Waste.

And here you have the effect of the Censorship in a nutshell. It does not forbid vice: it only insists that it shall be made attractive. It does not forbid you to put the brothel on the stage: it only compels you to advertise its charms, and suppress its penalties. Now it is futile to plead that the stage is not the proper place for the representation and discussion of illegal operations, incest, and venereal disease. If the stage is the proper place for the exhibition and discussion of seduction, adultery, promiscuity, and prostitution, it must be thrown open to all the consequences of these things, or it will demoralize the nation. Either prohibit both, or allow both. The Censorship admits that it cannot prohibit both. To do that would be to wipe the theatre out of existence, and to reduce the adult population to the status of children in the nursery. To allow both would be to allow everything that public opinion will allow: that is, to confess that the Censorship is of no use, and the salaries of its officials a waste of money

The "Saturday Review" suggests that Mr. Redford should be removed, and I put in his place. It is just as if the testing of watches at Kew had been complained of, and it were suggested that the Astronomer Royal or Lord Kelvin should be given the job. I am too busy as an author to spend my life reading other people's manuscripts; and the market value of my time is probably ten times that of the King's Reader of Plays.

The sensible course is obvious Abolish the Censorship of plays altogether, root and branch. Continue to license theatres from year to year, as much as you like, just as you license public houses or music-halls. License me from year to year as a dramatist if you will, just as you would license me as a motor-car driver. License the managers to manage; and by all means license Mr. Redford to express his opinon of their productions in the "London Gazette" if you value it. But let the play be born and take its chance with the consciences of men just as it came from the conscience of the author. If he shocks you, respect his courage and inspiration, even whilst you stone him. If he shocks you basely and lewdly, or, worse still, pleases you that way, at least do not give yourself a two-guinea certificate of propriety under cover of giving it to him.

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With the kind permission of the Editor of "Public Opinion," we reproduce for our readers the first letter ever addressed by Mr. Bernard Shaw to a public journal. It appeared in "Public Opinion" for April 3, 1875, nearly a third of a century ago; and was written on the occasion of the visit of Messrs. Moody and Sankey to Dublin, where Mr. Shaw was then employed as a clerk in an Irish land agent's office:—

Sir,—In reply to your correspondent "J.R D.," as to the effect of the "wave of evangelism," I beg to offer the following observations on the late "revival" in Dublin, of which I was a witness. As the enormous audiences drawn to the evangelistic services have been referred to as a proof of their efficacy, I will enumerate some of the motives which induced many persons to go. It will be seen that they were not of a religious, but a secular, not to say profane, character. Predominant was the curiosity excited by the great reputation of the evangelists, and the stories, widely circulated, of the summary annihilation by epilepsy and otherwise of sceptics who had openly proclaimed their doubts of Mr. Moody's divine mission. Another motive exhibits a peculiar side of human nature. The services took place in the Exhibition Building, the entry to which was connected in the public mind with the expenditure of a certain sum of money. But Messrs. Moody and Sankey opened the building "for nothing," and the novelty, combined with the curiosity, made the attraction irresistible. I mention these influences particularly as I believe they have hitherto been almost ignored. The audiences were, as a rule, respectable, and as Mr. Moody's orations were characterised by an excess of vehement assertion and a total absence of logic respectable audiences were precisely those which were least likely to derive any benefit from them.

It is to the rough, to the outcast of the streets, that such "awakenings" should be addressed; and those members of the aristocracy who by their presence tend to raise the meetings above the sphere of such outcasts, are merely diverting the evangelistic vein into channels where it is not wanted, its place being already supplied, and as, in the dull routine of hard work, novelty has a special attraction for the poor, I think it would be well for clergymen, who are nothing if not conspicuous, to render themselves so in this instance by their absence. The unreasoning mind of the people is too apt to connect a white tie with a dreary church service, capped by a sermon of platitudes, and is more likely to appreciate "the gift of the gab"—the possession of which by Mr. Moody nobody will deny—than that of the Apostolic succession, which he lacks. Respecting the effect of the revival on individuals I may mention that it has a tendency to make them highly objectionable members of society, and induces their unconverted friends to desire a speedy reaction, which either soon takes place or the revived one relapses slowly into his previous benighted condition as the effect fades, and although many young men have been snatched from careers of dissipation by Mr. Moody's exhortations, it remains doubtful whether the change is not merely in the nature of the excitement rather than in the moral nature of the individual. Hoping that these remarks may elucidate further opinions on the subject,

I remain, Sir, yours, etc.,

Dublin. S.

The Birmingham Conference.

THE sense of unreality attaching to mortal things was accentuated by the assembling at Birmingham of the Conservative Conference. It is but 16 years since the Conference last assembled there, and in the meantime change has overtaken the whole attitude and aspect of party politics. Since that time death has removed the Marquis of Salisbury, the Earl of Cranbrook, Viscount Goschen, Mr. Stanhope, and Lord Ritchie from the Conservative counsels, and from the other side two great and commanding figures, Mr. Gladstone and Sir Wm. Harcourt. And with the disappearance of the old protagonists have disappeared most of the old party catchwords and antagonisms. It is the fate of all controversies that they become stale. Home Rule is dead; Imperialism is tacitly accepted by both parties; and the political atmosphere is quickly losing the last traces of that simulated vitality that was called suddenly into being by the incidence of the General Election. These circumstances have imposed upon the Conservatives the necessity of at least appearing to formulate a constructive policy, and for several days this task occupied the best brains of the party.

We cannot honestly congratulate them upon the results of the Conference, and not even the presence and utterances of their Chief sufficed to obliterate the ominous sense of unreality pervading the proceedings. The Conservative Leader, indeed, spoke his mind freely and without ambiguity upon Socialism, and to his remarks upon this subject we hope to refer briefly next week. But it was upon the prospects of tariff reform that his audience wished to be enlightened, a mission upon which they had come full of hope, and from which they were sent empty away.

As we anticipated, Mr. Balfour illuminated the subject with a light that was itself darkness visible. Like a thrifty Scotchman, he divided his policy into various portions, of which the negative part almost exactly neutralised the positive. If recalled to power the Conservatives must "broaden the basis of taxation, safeguard the interests of our production, and strengthen our position in foreign markets." In order to this he laid down four principles which he described by a

similar number of epithets as incontrovertible, unmistakable, perfectly plain, and perfectly precise. They are these: in broadening the basis of taxation, the duties should be widespread, they should be small, they should not touch raw material, and they should not alter the proportion in which the working classes contribute to the cost of government. During the delivery of this halting and invertebrate rallying-cry many thoughts must have been wistfully turned to his ablest lieutenant, that once alert and intrepid figure now by an untoward fate disabled and silent, who was wont to measure neither his exertions nor his promises. Yet we cannot doubt that Mr. Balfour is right. He is at once too wise and too honest to play fast and loose with his own intelligence. And the dilemma is not of his making, it has been created by fate and circumstance. The Conservatives are pledged to provide Old Age Pensions, and to raise ample funds for necessary measures of social reform; and to give to the poor with one hand what he takes from them with the other he rightly conceives to be both insulting and impossible. The only method of raising revenue without increasing the burdens already oppressing the working classes is to tax unearned incomes. Mr. Balfour will not accept that alternative, and there is no other. While disagreeing with his decision we cannot but admire the courage with which he has met a difficult and graceless situation, and thereby justified his deserved reputation for intellectual honesty. His followers also deserve commiseration. They are condemned to live from hand to mouth on a policy upon which they were so signally defeated two years ago. No other policy is open to them, and as a means of averting the perils confronting the Empire, the passage of time can only accentuate its unreality and incapacity.

The Next Parliamentary Session.

SOMEWHERE within the Liberal Party crypt it has been decided that Parliament shall meet a fortnight earlier this year. Hence the Labour Party conference at Hull has been antedated by some two weeks in order to give its members an opportunity of being present at the opening of Parliament on January 29. It may be that the special circumstances requiring the earlier date have arisen as the result of the Labour protest against dismissing Parliament for the autumn. Or, again, to judge from the programme of the Cabinet, it may be that the Liberals foresee a strenuous session.

Whatever be the cause of the decision, there is no doubt now that the country has been pretty well informed on the proposals of all three parties. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman and his lieutenants have each made promises of a very definite nature. Mr. Balfour, at Birmingham, defined clearly enough the two principles on which he would proceed. And, finally, the Labour Party has anticipated the conclusion of the Hull Conference, and declared its whole business as a party during the coming session to be the passing of two Bills—one of Old Age Pensions and one on behalf of the Unemployed. Regarding the Labour Party, we may say now, as we have said before, that sooner or later they will be driven to Socialism—and the sooner the better. Mr. Macdonald may trim and manœuvre in order to maintain the Trade Union vote; but the fact is that most of the Trade Unionists are ready for a bold Socialist lead at this moment. Mr. Macdonald is a Socialist, as are many members of the Labour Party; and their hesitation in declaring themselves such on every platform is by no means to their credit. What is more, nothing can be more certain than the observation made by an acute spectator of the summer session: "The Labour Party is threatened with death by dulness." While we entirely agree that Old Age Pensions and an Unemployed Bill are matters of first importance, we sincerely hope that the Labour Party will this session attempt at any rate to look at political and social questions from a larger, we might almost say Imperial, point of view.

Of the Conservative Party it would be unnecessary to speak were the chances not distinctly favourable for their return to power in no long time. Nobody deserves to be reckoned a politician who is not aware of the enormous success of the Tariff Reform movement, and who does not allow for its possible triumph at the next election. Being independent of both Tariff Reform and Free Trade, we may safely affirm that quite seven-eighths of the opposition to Tariff Reform is as foolish as most of the opposition to Socialism. In fact, Tariff Reformers are inclined at the moment to sympathise with Socialists, being, as they are, enemies in a common adversity. On the other hand, popular as some Tariff Reform proposals certainly are, we cannot admit for a moment that even in their extreme form they would in practice enable us to raise the money for social reform. Mr. Balfour was commendably plain on this subject, and promised nothing heroic. In short, we may safely gather from his utterances the conclusion that under his leadership the country would be committed to large measures of Tariff Reform and small measures of Social Reform.

There remains the Liberal Party, which, as the party in power, is entitled, we suppose, to serious consideration. Of the members of the Cabinet it is impossible to say that they have fulfilled, either individually or collectively, their popular promise. When we remember the almost Mafficking enthusiasm that greeted the advent of this Government to power, and compare it with the impression left on the popular mind by the record of two years, we may doubt whether anything will save the party from rapid decay. Mr. Morley has been a disappointing failure in India, convicted of a complete lack of imagination, and no resource. Sir Edward Grey has proved himself incapable of appreciating the best side of his country's opinion, and only too fatally disposed to represent its worse and baser side. Mr. Herbert Gladstone, at the Home Office, has been even more reactionary than his Unionist predecessor, which is saying a good deal. Of the rest, Mr. Lloyd-George has arisen in public estimation only to fall from that giddy height lower than he has even been before. Mr. Asquith, as the "Deputy Premier," is without doubt one of the least admired men in England. His Budget of last year was, and is, as poor as he dared make it,—though for the concession of the principle of differentiation of incomes we owe him thanks. Mr. Burns is the Mrs. Harris of the Liberal Party; we are almost inclined to believe there is no such person. Finally, Mr. Haldane is the only complete success of the Cabinet, if we except Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman himself, whose position in England is not unlike that of President Roosevelt's in America—a man of many errors, but of a sincerity to make even his friends fear him.

Now, what is the Liberal programme for the coming session? Three measures of importance are certain—an Education Bill, a Licensing Bill, and an Old Age Pensions Bill. In addition, there are a number of highly contentious smaller measures, such as Mr. Burns' Afforestation Bill and Mr. Birrell's Irish University Bill. But, again, behind all these and overshadowing them is the question of the House of Lords, on which we are assured that something or other will certainly be done this session. Now, we may as well say in advance that so far as we are concerned the House of Lords is an obstacle to Liberalism, but not an obstacle to Socialism. It may be galling that Liberals should find their measures returned from the august assembly, but everybody knows that a serious and radical reform could not in these days be rejected by the Lords without arousing a popular spirit that would sweep them away. Hence, if Liberals are lukewarm and timid in their measures, they must expect only lukewarm and timid support in their attack upon the Lords. Make, however, a radical proposal, such as universal non-contributory Old Age Pensions, and then, if the Lords resist, the Liberals may command the support of the whole democratic forces.

The Liberals will not, of course, do anything of the kind. On the contrary, their Bills will be calculated to raise the maximum expectation and the minimum satisfaction on every side. We confidently predict an unprofitable session, unless the Labour Party uses its enormous moral power to sting an almost supine majority into something like political activity.

The Newfoundland Fisheries.

THE influence of "the land of cod, fogs, and dogs" on the early development of our sea-power has been very inadequately realised by historians, and in this injustice they only emulate the conduct of our kings and statesmen from the time of Charles II. right down to the present. Newfoundland interests have always been sacrificed to those of the home country, and for long fishermen were, by design, induced often by force to refrain from settling, lest wealth should remain in the island, instead of coming over to Bristol.

The age-long struggle with France as to its fishing-rights on the "French Shore" dates from the sale of a settlement by Charles II. to the French. When the sovereign rights of England over the whole island were resumed in 1715, we unfortunately continued to "allow to the French to catch fish and dry them" on certain defined portions of the shore. From 1715 to 1904, when the difficulty was terminated, the history of Newfoundland is one long story of the gradual extension of the French claim, of support given to French fishermen by English admirals, and finally of a tacit recognition by the English Colonial Office of the French claim to extend their original treaty right to catch and dry cod so as to include the trapping and tinning of lobsters. At length a modus vivendi was concluded between France and the Imperial authorities in 1891. It was protested against by the Newfoundland Premier, who refused to recognise it. On his refusal to do so, the Home Government induced the Colonial Legislature under pressure to pass an Act compelling the colonials to obey the English naval officers in the matter of abandoning their lobster fisheries on the French shore when so commanded. Of this Colonial Act Sir C. Dilke says: "To my mind the Newfoundland people went too far in giving up their freedom by passing an Act to which, had I been a member of the Newfoundland Legislative, nothing would have induced me to consent."

Happily, the French difficulty has been removed, but in considering the difficulties in which Newfoundland is at present involved with the United States and the recent passage-at-arms between Sir R. Bond's Ministry and the Home Government, it is essential to bear in mind this long tradition of neglect by the Imperial authorities of the Colonial interest. Sir R. Bond's conduct, hasty and unstatesmanlike as we may feel bound to regard it—even the "Times" joined in the general recrimination—is explained in large measure, we have no doubt, by the strength of this tradition in the island, as well as by a real interest in the commercial failure of Newfoundland, a failure which is so intimately bound up with the prosperity of the fishing industry. We have to picture to ourselves an island almost identically the size of the purely English portion of our own, with a population of less than a quarter of a million, seven-eighths of which relies on the fisheries for a livelihood. To these 250,000 people their struggle must seem to be not merely against the elements, but against the indifference of Downing Street. It may be true, as the "Times" correspondent remarked, that there are more politics to the square inch in Newfoundland than anywhere he had ever been, but there seems no reason to doubt that on the present occasion the Ministry has been making a serious effort on behalf of the little population whose interests it is its duty to guard.

The American claim to fish in the territorial waters of Newfoundland dates from the time before the War of Independence. The Treaty of 1783 consented to the continuation of the right which the citizens of the revolting colonies had possessed as British subjects before the rebellion. They were considered to have forfeited this right by joining France against England in 1812, and only after some years of negotiations was a new treaty concluded between the United States and England in 1818. This is the agreement which is the subject of the present contention. The inhabitants of the United States were by its terms "to have for ever liberty to take fish of every kind" on certain parts of the coast. Part of the fishery wealth of the shores of Newfoundland, which is in International Law indisputably the national possession of the inhabitants, was thus given over to the citizens of a foreign State. The animus which would naturally tend to result from the competition between native and foreign fishermen possessing this unusual right has been accentuated by the claim, recently put forward by the United States Government, to immunity for their fishermen from the regulations imposed on all fishermen in their waters by the Newfoundland Government.

To make possible a just appreciation of the intentions of the Bond Ministry, the manner in which the American right under the Treaty of 1818 has been employed needs some explanation. Until 1905 this positive right to engage in the winter herring fishery in the Bay of Islands was not taken advantage of in actual practice, although the Gloucester (U.S.A.) fishing ring was in the habit of sending its fishing vessels to the Newfoundland waters. Arrived there, it was their habit to engage Newfoundland fishermen, and buy from them herrings ready dried and packed, which were then imported, duty free, into the States as caught and prepared by genuine United States labour. The United States tariff made it impossible for the Newfoundland fishermen to import the fish and at the same time give the usual facilities for enhancing the price of the Newfoundland herring to the American public. Moreover, the ring succeeded in so depressing the price paid to the fishermen that the Newfoundland Government was induced, a year or two back, to impose a legal minimum price at which a barrel of fish might be sold.

Sir R. Bond's object in his tariff negotiations with the United States would seem to have been to use the bait bought from Newfoundland, for use in the United States fisheries, as a tariff weapon with which to secure a lowering of the duty on foreign-caught herring which would enable the Newfoundland fishermen to engage in the trade direct. This tariff accommodation proposal was defeated in the Senate, apparently in deference to the Gloucester fishing interest. As a consequence, in 1905, the Newfoundland Legislature forbade the recruiting of Newfoundland fishermen by American skippers in Newfoundland waters. The Americans retorted by recruiting outside the three-mile limit. In 1906 the Newfoundland Legislature passed a law forbidding Newfoundlanders to engage their services to American skippers on any condition. It is this enactment which the Imperial Government refused to accept when arranging the modus vivendi of 1906 with the United States. This arrangement was come to exactly as was that in 1891 with the French, in defiance of the wishes of the Newfoundland Ministry, which appealed to the principle enunciated in the English House of Commons by the Secretary of State in 1857 that "the rights enjoyed by the community of Newfoundland are not to be ceded or exchanged without their consent." Not merely did the modus vivendi admit provisionally some of the immunities claimed for American fishermen, but it interfered with a regulation made by a self-governing colony in the interests, and, it seems to us, the true interests, of its chief industry.

We have not space at present to discuss the later developments of the problem, and, as we have said, we doubt whether Sir R. Bond's recent action could be justified, but we do wish to emphasise the fact that the Colonial Government has much excuse for its suspicion of Downing Street, and we are opinion that its interests have once again been almost ruthlessly sacrificed. The Hague Tribunal will, we may hope, settle this difficulty. What its decision will be it seems hardly possible to doubt, after a careful reading of the Treaty of 1818 and the authorities on International Law. Meanwhile the whole incident calls attention once again to the crying need for some representative central authority which shall substitute for the spirit of Downing Street, distrusted by our colonies, a really representative Imperial opinion which shall ensure proper respect being paid to the legitimate claims of the colonies and at the same time formulate an Imperial standard which, accepted in their internal affairs by the nation-States which compose the Empire, will maintain the best traditions of the home country.

GEORGE PILCHER.

How to Govern India.

A Letter to John Bull.

IV.

Principles of Indian Government.

III. It follows logically, Sir, from I. and II. that "the British government of India rests, in the last resort, upon its military strength," as the great "Quarterly Review" reminded Lord Ripon in 1883; or, as it has been put by the "Times" lately: "India, a possession which we have won by the sword, and which we must make up our minds to hold in the last resort by the sword, if we are to continue to hold it at all." Again she says: "It is our sword, and nothing else, which stands between peace and the chaos of warring nations." And what we have conquered we have rights over, and we may keep it in the way we conquered it. The sword is the bright and burning legal instrument of Imperial progress, and again I say, Sir, what that flaming scimitar has won in the past it must and shall keep in the future. What it has conquered it shall reconquer, if needful. What logic is like sword logic? I came, I saw, I conquered: you had, I took, you have not, and there's an end on't. How simple the process! What is more gloriously decisive than military conquest! It is the great final argument that India understands better than any nation, or rather congeries, on earth. Show a Bengali a sword, and he will turn white. Point a machine-gun at a gang of Panjabi pleaders, and they will run behind Mount Everest. At the landing of a regiment of Highlanders all the villages of India tremble. These are the facts, as press agencies say. No wonder we subdued India with the magic flish-flash of our steel. Of course, there were a few poor, trembling natives at Plassey on our side, and I suppose two or three Sikhs ran down to help our Nicholson at the siege of Delhi; but these were special privileges. We have a native army of 150,000 now; but we have to keep 70,000 British soldiers to look after them, and we pay the native soldiers, any way, recruit them, and drill them, and discharge them at pension-time to become the victims of all the seducing Ajit Singhs in the country. All over India our big military arm is made ready bare for ruddy action. We know the price of Imperialism, and Lord God, we mean to pay it in full. A swift, hard blow will fall upon all misguided fanatics who shall dare to shake helm or spear in our men's fateful Imperial countenances.

IV. The native people of India are an inferior race compared with British superiority. The simple truth is, they are different, that is all. They cannot really be compared with us. The very colour of the European—at least, if he be an Englishman, is superior, apart from all sentiment. How nice and clean and gentlemanly he looks in the dirty streets of Bombay, Calcutta, Lahore, against the background of the sun-darkened, lower-faced creatures of the East! Yes, Sir, Providence, who might have done worse, has given India, as her overlords, a nation of men, the elite of the proud West itself: Noble, Upright, Large, Dignified, Vigorous, Daring, Masterful, Military, Kingly, Imperial, in a word, Superior. The young Civil Servant must always remember this: a moment's forgetfulness may lose him a lifetime's influence and cut him off from the sublimities of his race. He goes to rule an inferior race, then; to raise these low people, teach them, help them, encourage them to begin a long and wearisome upward climbing towards the heights so splendidly attained in ancient days by England and her sisters. This feeling of superiority, if planted deeply enough, will support him in his trials and labours, will carry him through temptations to undue familiarity with the members of a subject race, and prove a sweet comfort when wounded and sore with the hard facts that India sometimes throws so rudely in the faces of those even who condescend to her in the right spirit—the spirit I have described, Sir.

V. Beware of Sympathy—the thing itself and the word. It is entirely out of place in India, a country we have won by the sword, a country to be ruled only by common sense dignity and the iron upper-hand of the European Overlord, velveted or not velveted. Your rulers in India, Sir, must be stern, ruthless men. Frenchmen, Russians, Germans, and other foreigners may be allowed to be sympathetic when they visit India to write a book; the English ruler Never—it will not pay. There are in England flabby, sentimental folk, who tell you, Sir, that your representatives must have sympathy to deal rightly with India's people and their problems. They do not know India, Sir. If they were thrown up against the Facts like "the men on the spot," they would soon see that sympathy is unnecessary and dangerous. I believe it is true, Sir, that nearly all these "agitators" were first inspired by misused words of sympathy spoken to them by some thoughtless Englishman. Some European official, perhaps, was mistakenly or experimentally kind to them, and in that way flattered them into setting up as politicians, in time to become mere agitators. It is a remarkable fact that the Mutiny of '57 took place at a time when English officials were notoriously closer in touch with the people and more sympathetic than their successors are now; we are always being told, Sir, that in the old days, when England was nine or twelve months' distant, the Englishman made India his home and its people his people: then the Mutiny. If these natives were like English people it would not matter, but show sympathy in India, and you will not do so twice. It is read as a sign of weakness. If you give way to the natives in one thing, they will spring fifty new demands upon you. Like His Majesty's Opposition, they cannot be satisfied. They are born agitators and watch for the small signs of giving way as the Cabinet watches the bye-elections. Then they send the word around on chapattis from village to village, round and round weaving their web of danger about the feet of the Government.

The fact is Oriental people love a good despot, Sir. They have had nothing but despotism for over 2,000 years. They love to be cowed and mastered and driven—like our best women—Sir, because they understand the method. They do not understand kindness and patience and progress and self-government and Courts of careful justice and great books On Compromise. They would not thank you for any of these uplifting institutions that we, in the more vigorous West, admire so much and would die without. Sir, the natives want the Whip, so to speak—not the Horse Whip, of course—nor would I be understood, after what I have said, as implying "The Liberal Whip," as we say in England, but only that they want driving a bit. Whip them, and they will lick your hand as naughty children do the fearful cane, for they know well enough after all that the hard, stern face of the Englishman amongst them is their only surety of quiet and happiness—to quote the classic "Times" again: "It is our sword and nothing else which stands between peace and the chaos of warring nations." None but agitators hate the haughty Englishman's manner and his economical smile; the mass of the people bow low in silent adoration before the High Nobility, the Blind Justice, the Commanding Dignity of British Personality and British Government. They like being kicked, and that is the end of the matter.

H. V. STOREY.

THE END.

[A Reply to Mr. H. V. Storey will appear shortly in THE NEW AGE.—EDS.]

Charles Dickens as a Socialist.

By Edwin Pugh.

Part I. *Chapter II.*

I.

PERHAPS it was Burke's "Reflections" that, more than anything else, prejudiced British opinion—and not only British opinion—in regard to the French Revolution. At least one can affirm that it embodied and expressed

the current English judgment. Published twenty years before Dickens was born, its influence extended unto his day and beyond. And though Tom Paine's "Rights of Man," which fell upon its fiery eloquence like a douche of icy well-water, had had a sale which, even in these days of many editions, would be dubbed by the publishers "colossal," and which had furthermore achieved a veritable success of scandal—what one might call an Unpopular Success—from which no sensational elements of publicity were wanting, the name of that most unfortunate and harshly treated man of genius was held in such abhorrence by the vast majority who wear their respectability next their skin, that it is doubtful if any of his writings ever came Dickens's way at all. And, indisputably, Burke's highly-coloured views of the social crisis created by the French Revolution were far more likely to appeal to any spirited young man than the coldly-reasoned analysis of the great Radical—as Tom Paine was then called, among other things, in default of a worse—or better?—name. And indeed, to this day one still finds an overmastering witchery in Burke's book of "Lamentations," which has a power to play upon the heart-strings of the romantically-minded as the fingers of the skilled musician play upon the chords of a harp. His rhetoric is so full of a passionate cadence that it woos you like sweet singing heard through a murmur of sighs, a veil of unshed tears.

". . . . the age of chivalry is gone," he cries. "That of sophisters, economists, and calculators has succeeded, and the glory of Europe is extinguished for ever. Never, never more shall we behold that generous loyalty to rank and sex, that proud submission, that dignified obedience, that subordination of the heart, which kept alive, even in servitude itself, the spirit of an exalted freedom. The unbought grace of life, the cheap defence of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise is gone! It is gone, that sensibility of principle, that chastity of honour, which felt a stain like a wound, which inspired courage whilst it mitigated ferocity, which ennobled whatever it touched, and under which vice itself lost half its evil by losing all its grossness."

What had poor Tom Paine, with his fustian commonsense, to set against these captivating sentiments? Only that "so far is it from being true, as has been pretended, that the abolition of any formal government is the dissolution of society, that it acts by a contrary impulse, and brings the latter the closer together. All that part of its organisation which it had committed to its government devolves again upon itself, and acts through its medium. When men, as well from natural instinct as from reciprocal benefits, have habituated themselves to social and civilised life, there is always enough of its principles in practice to carry them through any changes they may find necessary or convenient to make in their government. In short, man is so naturally a creature of society that it is almost impossible to put him out of it."

Inevitably, public opinion scorned the rationalist in favour of the sentimentalist.

And, thanks to a most opportune intervention, public opinion was enabled to do still better for its own ease of mind than that. It was enabled absolutely to ignore all that had immediately preceded the appearance of Napoleon on the world's stage. For half a century, at least, the gorgeous pageantry of his deeds and his undoing quite sufficed to fill the eye, to exercise the imagination, to engage the critical faculties.

For the eager soul in quest of sensational provender there was no need to travel further back into the past than the beginning of 1801, when, following on Napoleon's election as First Consul, Nelson had been promoted Vice-Admiral of the Fleet, and had formally entered upon that brilliant unbroken series of victories which finally, at Trafalgar, shattered the Corsican upstart's fond dreams of establishing France as a first-class naval Power. In Dickens's early days a man had only to be in the prime of life to recall those parlous times when England had twittered with apprehension before the rumour of a new invasion of our coasts such as she had not been threatened with since the days of the Great Armada. There were gnarled and battered old salts, lacking an eye or a limb, who could spin you authentic yarns of the press-gang and of the ding-dong practice of laying-to your foe and beating him out of the water, one down, t'other come on, which was all those old sea-dogs professed to know of naval strategy. Scarred old warriors in plenty who had fought under Clive in India and under Wellesley at Seringapatam and elsewhere against the sanguinary Tippo Sahib; who had gone into the Peninsular War as battle-stained veterans, and could tell you all—and more—about that long victorious campaign; who had followed the Iron Duke and helped in the consummation of his fame on the 18th of June, 1815: these still spread abroad the glory of our British arms, and kept the national self-love alive in their own persons. The memory of their feats did more: it filled the great gulf—a very Valley of Gehenna—fixed between those already seemingly far-off days of the Reign of Terror and that present era of piping peace. The retrospective gaze of 1830 had visions enough to glut itself upon in a panoramic review of the events of the century's first fifteen years. The rise and fall of the first French Republic belonged already to the distant past that only the lapse of years could bring into due perspective again. For the time being it was obscured by a cloud of later, more momentous, happenings.

And Dickens was—in most salient aspects of his character, at least—essentially a man who belonged to his own period. To that fact is no doubt attributable his overwhelming popularity. But it involved some serious disabilities also.

I think it is often too lightly assumed that Dickens was very ill-acquainted with the work of his immediate predecessors and contemporaries in the higher walks of literature; though, beyond question, there was never anything of the mere bookman about him at any time. And probably, in his early days, he knew surprisingly little of the great poets who had attained their apogee when he was only just emerging from his swaddling-clothes. In later life we know that he was intimate with Walter Savage Landor, and liked him extremely. At the same time it cannot be gainsaid that his liking was tinctured with a feeling of something perilously akin to good-natured tolerance. In one of his letters to Forster this significant reference occurs: "As Landor would say, 'most wonderful'"; and somehow that seems to suggest rather a keen sense of the humour of the personal friend's peculiarities and mannerisms than any very adequate appreciation of the great poet's superb qualities of mind. And everybody is aware, of course, that Landor figured as Boythorn in "Bleak House." Now, Landor was a born rebel. Because of his outspoken sympathies with the French Revolutionaries, he had been known at Oxford as "the mad Jacobin," and eventually rusticated therefrom. All his life he had held the most heterodox views on every conceivable subject: among others, that Napoleon was a ridiculously over-rated man. He was, indeed, as much an insurgent in temperament as either Shelley or Byron, whose unpopular opinions on politics and religion he shared and espoused. But it is plain that Dickens miraculously escaped these influences which so deeply affected other young men of his age and time. It will be shown in a future chapter that he could hardly have been entirely ignorant of the existence of these turbulent spirits; but presumably he was not attracted by their mutinous methods, and did not trouble to investigate for himself their claims to a fair and impartial hearing. In short, it is most likely that if he considered them at all, he adopted the conventional thin attitude toward them of scornful indifference, shot with horror and loathing.

Thus he missed an early chance of emancipating himself from the thrall of those unworthy and stultifying prejudices with which his natural gifts of clear insight and foresight were to come so often into conflict, later on, and which consistently hampered him at every new stage of his development.

(To be continued.)

The Problem of Equality.

THE task which I have set myself is to discuss and meet the principal popular arguments against Socialism. I shall try throughout to state these difficulties as fairly as I can, and I shall then do my best to remove them.

Let us first take the objection based on the natural inequalities of men, and the alleged refusal of Socialism to recognise these inequalities. It may, I think, be stated thus :—

Men are born with widely different physical, mental, and moral capacities. Socialism seeks to impose on them an artificial equality. Therefore Socialism is fighting against nature, and must fail.

Before considering the application of this argument to Socialism, it will be well to note the implication underlying it. That implication is that the present inequalities of fortune result from and correspond to inequalities of natural capacity—that the rich man and the able man, the poor man and the inefficient man are respectively interchangeable terms. Now, this is quite patently not the case. There are thousands of men and women possessed of an "independent income" of considerable magnitude, who, if compelled to face the stress of free competition, would inevitably fall to the lowest grade of unskilled labour, if they did not have to enter the ranks of the "unemployable." On the other hand, there are as certainly still larger numbers of labourers who lack nothing to distinguish themselves in the highest places except the opportunity. And this must always continue to be so in any society based upon the private ownership of land and capital. For if an individual can acquire control of the means of production and hand on his control to his children, it is not humanly possible to avoid the creation of an idle class, fenced from the need of competition on the one hand, and on the other of a propertiless class too heavily handicapped to have any chance of obtaining its prizes. There is no getting away from this necessity. There is no alchemy by which the ablest coal-heaver can obtain the Duke of Westminster's estates, however incompetent the Duke may be, so long as he has just sense enough to sit still and do nothing. Even, therefore, if we admit the startling doctrine that the capacity to make and keep money is the only quality which deserves to be rewarded by the community, our present social system and all other social systems based on the private ownership of land and capital must stand condemned for their glaring failure to reward it equitably. But, though the case is here clear and overwhelming, it does not quite prove all that we wish to prove. The present organisation of society may be demonstrably unjust, but it does not follow that Socialism is just. In order to prove that we must return to the doctrine of equality and ask what it really means.

It is a common trick of modern controversy to assume that your opponent's position involves the denial of some quite self-evident truth, and then with immense wealth of logic and illustration to prove that truth to be true. Thus many modern materialists seek to demonstrate the dependence of consciousness on material phenomena by giving accounts of complicated operations on the brain—as if the mediæval theologians did not know that if you beat a man's brains out with a battle-axe he usually died! In the same way the anti-egalitarians are always telling us that some men are cleverer than others and will always succeed better—as if the great philosophers, who at the end of the eighteenth century preached human equality, and the great men of action, who accepted that teaching and founded their policy on it, really thought that all men were the same height! They did not think this; neither did they think that all men had the same brains or the same character. What they really held was *that all men should be in an equal sense citizens of the State.*

Now this equality is a human product. We need not deny the assertion of our opponents that it is unnatural, provided that they are prepared to say the same of all other purely human products—property, for instance, and law. But it is perfectly natural in the the sense that men discovered it because it suited them, because it seemed to them just, and because they could not found a tolerable State without it. It is obvious that, if a man whose house has been burned down could not recover any damages because the man who burned it down was a Duke, he would soon discover from his own sense of galling injustice how absolutely human is the need of equality. Nor would his feelings be much milder if his impotence resulted from the fact that the offender was a perfect gentleman, or a very clever writer, or a man who had rendered some service to the community. When Lavoisier, the great chemist, was convicted of conspiring against the French Republic, one of the revolutionary leaders replied to the plea for mercy based on the offender's scientific attainments, "The Republic has no need of chemists!" This was a silly way of putting it, but what I take it he meant was this: that it was less fatal to kill a great man of science than to kill the idea of an equal law, that the discovery of Human Equality was more important to men than the discovery of oxygen.

The equality, then, which Rousseau preached and Danton and the other leaders of revolutionary France endeavoured to realise was a political equality. But it soon became obvious that real equality of citizenship could not be obtained by any merely political machinery so long as the economic system was based on a denial of equality. In spite of political democracy, the old oppression returned. In France, thanks to her powerful bureaucracy and her instinct for a strong centralised government, some shadow of equality before the law persisted, but America, with even freer political institutions, soon became frankly plutocratic. It is this discovery that has convinced many of us that equality of citizenship cannot be attained except upon a basis of economic equality.

Now economic equality does not imply that all men shall receive the same wages, any more than political equality implies that all men shall possess an equal measure of political power. There never has been and never could be a State in which one man was not more powerful than another. At the height of the French Revolution Danton had obviously more influence on the destinies of his country than a peasant in Gascony. And no one ever thought that this involved a violation of democratic principles, because Danton's power was not the result of any special privileges conferred on him by the State, but was the natural consequence of his superior ability to serve it.

So with economic equality. The true doctrine of equality as applied to matters of work and wages appears to me to be this: *That no one should be suffered to live partly or wholly upon the labour of another, but that every man should receive from the Commonwealth a fair equivalent in payments or services for the payments or services which the Commonwealth receives from him.*

I know, of course, that exception has often been taken to this (sometimes even by Socialists) on the ground that it is not possible to say exactly how much each citizen has contributed to the wealth of the State, and that absolute economic justice is therefore impossible. This is quite true, and in the same way it is true that absolute justice between man and man is impossible. No court of law is infallible; no tribunal can say with full confidence that its decisions are just. Yet we are all pretty well satisfied that even a defective tribunal gives better justice than we should get by reverting to anarchy. In the same way it is reasonable to suppose that the decisions of a State attempting to carry out the rule defined above would approximate more nearly to economic justice than the haphazard results of the industrial anarchy which now prevails.

At least, under such a system, certain glaring injustices inseparable from the present system would disappear. The monstrous spectacle of a class rendering no services at all to the community, yet consuming the fruits of labour more plentifully than their hard-working fellow-citizens, would become impossible. Those whom the State treated best would be those whom it believed, at any rate, to have served it best. And that is, perhaps, as near an approach to justice as we are likely to get in this imperfect world.

CECIL CHESTERTON.

Towards Socialism.

VIII.

The Fallacy of Aristocracy.

Of all the subtle ideas brooding on the face of the Socialist waters, none is more subtle than the idea of Democracy. Only a few people grasp it at all, many violently espouse its cause through sheer misunderstanding, and nine-tenths of so-called democratic practice is either self-conscious condescension or secret despotism. The misunderstanding is not to be wondered at, since the sophistries of history, the institution of the family, the whole false analogies of nature and man, as well as the inspired nonsense of the greatest literary artists of the world, have conspired to stamp the notion of aristocracy into our very being.

It is easy enough to see how history, as interpreted by aristomaniacs, is made to exemplify nothing else but aristocracy. You cannot write a history of a people or the true story of a single-minded community. There must be points round which your records must be grouped; and such points are most serviceable when in the form of persons. Hence every historian with imagination must either discover such points and persons or invent them. Any costumier's dummy will serve in case of emergency, as was instanced by Bacon's choice of King Henry VII, or Mommsen's choice of Julius Cæsar. That such persons really did rule and govern, in the sense of personal control, their respective peoples is of course pure myth. Their only value to us is their exemplification or the reverse of the prevailing manners of their day. It is as if one should draw out of the sea a bucket of water by way of sample. Such buckets of water are the historical personages that figure in the pages of history as not only the whole sea of humanity, but as the tides and currents of the sea as well. The mere exigencies of verbal narrative and vivid story-telling have been responsible for more fictitious heroes of history than ever were created in mythology.

But the institution of the family, it must be admitted, brought the error still nearer home. Of all the stupid theories regarding the family, the most stupid is the belief that it is natural. On the contrary, the trinitarian family organisation is plainly a work of art, a deliberate device of man's, and, in many respects, distinctly opposed to nature. The father, for example, has plainly no necessary place in the home when once the children have been born. As a dependent of the mother's, who has quite enough to do in looking after the children, the husband's modern rôle of "big baby" in the household is a usurpation of the real babies' rights. If he supplies them with pottage, he certainly often steals their birthright of maternal attention. I mention this as an instance of the "unnaturalism" of family life, and not as its condemnation, the point being that whatever else the family as we know it may be, it is not the simple result of natural laws, but an artificial device. As such, like all artificial devices, it has had to be paid for, and not only in innumerable domestic tragedies, but in the propaganda in men's minds of totally false ideas. Nothing, for instance, is more plain than the fact that the hierarchy of the family has been employed and is still employed as a model for the hierarchy of the State and of human society generally; in other words, as a prop of aristocracy.

To the sophistry of history and the influence of the family ideal another factor in the generation of our aristocratic notions may be added—the appalling moral inertia of the majority of people. Nine out of ten would infinitely prefer to lose what souls they have to the difficult task of keeping their souls by their own exertions. If the Kingdom of Heaven is to be taken by individual violence, we may rest assured that the celestial company will be small and select. The flattering name, however, for being too idle to save your own soul is obedience to the commandments of somebody else, of somebody accounted thereby a superior. Every idler and footler spends his time in looking round for somebody to take responsibility for him; and is only too willing to decorate with big names the person or institution silly enough to do it. Such persons or institutions necessarily become aristocratic on account of the prevailing inertia.

Another factor is the consummate cant of great writers and artists. Goodness knows, the world has paid dearly enough for its æsthetic ecstasies! From the very dawn of history, great names have been emblazoned on the banners of the people, and the people have been content to follow. I omit all the rest and confine myself to two examples—the example of ancient India, as described in the Laws of Manu, with its detestable, inhuman caste-system; and the more enlightened aristocracies of Plato and Carlyle. Of the caste-system of ancient India it is impossible to speak without extreme indignation. The grossest despotisms of Mr. John Morley are benevolent in comparison with the atrocious tyrannies of the sanctified Brahman caste in the pre-Buddhist days. What matters it to us that the lower castes were possibly contented, infinitely more contented than under the present yoke of famine, plague, and Anglo-Indians? If contentment is the aim of life, we might as well all enter a lethal chamber and die asleep. But if the only precious thing in life is life, and ever more life, then mere contentment is stagnation, and a contented people is a doomed people. Moreover, the Sudras under the ancient Hindu caste were far from contented. Only the Brahmins were that; and their smug complacency affords an even more intolerable spectacle than the sufferings of the outcasts and pariahs.

It is, however, Plato and Carlyle who are the typical European aristocrats—the one with his Guardians, the other with his "blessed aristocracy of the wisest"; or, in recent phrase, the aristocracy of intellect, the aristocracy of talent. Plato, at least, had some inkling of the truth when he made his philosophers rule only because they were afraid they might be ruled. The only excuse, in short, for governing anybody is a strong dislike of being governed. But Plato forgot his own observation, and, as is obvious in the Republic, his Guardians are allowed positively to revel in their benevolent tyranny. On the condition that the Guardians were obeyed (as if they were laws of nature!) everything was forgiven the governed—their gross idleness and cowardice, their shirking of responsibility, their willingness to be served on every occasion. Plato's Guardian caste was a huge contrivance for keeping the few in a state of moral alertness at the cost of the demoralisation of the many.

And with the aristocratic doctrine of Carlyle it is impossible for the democrat (that is, the Christian) to be one whit more satisfied. I equate democracy and Christianity in the peril of misunderstanding; misunderstanding that is not at all likely to be removed by my stating explicitly that current Christianity is the antithesis of Christ's Christianity. Carlyle, however, thought he had discovered the weakness of previous aristocracy in the hereditary system whereby talent and capacity became only chance accompaniments of lordly privileges. If, he reflected, we could have a genuine aristocracy, an aristocracy consisting of first-rate intellects and characters, the world would very soon be put right, chaos would disappear and cosmos would come again. The truth is, however, that his aristocracy of talent was tried long ago and failed as completely as it must always fail. It matters precious little to the soul of man whether his "governors" are men like our present Cabinet and House of Lords or men like the ancient kings of Peru, whose administration compares favourably with even a modern political programme (to take the Utopias of to-day). Thanks to the nature of life, there is an insubordinate imp in each of us that prefers in the long run all the horrors of freedom to all the amenities of benevolent slavery. And it is just that imp (apostrophised by despots of all ages as the Devil) that saves man from eternal servitude to superiors who are quite willing to do his work for him. Hence not only a hereditary aristocracy is ridiculous, inhuman, and in the long run impossible, but an aristocracy of intellect, character, or what not, as well. The right of the stupid to be stupid is, at bottom, as undeniable as the right of the wise to be wise.

A. R. Orage.

Driving Capital Out of the Country.

By G. Bernard Shaw.

IV.

Will the Employers Emigrate?

HAVING now got the matter into something like a true Socialist perspective, let us consider what our employers actually do for us.

They take the land, capital, and labour of the country under their direction, and produce from them commodities which make life and civilisation (such as it is) possible. That is not only a very considerable service, but an indispensable one. If we are dependent on them for that, we are dependent on them altogether, body and soul. The Social-Democratic Federation asks whether there is a single service performed by them which the people, organised, could not perform for themselves. This begs the question, because though the answer may be in the affirmative, the difficulty remains, who is to organise them? It is no use asking whether the people, if organised, could do without organisers. It is like asking whether a man can do without food if you give him a good dinner.

Nor is it any use to point out that the employers distribute the product unfairly. For the moment, that is not the point. Granted that they allow the landlords and capitalists to take a huge share of the product without helping to produce it, and that their reason for submitting to this apparently intolerable oppression is that they intend to became landlords and capitalists themselves, and quarter their descendants on future employers, which can only be done by keeping up the system of private property in land and capital. Granted also that the rest of the product is divided between the employer and his employees as unfairly as he can possibly divide it. That does not at all lighten his contention that he performs an indispensable service, and that if you drive him abroad without making other provision for that service, our industry will collapse like a cart when the linch-pin is pulled out.

Note also, if you please, that the employer not only claims that this service cannot be done without him, but that it cannot be done at all from Socialist motives. He tells you that though his particular incentive happens by a strange chance to be simply the golden rule of our Saviour, yet the incentive of all the other employers is a desire to make money, and that every mature man of the world knows this to be the only incentive that will nerve men to the strenuous effort of building up the large businesses on which the industry of our country depends. "Now," he continues, "I admit that up to a certain point—which is, curiously enough, the point we have just reached—Socialism has done good. Why? Because, up to a certain point, it pays to spend some money on the worker. We used to kill the goose that laid the golden eggs. We now fatten him a bit, educate him a bit, give him a bit of a chance; and we find the result quite satisfactory to us, because he works better and can be trusted with more complicated machinery; so that we are able not only to pay for all his little indulgences out of the extra product, but to find something left for ourselves out of it afterwards. We admit that we were shortsighted in objecting to these indulgences when they were first proposed; but we have found out our mistake and have no intention of going back on them. Only, let it be understood that we can go no further. Some of us, like our friend Livesey, are willing to introduce profit sharing, provided the worker will produce his share in addition to our own and something for us into the bargain; but a step beyond this will drive us out of the country. Many of us do not approve of profit sharing on any conditions, as it leads working men to form an undesirable habit of looking at profits as if profits were their business instead of wages. However, leave that aside for the present. The thing to grasp is that if you take away the incentive of gain, the work will not be done. That may be sordid, but it is human nature."

But here the employer, by implication, does Socialism too much honour. There is really no reason to suppose that under Socialism men will be less sordid in this sense than they are at present. Only, let us be quite clear as to how sordid they are at present. Sordid enough, certainly, not to do a job for five pounds if they can get six, but also generous enough to do the same job for four if they cannot get five. Milton took £5 for Paradise Lost because he could not get any more. I should ask £5,000 for the same quantity of pen-and-ink work because I need not take any less. The employer to-day is emphatically a man who, like Milton and myself, has to take what he can get. Whether as lessee to a landlord, debtor to a capitalist, employee to a big company or trust, employer to a powerful Trade Union, or slave to an inexorable Factory Inspector, he very soon finds out that it is no use to declare that he must have this or that, or he will not play. He *must* play, or go under. If the conditions are made more onerous for him, he must play harder, or reorganise the game. If he has to surrender more of the product, he must increase the product (or adulterate it) by new methods. Ever since Factory Legislation began to be really effective sixty years ago he has protested that another turn of the social screw on him would drive his trade into bankruptcy and his country into ruin; but the screw has been turned again and again; and the result is that his trade flourishes more than ever. It is the farmer's trade, which was left untouched, that is ruined, and has to beg off half its rates.

The process, however, has its limits in the case of certain individuals, if not of the nation at large. There is a point at which the pressure of State regulation from above, and of the acquisitiveness of organised labour from below, will squeeze an employer out of business through the doors of the Bankruptcy Court. Many a mediocrity and many a sweater has gone that way already; and others have gone it who were neither mediocrities nor sweaters, but simply lacked the particular sort of charlatanism which attracts capital and the confidence of bank managers, or the narrowly greedy competitive ruffianism or the wide and powerful grip of the realities of our system which makes a man say "Thou shalt starve ere I starve" and go through with it. But the supply of employing power has never yet failed, although it is usual to say that the stress both of competition and State regulation has increased enormously. Of that I am not so sure. State regulation makes business much easier for capable men by relieving them from the worst sorts of competition. Legitimate competition has been made much more agreeable by compacts which limit it in its most harassing forms. The supply of literate employees to whom parts of the work can be delegated has been increased by popular education. At all events the number of business men who knock off work from Friday to Tuesday is visibly greater than it was: indeed, the week-end itself is quite a recent institution. The man who can only learn a routine and stick to it for eight hours a day may be having a worse time than he used to; but the man who can use his brains for two hours a day has probably a better time than he ever had before in business. I therefore do not admit that Socialism has yet reached the point at which there is a danger of a strike of employers against State regulation, rising wages, and shortening working days. But I am quite prepared to consider the theoretically possible limit next week.

(To be continued.)

A Spring Meeting.

By George Raffalovich.

A RECENT crime, committed in Sweden, has revealed to us the existence of a boy for whom five senses did not suffice; over and above he had the gift of second sight. Happy child!

But there is no need to go to the country of Ibsen to hear of such wonders. I myself, who am speaking to you, could (without boasting) altogether astonish you. Not that I have more than five senses, but with me the sense of taste (I have not the least taste) is substituted by the faculty of hearing the speech of voiceless things. Last Sunday, while still very tired from a rapid flight across space, in the company of two inhabitants of an extraordinary planet, I was enabled to listen to the most curious conversation I had ever heard. My watch, placed on the table where I was drowsing (every man sleeps where he can) became suddenly phosphorescent, and each separate wheel became endowed with personality—and personality, you must know, of necessity brings with it the power of speech.

The mainspring, in its capacity of chairman, opened the meeting with a long-winded speech, pronounced in the best French of Switzerland. (To which dialect of Birmingham could I compare it without hurting anybody's feelings?) This mainspring was certainly possessed of a highly religious and respectable mind; moreover, I herewith bind myself always to preserve a cool head when I wind up my watch of an evening and to effect the operation with the greatest precautions (a special exception to be made in favour of Bank holidays!)

He spoke very respectfully of the great benefits they had received, one and all, at the hands of their god (what followed led me to understand it was your humble servant they style thus), and extolled the providence which had been able to combine with so much art and wisdom the perpetual march of their time-keeping world. (I never did anything of the sort, having bought my watch to avoid the trouble of making one!) He thanked me with tears of gratitude in his voice, for having given them life, for having created them out of nothing, for having saved them from the fire which burned them and from the water which swallowed them up (an allusion, I fancy, to the tempering of steel), and for having kept them from falling into the society of needles, of wheels and springs devoid of proper and religious sentiments. Then he prayed, and here is his prayer:—"O master of our life, we pray to thee at this hour that thou mayest know the needs of thy servants out of their own mouth. Behold, in thy sight we are but the meanest of small wheels, worth only 4¾d. a piece (the devils do nicely enough for their price, but they ought not to give me away like this!), but we promise to serve thee faithfully throughout all our life. (The shopkeeper only guaranteed them for two years!) Thanks to thee, we mark naught but happy hours; and thy hand withholdest cataclysms. Since the last watch-quake (that's when I broke the glass of my watch!) thou surroundest us more even than in the past with thy watchful care (child, it is out of economy!), and we unite in prayer to thank thee for it. And we are now, under the protection of thy presence invisible, about to discuss the affairs of the community. Forgive our ignorance, pardon our weaknesses, and give us each day our daily wind, without which the untroubled harmony of our world may not continue. We do not know what worlds are round about us; but, faithful to thy will, we believe that the end of the whole world will immediately follow upon our own death, and that time will no longer exist when we cease from the marking thereof."

Thus spoke the mainspring, not without eloquence, and I was touched by his naive stupidity. But the meeting which followed assumed a very different tone. A small wheel, with a menacing air, spoke next, and began attacking the chairman insultingly. After a string of personal reproaches which my pen would blush to write, he concluded with these words: "My friends, we have been fooled long enough. I shall not obey any more without knowing whither I am going. I shall turn no longer. If our president is an old dotard whose excesses have reduced him to imbecility, *we* want to live a different life. If some god has created us, perhaps our revolt will reveal him to us. For my part, such a power does not exist, and as for respecting and loving someone I don't know—never! The love of this sphere suffices for me."

The little needle grumbled assent, and the chairman was preparing himself to reply, when the wheel, carrying out his threat, stopped turning. Oh, it did not last long; taking my *rôle* of god seriously, and wishing to avoid unnecessary expense, I opened my watchcase and with the point of my penknife made the young recalcitrant perforce to go again.

Set working one with another the wheels combined to do their "hourly round, their common task," without a word of anger, while the mainspring snorted with joy at this manifestation of my divinity. But I was also to hear a philosopher, and the little spring of the second-hand began in its turn to speak, without ceasing to expand and contract its tiny rings: "Comrades," said he, "the words we have heard to-night and the punishment which attended upon the refusal of our brother to take his place in the common movement, seem to indicate that the opinion which is shared by us younger ones here is alone of any scientific value. It is impossible for us to know who has created us, impossible to know where we came from before we were reunited in this steel box (just as good as a silver one, my dear fellow!), impossible to know where we shall go when wear and tear have made us unfit for work. (A pawnshop may be your workhouse, infant!) Since this is so, of what use to search, of what use to investigate what we can never know? Why pray to the god of good if we have no certitude of his existence, and why hate the devil, master of evil, if nothing enables us to conceive of him with certainty? We know that we do not know. Let us be simple, and do simply our obvious duty—that which it is proved we cannot omit to do without suffering."

The chairman greeted this speech with a hostile grunt; yet it was not without sense. The fact of my having been disturbed from peaceful slumbers by such a meeting, however, put me in a bad temper, and without wishing to hear what the mainspring had further to say (Besides, how was I to respect him after the horrible revelations of the little wheel?) I myself made a speech: "My good friends (I tried to assume the tone of a god in the Iliad), you don't seem to me to know much about the general mechanism of your universe. The last speaker alone had his wits about him; as for the rest, unless they had the intention of being humorous (and humour is a thing I don't understand), they have talked more nonsense in ten minutes than all the members of Parliament in seven years. I am going to tear the veil from your eyes. Listen well, this is the explanation of the whole mystery: Manufactured, with hundreds of your kind, in the villages of Switzerland, you were collected and put together by a watchmaker, who shut you in this case and sold you to me who bought you, in a moment of extravagance. There is neither god nor devil around nor above you—you wouldn't pay for their upkeep. As I possess the bill of purchase, I am your sole lord and master. The good, as the evil, which is done to you, results from causes external to my will, either on account of time and place, or by reason of the attitude of other beings similar to myself, and possessors, for the most part, of watches with springs and wheels similar to you.

"Enough of prayer; my treatment of you will not change, because it cannot change without incurring inconvenience and harm to myself. If external causes or your want of goodwill bring about a too frequent repetition of your strike of a few minutes back (causing me to miss an appointment, perhaps) I shall consider you as worthless and send you to a certain relation under whose charge, thanks to my economy, you never yet came. Or else I might get rid of you altogether by selling you to a watch manufacturer, who would stick his knife into you and split your sides for ever.

"One way or another, the day will come when you will cease to live, and be broken up and recast into something useful, for me or for one of my kind. You have spoken of loving me; that is of little consequence to me; I want you to walk straight—or, rather, turn properly—or I shall have the regret of hastening your end. For the rest, I am mortal myself (not that it could make any difference, for another would treat you in the same way). Cease to believe in a sublime destiny, live at peace and think not overmuch. Do not stuff your heads with any illusions—keep turning—banish foolish ideas and despondent thoughts. Above all, do not pride yourselves on your intelligence."

I continued to talk to them for some time in this fashion, till I perceived that my watch was gradually losing its phosphorescence, and that its buzzing tic-tac was scarcely any longer distinguishable. The unfortunate fellows had not understood me, perhaps not even heard me. So much eloquent wisdom thrown away! I resolved to respect their stupidity, to ignore them henceforth; to leave them to their foolish imaginary beliefs, and accept their faithful work (till the day I am able to buy a watch with more intelligent works!)

As for my lost speech, perhaps I shall find an audience for it some day at Hyde Park—speaking to men.

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

Bohemia in London. By Arthur Ransome. (Chapman and Hall. 6s.)

WHATEVER else Mr. Ransome's new book is, it is eminently readable. He has chosen a subject which he knows thoroughly, and which suits him down to the ground. His observation is acute and unfailing; his method of presentment vivid to an unusual degree. Anyone who knows the world of which the author writes will recognise his picture instantly. Anyone who does not know it will be able to form a very fair idea of its main features.

The world in question, which Mr. Ransome calls "Bohemia," is that section of the intellectually conscious class which does not obey the social conventions of what we Socialists used to call the "bourgeoisie." Now, there are many reasons that may lead people to neglect these conventions, and it is, I think, a possible criticism of Mr. Ransome's book that he lumps together under one title two circles which are not only different, but markedly incompatible. He describes both circles admirably, it is true. Nothing could be richer in humour and observation than the description of a Chelsea evening in the earlier, or of the young poets of Hampstead in the later, part of the book. Nothing again could be more incisive in its realism than the Fleet Street passages. But Mr. Ransome does not quite clearly show how alien is the world of the first from the world of the second, how little at home the inhabitants of either would feel in the other.

There are a certain number of people born into the fairly comfortable middle-class who dislike the sort of people with whom they are thrown in contact. Disliking the bulk of their fellow-creatures, they naturally dislike their conventions. They therefore usually seek each other out, form little "advanced" sets, and frame conventions of their own, differing in many ways from those of their neighbours. These people have often small independent incomes. Sometimes they are clerks under the L.C.C. Sometimes they follow some minor artistic craft—metal work or book binding. Hardly ever do they practise painting or writing as a trade. You may call them "Bohemians" if you like, but you must not confuse them with the other class with which Mr. Ransome's book deals.

Those who paint or write for a living are generally people of quite a different type. I know very little of the studio world from within, but I should say that the professional artist had more in common with the journalist than with the artistic amateur. With the world of journalism, on the other hand, I am tolerably familiar, and I assert without hesitation that it has no affinity with the world of æsthetic amateurism. I have seen the two sets mixed in certain "advanced" clubs, and I never saw them meet without clashing. The idealists of the new movement despised the journalists as prostitutes who had sold their souls to pander to the base instincts of the public, while the journalists regard the idealists with feelings compounded of the contempt of the skilled worker for the amateur and the hatred of the trade unionist for the blackleg.

By their clothes ye shall know them. The typical journalist has no æsthetic aspirations in the matter of attire. If he is shabby, it is probably because he has no money. It may be because he is removed from feminine influences, and has developed a barbaric disregard of externals. It is quite possibly because he drinks. But it is quite certainly not because he thinks it looks nice. If, on some special occasion, he particularly wants to look nice, he puts on a top hat and frock coat (if he possesses them) like any bank clerk.

So also with his mode of life. The Bohemianism of Fleet Street is not really a matter of choice, though it has doubtless become congenial, and even necessary, to many journalists by force of habit. Its fundamental causes are economic. It must be remembered that the "free lance" journalist is in a position without parallel in the world of industry. He is not only the extreme example of "casual labour," but his payments are even more casual than his work. A docker may not know when he will get a job, but, if he gets a job, he knows when he will get his wages. A journalist, on the other hand, may sell a dozen articles, and yet be unable to say when he will be paid for one of them. I have known a man who was walking about London, starving and almost without boots, while sums amounting to something over twenty pounds were owing to him from various papers and magazines. Broadly speaking, it may be said that no unattached journalist is able to forecast his income for a fortnight in advance until he reaches that happy turning-point when he takes what work he chooses instead of what he can get.

Now these conditions inevitably breed what is called "Bohemianism" in the least temperamentally Bohemian of men. They lead to explosions of energy varied by lapses into idleness; they lead to bursts of extravagance to relieve the long periods of penury. They lead to that continual borrowing which is so marked a feature of Fleet Street, and which shocks the possessors of regular incomes, who do not realise that, under the conditions described, this rough communism is practically an economic necessity. It leads incidentally to that characteristic which everyone must have noticed in most journalists—that they are always late for appointments.

This is something of a digression from Mr. Ransome's book, but that very digression is a compliment. "Bohemia in London" is one of that admirable class of books which start a dozen hares of thought in every page, and provoke us to follow each to its lair. I have not time and space to follow them all. I must perforce leave the youthful versifier who wrote in his diary: "Eighteen to-day—and nothing done!" I must leave all the glorious drinking songs and the exquisitely-improper song which the author heard from the lips of a model. I must leave his reminiscence of the great Bohemians of London's past. I must return to Fleet Street.

Mr. Ransome's descriptions of journalistic life are so entirely delightful that I hesitate to suggest another criticism. Yet the criticism will inevitably occur to the mind of anyone who knows Fleet Street well. There is something lacking in all these pictures of jolly evenings, drinks and smokes and talks, accurately as they are painted. And that thing is the background—the background of darkness against which they are relieved, the abyss that yawns always under the feet of the man who lives precariously by his pen. Mr. Ransome has hardly hinted at that abyss, and I am glad to leave it undescribed.

But let me give one example to illustrate my meaning. Mr. Ransome tells a delightful story of Belden, the editor, who paid his staff in cheques, only two or three of which could be honoured, and whose contributors consequently raced in cabs to the bank to secure their money. Now, I knew Belden; that was not the name by which I knew him, but he had many, and I dare say that it was one of them. Anyhow, the story is quite true, and there are many other stories quite as amusing that I could tell of him. But this is the point: Mr. Ransome shows us Belden as a comedic figure, but not as a tragic figure. Yet a tragic figure he was. He was a man whose life, full of mean shifts and daring frauds, was a long fight to keep off the poverty he hated and dreaded. Poverty caught him at last. The waters closed over him, and I do not know if he is alive or dead.

Mr. Ransome spares us the dark underside of Belden; he spares us the dark underside of Fleet Street. He touches lightly on it in the last chapter, and passes it by. His book is avowedly written from the point of view of early youth, and in early youth, thank God, one does not know all that is happening in the shadows of *la Rue des Pas Perdus*.

CECIL CHESTERTON.

REVIEWS.

Nach dem englisch-japanischen Bundnis. By Dr. Hans Plehn. (Karl Curtius. Berlin.)

The rapid appearance of this second edition is a well-merited testimony to the value of the author's "studies and observations made during a three years' stay in England," where he acted as the London correspondent for a leading German newspaper. The title quite fails to do justice to this remarkably impersonal book, of which more than one-third is devoted to a very comprehensive study of the social, political, and psychological factors upon which English foreign policy is founded. The book comprises very searching analysis of the international policies of the Powers in the East, in the Pacific, the future of Korea and Manchuria, Japan and her neighbours. Throughout, the attitude adopted is that of almost too strict an impartiality; the author might be an inhabitant of Mars studying our politics and politicians from the strictly objective and positive point of view.

Welt-politik (world-policy) is a term that has given rise to much misunderstanding. Dr. Plehn complains that even in Germany, where the word was first coined, it is often used as implying that German policy must be directed to the dominance of some one supreme world-State like that of the Roman Empire. The term connotes nothing more than the international relations of the world-States to one another. Far from conniving at the dominance of one Power, Welt-politik aims at preserving some sort of equilibrium between the rival powers.

From 1815 until 1870, world-policy practically meant the maintenance of the balance of power among the European States; it was, as Dr. Plehn states, a European State system, with the near East and the Mediterranean as the furthest objectives. Since then, not only have the European Powers become world-Powers through the growth of their colonies or their commerce, but the United States and Japan have entered the charmed circle known as the Concert of the Powers.

England, a world-Power since centuries, strove in vain for a kind of negative Monroe Doctrine outside Europe. She wanted, rather, to remain isolated from the European system so long as she might, in a phrase too familiar to our readers, be allowed "to do as she liked with her own." But her extra-insular frontiers becoming everywhere conterminous with those of other Powers, a policy of isolation was no longer tenable.

Dr. Plehn draws the following parallel between the development of Germany and that of America:—

> Imperialism had precursors in both countries; philosophers like Ferdinand List in Germany, men of action like the presidents and secretaries of state in America. In both countries it was the leaders, not the people, who turned the scale in favour of a world-policy, who decided that history should not be determined entirely by the other powers. A German or an American world-policy is scarcely conceivable without the personalities of Kaiser Wilhelm and President Roosevelt. To complete the parallel Parliament was in both countries the reactionary element in this development. The Reichstag in Germany and the Senate in America were more reluctantly converted to the new idea than was the nation. The cause was the same in both countries; the fear of giving the executive too free a hand.

Although in sketching the rise of Japan, the author tells us nothing very new, it is interesting to be reminded that Sir Charles Dilke, perhaps our only English statesman, concluded twenty years ago that England must have an ally in the East—either China or Japan. England, the first to recognise the independence of the South American Republics, was also the first to recognise Japan as an equal. The ignoring of Japan as a "front-bench" Power was no longer possible after the Treaty of 1902—a direct sequel of the Shimonoseki Peace Conference. "Japan," says Dr. Plehn, "requires capital for her expansion... She is, above all an agricultural country . . . Her population increases by half a million yearly, and her land proletariat forms a difficult social problem. The Japanese small landholders, and still more the labourers, are wedded to the agricultural methods of their ancestors. The Government is endeavouring to alter these conditions, but it will be a long time before any great success can be expected." In the meantime Japan has an enormous struggle to keep up appearances. Isn't she indeed paying too much for her whistle? There is another way out besides emigration and a modern industrial organisation, but as Dr. Plehn is content to describe the facts and not to offer remedies, we must pursue a like reticence.

We think that in a future edition Dr. Plehn will make some additions to his Great Powers. The Hague triumphs, such as they were, both diplomatically and oratorically, were with Drago the Brazilian and Triana the Colombian representatives. Brazil and Argentina are aspirants, no longer to be denied, to front rank. It is curious how neglected these countries are by all European Welt-politikers—yet in intellect, culture, and feeling the South American Republics really stand much nearer the "good European" point of view than does the United States. Dr. Plehn recognises that the countries have never willingly submitted to be regarded as protégés of the Northern Republic.

To our readers probably the most interesting sections are those devoted to an examination of the "Foundations of English Foreign Policy." "Germany," says Dr. Plehn, "has one State and no Society; England has one Society and no State." The whole political life which is practically identical wtih Society is centralised in London; London is England. In the law of primogeniture Dr. Plehn sees a sufficient reason why we have never had an aristocracy in the Continental sense. Whilst the younger sons were forced into posts and professions the land became the property and source of power of a few score individuals. (By the way, the results of this English land trust, the oldest and wealthiest of all the trusts, should open the eyes of the collectivists to the naiveté of their belief in the possibility of arriving at Socialism via the Trust.)

Dr. Plehn recognises that only theoretically can Parliament be said to control foreign affairs (or internal either, we may add). Public Opinion is ruler in England, and the Press is the means by which Public Opinion expresses its desires. But whose opinion rules, what classes form public opinion? Politically, public opinion is made in London, but not all Londoners participate in making it. "London is not," says Dr. Plehn, "the industrial, but only the commercial centre of England. London society lives on its unearned increment. London artisans are not organised as they are in the great industrial towns. The industrial classes of London are engaged in providing for the wants of its six million inhabitants and for the leisure of its upper ten thousand. The middle class is ground between the millstones of Socialism and Capitalism; without power of self-organisation and with its inherited respect of Aristocracy and Plutocracy, it blindly follows their lead." The Public Opinion of London, and therefore of England, is thus that of the upper classes and the upper ranks of the middle classes.

Dr. Plehn is at pains to demonstrate that we have no official, subsidised Press in the Continental sense. Of course not! A reptile Press has at least the sense to exact payment; our London Press, for the most part, is content to act as the mouthpiece of a plutocratic governing class out of sheer snobbery. We should like to quote further from this interesting survey, but we should still more like to see an English translation.

Tolstoy: A Study. By Percy Redfern. (Fifield. 1s. net.)

Mr. Percy Redfern is a man who has been through Tolstoy and come out at the other side—unscathed. More than this, he has come out at the other side with the ripened judgment of the disciple who, though no longer wholly of the old cause, can still speak with real enthusiasm of the old masters. And because of this his study of the modern Isaiah should do more to popularise what is really valuable in his message than perhaps anything that has been written on the subject. We have no hesitation in recommending this unpretentious book to those who require a sane and discriminating introduction to the ideas of the most distinct personality of the age. By the questionable act of aban-

doning his copyrights, Tolstoy has at least made his work accessible, but this is no guarantee of sound judgment in his innumerable readers all over the world. There is no reason, of course, why this should be so, for in whatever age, the mind of man will be as varied in texture and impressionability as are the leaves on a tree. But in spite of his simple and direct style (or perhaps because of it) Tolstoy more than many other teachers, because he is more vital, requires an interpreter who can expound the teaching from actual experience, not only of the word, but of its outcome in deed. Mr. Percy Redfern has written such a book as this, and even Tolstoyans should rejoice. It is doubtful whether Tolstoy ever wanted disciples in the sense of followers. What probably would have been more gratifying to him would have been an awakening of the spirit in those who read him, and a quickness to turn such an awakening into individual action. This, of course, is not the way of disciples. The Master is all or nothing. And that is their tragedy and his. That no philosopher or moral teacher is sound upon all points, is an axiom quite incomprehensible to those who have the passion of discipleship. Mr. Percy Redfern learned this in time. And he has also recognised the converse axiom which is often the cause of even more trouble than the former. That is, that even the sound points of one teacher are not sound for all minds. This really has been the difficulty with not only the Tolstoy propagandists, but with all religious enthusiasts. Religious propaganda always has a tendency to degenerate into insistence on salvation upon no other terms than coming under "the ole umbrella"—it can never understand that some people prefer little umbrellas of their own. Tolstoyans, for example, whilst recognising the finality of all religious forms, have never recognised the finality of Tolstoyism. But Tolstoy always did, and will continue doing so until he dies. He has spent his life in burning his intellectual ships, in abandoning his own finalities. His long life, as all lives worthy the name should be, has been a series of intellectual metamorphoses, and not always free from tragedy; the most tragic of all, as both Aylmer Maude and Merejkowski, as well as Mr. Redfern, have recognised, being the evacuation of his position of abnegation in reference to his estates. Mr. Redfern has some very wise things to say on the Count's capitulation to the Countess in this matter. We agree in the main with Mr. Redfern's criticism of Tolstoy, but cannot see eye to eye with him on the question of the Tolstoy settlements. These, surely, had so little success, not so much because of any defect in Tolstoy's teaching, but because they were not based upon Tolstoy's teaching. It is just as reasonable to use the failure of the many communist experiments as arguments against Socialism. But no matter what value such experiments have, and as experiments their value must not be overlooked, the Tolstoyan, no less than the communist experiments, failed, because of the economic and emotional difficulties in the way of any intensely individual community that seeks to establish itself as a thing apart, yet in the midst of another social system. Besides, neither Tolstoy nor Socialism advocate such communities as means towards their ends. In fact, one of the chief limitations of Tolstoy's teaching is his failure to realise the value of even the minimum of conscious social organisation. But this, of course, does not destroy the value of this "man of grim aspect and harsh words" as a spiritual and social tonic. And the Socialist will not be the last to see in him, with Mr. Redfern, "a teacher of brotherhood who believes even in his own errors and who lives within its limits, a life that is unaffectedly fraternal."

Florence and Northern Tuscany. By Edward Hutton (Methuen. 6s)

This book of Mr. Hutton's is admirable. With a zest and a joyfulness that we have found infectious, he carries us through the towns and country places of Northern Tuscany with something of that same overeagerness to express all he has to say that he finds characteristic of one of the groups of his beloved Verocchio. Sometimes by motor-car, sometimes on horseback, and less frequently by train, he links up the towns and villages. But most of all, he loves to walk

telling us by the way the tales of their rise and fall, "or the fragrance of the sea, the perfume of the blossoms, and, above all, Beauty that, as a night in spring, came to her from Greece, as it is said among the vineyards, before the vines had budded." Although the pages are crowded with illuminating and critical appreciations of the great architects, sculptors, and painters of the Renaissance, particularly of those who lived and worked in the first half of the fifteenth century, it is neither in these nor in the history of the towns that the charm of the book lies, but in the vivid and beautiful descriptions of the old country life in the hills, where the ancient ways still persist, and where they "still reap with the sickle and sing to the beat of the flail." In the cities, picture galleries, and museums the author grows a little weary at times, and we with him, but once outside, in the shadow of the Tuscan hills, he abandons himself to the delight of picturing the cities seen from afar, of the peasants and muleteers at their labours, of the piping of a shepherd on the hills, of the song of a girl in a garden, and of the mountains in shadow and sunshine, visualised in language reminiscent at times of the Bible. We get glimpses, too, of the craftsman working in the same way as he has worked from time immemorial. We could have wished that the author had given us further and more detailed scenes of workshop life in the towns seen in the same human and catholic spirit as he sees the life of the countryside. It was a time when the workman was no longer content to wholly accept the traditions of the guilds and Church. He was beginning to rebel against their domination, to throw over their authority, and yet it was from these guilds, after long apprenticeship, there came this workman with a wealth of ideas, a perception in the right handling of materials, and a delight in beauty that probably has never been surpassed. Professor Baldwin Brown, M.A., has described the interior of a Florentine painter's workshop, and Mr. Edgcumbe Staley has just lately written a valuable history of the guilds in Florence, but these do not fill the gap. What is wanted is a series of ordinary everyday scenes of men as they worked in their various trades—all the reality and romance of the arts and crafts depicted with passion and truth. This Mr. Hutton might well have done. He at least leaves no doubt in the reader's mind of the truthfulness of his lurid and convincing description of the conditions of labour in the Carrara marble quarries. In some striking passages he sums up his hatred and contempt for a period which has made Beauty an outcast and transformed its manufacturers into the prostitutes of craft and industry.

Kit's Woman. By Mrs. Havelock Ellis. (Rivers. 3s. 6d.)

It is frequently asserted on good authority that novels dealing with extreme examples of sex psychology and morality are written almost exclusively by women for women. Certainly we should not expect to find a story like this written by a man, for the theme is one that is alien to his traditions, and the solution one that is slightly abhorrent to his instincts. Mrs Havelock Ellis entitles her story an idyll, as she has a perfect right to do, even at the risk of inviting unfavourable comparisons. Let our readers judge for themselves

Kit Trenoweth, a miner in a Cornish village, after a varied amatory experience, weds a physically luxurious Lancashire maiden, Janet by name. Two years afterwards, as the result of a mining accident, the lower part of his body becomes paralysed, confining him to his couch, and leaving him to the constant torments of his own thoughts. The natural relations of husband and wife are thus reversed, Janet becoming the protectress and bread-winner; Kit brooding in sorrow over the thought that owing to his misfortune his wife is robbed of the crowning desire of her life—a child To such a pitch has his habit of introspection developed that he persuades himself that it is his duty (and his love for her compels him!) to sanction the only possible means of enabling her to fulfil her desire. He even discusses the matter with the local clergyman. Meanwhile the muddy gossip of the village has not spared Janet, and whether as the result of some mysterious telepathic influence or not, she succumbs to the adulterous solicitations of a casual stranger, a ship's mate. Meeting the man clandestinely a second time, she repels him and informs him of her intention of disclosing everything to her husband. This she does, and is handsomely forgiven, and in the last scene the bewildered reader is left with this spectacle of man and wife: "her's kneelin' like a innocent babe alongside Kit, and they be starin' i' one 'nother's eyes like two fools just beginnin' coortship."

A Soul from the Pit. By Walter M. Gallichan. (D. Nutt. 6s.)

The history of a soul submerged in vice or crime, however distasteful in itself, might, if written from the inside, prove an interesting human document; but it obviously demands the hand of the artist and the intellect of the thinker. This story, unfortunately, is but a featureless, commonplace narrative, without any claims to characterisation or distinction.

A young girl is beguiled from her Welsh home by a member of Mrs. Warren's profession, to a house in London. When she realises her position, she promptly escapes; and after taking service in a restaurant is befriended by a lady of advanced modern views. A fine-spirited young artist of promise falls in love with her, and asks her hand in marriage, whereupon she, torn with mental conflict between her desire for happiness, and her duty of disclosing the unfortunate Mrs. Warren episode, finally resolves to sacrifice herself, and disappears. From an accidental source her lover learns her whole story, which only deepens his affection; he seeks and discovers her when overpowered by grief and illness; in due time they marry and live happily ever after. The personages are mere stage dummies, and the atmosphere of the book quite uninspired.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

"The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood." By Ford Madox Hueffer. (Duckworth. 2s. 6d. net.)
"Rembrandt." By Baldwin Brown. (Duckworth. 7s. 6d. net.)
"A National Theatre." By William Archer and H. Granville Barker. (Duckworth. 5s. net.)
"La Démocratie Individualiste." Par Yves Guyot. (Giard et Brière. Paris.)
"New Poems" By Stephen Phillips. (Lane. 4s. 6d net.)
"Old Age Pensions." By W. Sutherland. (Methuen. 3s. 6d. net.)
"The Adventures of a Dodo." By G. E. Farrow. (Unwin. 3s. 6d.)
"Harry Rowntree's Annual." (Cassell. 3s. 6d.)
"The Confidantes of a King. By E. De Goncourt. Trans. by Ernest Dowson. 2 vols. (Foulis. 15s. net.)
"Socialism." By J. Ramsay Macdonald, M.P. (Social Problems Series.) (Jack. 1s. net.)
"The Awakening." By Richard Sands. (Macdonald and Evans 3s. 6d.)
"Abraham Lincoln." By Henry Bryan Binns. (The Temple Biographies.) Dent. 4s. 6d. net.)
"Russian and Bulgarian Folk-lore Stories." Translated by W. W. Strickland, B.A. (Geo. Standring.)
"God's Self-emptied Servant." By R. C. Morgan. Second Edition. (Morgan and Scott. 1s. net.)
"Nineteenth Century Prose." Selected by Mrs. Laurence Binyon. (Methuen. 6s)
"The Citizen and his Duties." By W. F. Trotter, M.A. (Jack. 1s. net.)
"The Model Citizen." By H. Osman Newland. (Pitman. 1s. 6d)
"British Freewomen" By Charlotte Carmichael Stopes. Third Edition, revised. (Sonnenschein. 2s. 6d.)
"The Writings of St Francis of Assisi." Translated by Countess De la Warr. (Burns and Oates. 2s. 6d. net.)
"The Sentimental Traveller." By Vernon Lee. (Lane. 3s. 6d net.)
"The Municipal Manual" By A. E. Lauder. (King. 3s 6d. net.)
"Oscar Wilde." By Leonard Cresswell Ingleby. (Laurie. 12s. 6d. net.)

"Balanced Life." By Eustace Miles. (Samurai Press. 2s. net.)
"A History of Sculpture." By Ernest H. Short. (Heinemann. 7s. 6d. net.)
"The Prolongation of Life." By Elie Metchnikoff. (Heinemann. 12s. 6d. net.)
"The Sayings of Confucius." With Introduction and Notes by Lionel Giles, M.A. (Murray. 2s. net.)
"Lucretius, Epicurean and Poet." By John Masson, M.A. (Murray. 12s. net.)
"Studies in Poetry." By Stopford A. Brooke. (Duckworth. 6s. net.)
"The Ethics of Revolt." By Greville Macdonald. (Duckworth. 5s. net.)
"India Impressions." By Walter Crane. (Methuen. 7s. 6d. net.)
"The Letters of Dr. John Brown." Edited by His Son and D. W. Forrest. (Black. 10s. 6d. net.)
"Frontiers." By the Rt. Hon. Lord Curzon of Kedleston. (Clarendon Press. 2s. net.)
"Eugene Delacroix." By Dorothy Bussy. (Duckworth. 5s. net.)

Pamphlets, etc.—"Our Debt to the Class-Meeting—and Duty." By Rev. C. W. L. Christien. (Culley. 2d.)—"Newspaper Gambling Schemes." By J. Scott Duckers. (Anti-Gambling League. 1d.)—"Bulletin of the International Labour Office." (Labour Representation Printing Co., Woolwich.)—"Charles Bradlaugh." By Rev. Stewart D. Headlam. (Standring. 1d.)—"Socialism?" By Cayley Calvert. (Constitutional Speakers League. 1d.) "How Irish County Councils Work." By W. J. Flynn. (United Irish League.)

Reviews, etc.—Saint George. "The Happy Annual." By Cecil Aldin and John Hassall. (Heinemann. 1s. net.) The Colonial Office Journal. American Journal of Eugenics.

DRAMA.

Mr. Alfred Sutro's "Barrier."

Imagination cannot be acquired, it is a matter of natural rank; one is born with access to the great ideas or the small ideas as a question of natural and social heredity. And upon imaginative rank the place of a writer ultimately depends. Miss Corelli might warble never so sweetly, her style might be very much more expressive and restrained than it is, yet she could never escape from her pre-occupation with the "delusions of grandeur," as the alienists say, which cling about great things. Precisely upon what qualities this access to great or limited ideas depends is another story; it is enough for the moment that all the expressed ideas of men do wait, like a great hierarchy of priests, for the new-born, conscious self to take its choice from, and upon that choice, rank, value, meaning, in life as in literature, depend. So far as the dramatist is concerned, the technical part of his equipment is a subsidiary. By which I mean not only the faculty of writing words in the form of spoken dialogue, and arranging the action of that dialogue to express ideas and emotion, but the instinct for seeing things dramatically. The instinct cannot be acquired, the literary facility may be; but both combined will not serve to make valuable the product of an imagination of low rank. There is unfortunately another important factor in the problem, and that is the nexus of ideas in the society in which we live, the imaginative rank of our common mutual life. From that it is so difficult to escape that many people never make the attempt. We have great numbers of writers who are so afraid of their own remote superiority that whenever they express themselves, they do so through the medium of social ideas quite a long way in the scale below themselves. The majority of journalists, for instance. But this weakness is the besetting sin of dramatists, the condition of whose work, if it is to be successful, makes it particularly necessary that they should not be out of touch with their audiences. Once more, in fact, we are brought to a standstill before the appalling truth of the solidarity of man. Freedom is impossible save on a basis of general social freedom; the escape from poverty is impossible while there are many poor; great imaginative literature and drama are impossible while the average imaginative rank, the social, imaginative rank, is low. Yet at the same time, dramatists do rather overdo their fear of getting out of touch with the mind of their audience. The smothering of the dramatist's own ideas, of his feverish interpretation of general fatuities, does sometimes amount to "blue funk." Let me concede that it is not always possible for the dramatist to deal with the highest ideas of which his mind is capable, yet the alternative is not subservient conventionality. Rank cannot be acquired; conventionality can be avoided. But Mr. Sutro seems to be at pains to make capital out of it, to entangle himself in the peerage, and in chromo-lithographic conceptions of Holloway drapers. Mr. Sutro's imaginative rank is not very high; at least, not in his acted and published plays, but that is no reason for lazily refusing to conceive a real world of drama, and for just transferring conventional types from casual conversation and the newspapers on to the stage. In a sense "The Barrier" is realistic. None of the characters affront one by being obviously impossible, but then they were all very well acted. Compared with an unfortunate play called "Simple Simon" I had seen the previous evening at the Garrick Theatre, Mr. Sutro's "Barrier" shone like gold. Anyone who wishes to see how dull a play full of plot and passion (despite Mr. Bourchier's heroic efforts) can be should go and see "Simple Simon." It is not enough, however, to be merely tolerable; a play needs more individuality than that. And this individuality will not be attained by putting a realistic coat of paint on the stock lords, ladies, actresses, and magnanimous drapers of the popular mind, and making these aforesaid persons use a realistic dialogue. And that is what "The Barrier" amounts to. It is really extraordinary how limited are the materials to which dramatists confine themselves. They very barely interpret a few ideas about a small clique. With all the various world of wondrous humanity tossing tumultuously from Wimbledon to Watford and from Ealing to East Ham, the dramatist confines himself to the life of a few thousand people in the centre. Mr. Sutro's most adventurous excursion, I believe, has been to West Hampstead, and even then the author was careful to assure his audience that the dramatis personæ belonged to their world, but had chosen a species of voluntary exile and a mitigated poverty. At least, the husband and wife in "A Maker of Men" were both very nicely dressed, and real poor people of the middle-class are, I regret to say, shabby. Even in this high flight, how anxious the wife was to run away from the expression of her real ideas! Even when expressing one of his cardinal ideas—the nobility and dignity of woman's function as a mother, Mr. Sutro was careful to make the wife say, "Let us never speak of this again." Discussion of this kind is certainly liable to put a strain on tea-table conventions. But it is time those conventions were transcended, and that involves the necessity of dramatists leading different lives, and sweeping from a semi-fashionable existence into the real life of the nation. The possibilities this escape opens up have been indicated by Bernard Shaw's dramatisation of the Salvation Army, but Mr. Shaw did not get his knowledge of the Army by reading the "Daily Mail."

To ask a dramatist to abjure the conventional dramatic types is not to ask him to get out of touch with his audience. A real drama of a suburb would be actually much more in touch than a drama of Belgravia and Scotland. And a drama of Herne Hill by a dramatist of moderate imaginative rank would stand for something, and would remain, whereas "The Barrier," acted for all it is worth by a quite extraordinarily good company, may make some money, but doesn't matter.

L. HADEN GUEST.

ART.

The Tragedy of Lost Opportunities.

WHEN last year I first planted my feet on American soil the first thing which, as an architect, excited my wonder and curiosity was the skill with which the most important American buildings are designed. How had it all come about? In England I had taken it for granted that important buildings would be badly designed, and that capable architects would have to content themselves with the smaller commissions. Here the reverse appeared to be true. The largest and most expensive buildings (excepting the skyscrapers) were invariably the best designed. There seemed no reason to suppose but that on the whole the best buildings were designed by the best architects in America, so little attention had been given to smaller work.

On reflection I came to the conclusion that the cause was to be found in the difference between the English and American character. The average American, whatever his faults may be, appears to be very much more alive to the necessities of architecture than the average Englishman. If you were to tell an American that the house he had just built was ugly he would blame himself for selecting the wrong architect; the Englishman, on the other hand, would probably answer: Yes, everybody knows that architects are rotters. He would be altogether unconscious of any responsibility in the matter.

I do not suppose that the average Englishman feels any responsibility in the matter of South Kensington Museum now approaching completion. Yet all the same it is a national disgrace that such a building should be allowed to be built. Especially am I constrained to say this when I remember that in the competition from which the design was selected one of the designs submitted would have given us a building second to none in London, and certainly one of the finest Renaissance buildings in Europe. Who is responsible for this? Is the assessor, or the Government of the day, or is it public indifference which permits such things to happen? Nor is this an isolated instance. The Admiralty buildings, the Record Office, and the Bankruptcy Court close by—which it has been well said may well stand for bankruptcy in taste as in other matters—are all on the same level of incompetence. They do not even rise to the level of dull mediocrity as is the case with the War Office and Government Offices.

I confess to a certain impatience when I think of all these fine opportunities which are thrown away apparently without any misgivings, by the public, who seem absolutely incapable of any sense of responsibility in the matter. Certainly no other nation in Europe would allow such buildings to be built. And this state of things exists at a time when a definitely modern school of architecture is in existence. English architects to-day, in spite of public apathy and indifference, lead the world. English architectural books and periodicals circulate all over Europe and America. The ideas which in England rarely do more than get on to paper are taken up abroad and reduced to actuality. The men who have modelled themselves upon English ideas are there given opportunities to practise on a larger scale. Could anything be more damning to the British public? What can be the cause of the sodden state of England to-day?

A. J. PENTY.

MUSIC.

Modern Song Writing.

I HAVE just come across a new volume of German songs by the young Englishman, Edward Agate,* a volume which is at the same time very much better and very much worse than his first volume issued not long ago by Breitkopf and Härtel. When Mr. Agate deigns to be comprehensible he achieves a really remarkable beauty, and although I fancy he rather upsets Uhland's metre in "Bauernregel," it is one of the most delightful little songs that have been written in our time, worthy to rank with the best of Richard Strauss and Hugo Wolf. But this is only one song, and out of the six in this book, the only song one really wants to hear over again. It is slight and dainty as a piece of Dresden china, and it is the only one that can be considered really vocal. And this brings me to Mr. Agate's deficiency. With all his splendid egotism and courage he fails to grasp this raison d'être of all song writing (at least, I hope it is intended in some cases), that songs are written to be sung. One may find various influences in these compositions (and what artist is not "influenced"?) and accuse him of slavish imitation here and there in his harmonic designs. I hesitate, however, to make this charge against Mr. Agate, or if I did I might add that his irrepressible egotism carries him beyond mere admiration of his masters to some definite personal achievement. And I do feel the expression of a personality behind these little songs; but the expression is untrained, inexperienced, uncouth; something like the capers of an unbroken colt, now halting, now curveting, then off at some wild gallop towards some unknown goal. And yet I have said that "Bauernregel" is one of the most beautiful little songs ever written. So it is; but in all the others he is only forcing some ideas into an utterance that is condemned to be misunderstood—into some mumbling incoherency. If he had kept the vocal necessities before his mind while writing these songs, he would certainly never have written such awkward phrases as are to be found in every song but this one that I have picked out. I should strongly recommend him to go and hear Tetrazzini, if just to understand the meaning of *bel canto*; and then to think of the prima donna's glorious voice when writing his next song. This should inspire him to some comprehensible act of heroism.

I should also recommend many of our younger song writers to listen carefully to Julia Culp's phrasing of some Brahms songs, for, of course, Brahms intended people to sing his songs. This was one of the things that raised Brahms so high above many of his contemporaries, the gift for "melodic outline," those wonderful curves which one always finds in the best folk-songs as in the best art-songs. The "melodic outlines" in

* "Sechs Lieder von Edward Agate." (London. Sidney Riorden. 2s. 6d.)

many songs of Strauss and Wolf and a host of imitators are like silhouettes of house-tops and chimney-stacks: interesting, but not what we understand as graceful. It is only occasionally, during some aberration of honesty, that they write songs which are perfectly vocal; their *lieder* are generally the reverse and all but impossible to sing. But Schumann, Brahms, Grieg or Dvorâk never made this mistake, and certainly never Schubert, the pioneer of the modern art-song. These understood the capabilities of the voice just as Reynaldo Hahn, Fauré and Debussy do to-day. For felicitous vocal writing no young composer can have a better model than Brahms, a man whose music appeals to me but little, but who certainly did write songs that are always comprehensible from the vocal point of view. And I insist in face of all the wonderful music of "songs" Strauss and Max Reger and Wolf have written, that unless a song is lyrical and possible of performance, there is no use in calling it a song. I am far from pleading in favour of the obvious in music—I have a strong penchant for the incomprehensible, but I do object strongly to such songs as the last one in Mr. Agate's volume, for instance, not merely because the music is definitely ugly to listen to (I don't even mind ugliness), but that it is an unsingable ugliness. What I may call the harmonic sense is very highly developed in Mr. Agate, and although five of these six songs are, as I have said, unlyrical and nasty to sing, the music is never quite dull, and the harmonic "resolutions" often arresting in their originality. It is, however, as the composer of such a charming trifle as "Bauernregel" that Mr. Edward Agate is entitled to consideration amongst modern English writers.

I am looking forward eagerly to Mrs. Franz Liebich's book on Claude Debussy, which I hear John Lane is to bring out shortly in his "Living Masters of Music" Series. Mrs. Liebich has an intimate knowledge of this most wonderful of all wonderful modern music, and I believe her book will be the first in English on the great Frenchman's life and work. Debussy is coming to London in February to conduct two or three things of his own with the Queen's Hall Orchestra. X.

CORRESPONDENCE.

For the opinions expressed by correspondents, the Editors do no hold themselves responsible.
Correspondence intended for publication should be addressed to the Editors and written on one side of the paper only.

SOCIALISM AND PUNISHMENT.

TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE."

The letter by Mr. Simons in your last issue is surely the ne plus ultra of the New Ethics. We had previously been invited to consider the question of the treatment of crime with the idea of punishment left out. Mr. Simons says that in his opinion it ought to be discussed with the idea of justice left out. The framing of laws, we are told, is "a purely utilitarian matter."

Well, possibly the word justice does not stand for any spiritual reality. And perhaps the earth is flat. But——

Your correspondent, though no doubt quite consciously heterodox, is perhaps not fully aware of his splendid isolation. The Utilitarian philosophers themselves, the very men who originated and elaborately worked out the theory that Utility, or Well-being, is the ultimate basis of our sentiments of justice, duty, and morality generally, never dreamt of denying the higher claims of these sentiments where they conflict with the more obvious dictates of expediency. To assert the claim of utility against that of justice is to affirm the supremacy of a short-sighted over a far-seeing Expediency. Is not the existence of a sentiment of justice in the community one of the factors determining what kind of laws are expedient? Can there be any permanent utility in a law that achieves its ultimate ends by means which outrage the moral sense of the community? The average citizen believes that our penal system acts as a deterrent from crime, and for that reason he supports it. There the matter ends, thinks your correspondent: it is "a purely utilitarian matter." There, however, it does not end. The community would not tolerate the penal system another day if the average citizen believed it to consist in the deliberate infliction of deep pain and ignominy upon men and women who do not justly deserve it. If the community did not regard those who commit injurious acts as deserving of punishment, the penal system, as a mere ready expedient for deterring others from committing such acts, would have to be replaced (such is the "superstition" of justice) by some other expedient. The truth of this is clearly illustrated by the fact that those modern social reformers who think punishment is not just, so far from admitting the supposed necessity for it as a deterrent, denounce it, and urge the adoption of some form of non-punitive deterrent that does not conflict with their idea of justice. Thus, on the one hand, the average citizen supports the penal system because he believes that punishment is just; and, on the other hand, the social reformer who thinks punishment unjust demands some humaner expedient.

It is evident, therefore, that the whole controversy about punishment hinges upon the question of justice. The supporters of punishment are those who think it just; the opponents of punishment are those who think it unjust; and in both cases the opinion of its utility is determined by the belief concerning its justice.

RUSSELL THOMPSON.

MR. R. B. HALDANE AND "PUBLIC OPINION."

THE Right Hon. R. B. Haldane, M.P., Secretary for War, has addressed the following letter to the Editor of PUBLIC OPINION:—

WAR OFFICE, 1st October, 1907.

Dear Mr. Parker,

I think that in the new form of "Public Opinion" under your editorship, you do well to make prominent what is concrete and living in the shape of the opinions maturely formed of men who are trying to do the work of the nation and of journalists the standard of whose critioism is high. What interests people is that which is expressed in a concrete form and has in it the touch of humanity. The views of strenuous spirits and the criticisms of really competent critics given in their own words comply with this condition. Your paper will succeed if it can only keep up to this standard, and I think you have brought it on to the right lines.

Yours faithfully,
R. B. HALDANE.

Percy L. Parker, Esq.,
Offices of "Public Opinion,"
Temple House, Tallis Street, E.C.

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