EDWARD CARPENTER on the MINIMUM WAGE.

THE NEW AGE

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE news, if it is news, of the rapprochement between the Trade Unionist members and the members of the Labour Party is very welcome. We have urged over and over again that Trade Unionism having first become political was bound sooner or later to become Socialist. There is, of course, no immediate prospect of the latter; but the bridging of the gulf between the two sections has practically been accomplished. The Miners' Federation, in particular, has a good deal to give in the way of political strength. Having over 200,000 members, mostly voters, their accession to the principle of independent political action will strengthen the hands of earnest reformers in the North, the Midlands, and in Wales; and the addition of their fifteen Parliamentary representatives to the present Labour Party, coupled with the adhesion of Mr. Steadman, would bring up the total of Labour Members to 47.

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This, we need not say, is a formidable nucleus for a political party intent upon economic reforms. And nucleus only we firmly believe it to be. The rumour goes that a considerable body of Liberal members are prepared to support the Labour Party in the event of Mr. Asquith's promotion to Deputy-Premiership. We sincerely hope the rumour is true. With a strong Socialist lead and a strong mixed following of Trade Unionists, impatient Liberals, and disappointed Radicals, the chances of the Cabinet maiming Old Age Pensions and the Right to Work Bills would be considerably lessened, even if, as is very likely, the Conservatives forget Tariff Reform in a panic against Social Reform.

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We insist strongly, however, on the decisive Socialist lead, and more particularly because the tendency is towards excessive caution when an extreme party is joined by a moderate party. Each party is slightly suspicious of the other, the extremists deferentially abating their extremes, and the moderates rather zealously proclaiming their moderation. Thus, in fact, such a rapprochement as has been suggested may prove a little dangerous for Socialism. We observe that both Mr. Philip Snowden and Mr. Ramsay Macdonald have been, if not exactly complaining, at least explaining that the resolutions to be discussed at the coming Labour Party Conference at Hull are not particularly inspiring. They are not. And they are not inspiring because they are too moderate. We realise clearly enough Mr. Snowden's objection to a formulated programme; but in the absence of a programme there should surely be plenty of principles. It is not enough to talk of the amelioration of the conditions of labour by means of Old Age Pensions and an Unemployed Act. We are in for a revolution, political, economic, and, we would add, moral. The question is: Will the Labour Party widen its platform of principles to include such revolution? Is its clear aim to become a great political party representative of the whole community, representative of all the national interests, without distinction of class, sect, sex, or creed? Is it prepared to undertake the responsibilities of a world-commonwealth—the British Empire—and to maintain civilisation at least at its present level? We believe that the Labour Party, with such additions as are bound to be made in future by defection of the best men from the Liberal Party and by the addition of the trained men of the Socialist bodies, will certainly become what we may name a national, as distinct from a sectional, party; and hence, with every increase of its strength, our hopes for the conquest of poverty and ignorance rise. But the condition, as we believe, is not moderation in demands, but revolution. Moderation in action is a different thing, but as Mr. Snowden observes, the Labour Party is not yet called upon to act. Confucius once said: When not in office devise not the policy.

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One ingredient is certainly lacking not only in the Labour Party, but even more in the Liberal and Conservative Parties. It is imagination. Nine-tenths of the politics of the country is made positively repellent by its deadly dulness. Now this, if we are aiming at democracy, is a fatal error. It is the bounden duty of responsible politicians to give charm and romance to politics by the admixture of imagination. It is, we admit, quite outside the ordinary tradition of English political life; but then English political life has too often been outside the tradition of English popular life. Only now and then has the English public been diverted from police court and divorce news to politics, and always by a commanding and imaginative personality. At this very moment our political leaders are piping to ears intent on the latest news from Monte Carlo or Camden Town; while the Test Matches easily monopolise the posters of even our most politically-minded newspapers. Under such conditions, we repeat, there is only one duty for the democratic politician—that is, seriously and effectively to emulate our Churches and Theatres, our Literature and our Royal Court, by popularising politics. And the way to popularise politics is to import into it imagination.

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Nor is imagination a vulgar or an impolitic or a more dangerous element than routine in politics. In

India, as we have before observed, in Natal, in Ireland; and, coming to domestic politics, in the problems of the unemployed, of sweating, and of Old Age Pensions, the lack of imagination is responsible for untold muddle and misery. The news, says the "Times," that Dinuzulu has surrendered quietly rejoices all who have at heart the peace of South Africa. But that is not true. The news depresses us profoundly. What a magnificent opportunity for really winning the Zulus has been worse than thrown away! Undoubtedly Dinuzulu is one of the most popular Zulu chieftains since Cetewayo. With a grain of imagination in the Natalese he could have been won for the white people of South Africa, he and all his nation. Miss Colenso, we are certain, could have done it. Mr. Cecil Rhodes would probably have actually done it. Mr. Keir Hardie could have done it. But no, the panic-stricken, muddle-headed routineers of Natal, because they were men "on the spot," were left to apply what fools and cowards always instinctively rely upon, namely, force. Force, force, always force—in Natal, in Egypt, in India, and now Mr. Birrell is being implored to use force in Ireland.

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But if Mr. Birrell is one of the worst-tempered (being quite unruffleable) men in the Cabinet, he is also one of the most intellectually honest. Not to mince words, he is the only completely intellectually honest man in the present Government. Mr. Haldane is straight enough, but he has the difficult task of welding many elements. He wants to get a job done, and will spend an hour or two with Machiavelli for the purpose. But Mr. Birrell is the spoiled child of ingenuousness. He cannot help saying exactly what he thinks to-day, even if it differs from what he thought and said yesterday. He is the enfant terrible of the present Cabinet. And being intellectually honest and also an enfant terrible, he does not believe in the renewal of Coercion in Ireland, nor will he say he does, even to satisfy Mr. Walter Long, the celebrated muzzler of dogs. Mr. Morley, we know, promptly swallowed his principles of a literary life-time the moment he was faced by the official demand of Anglo-Indians for repression. Sir Edward Grey still leaves the innocent Denshavians mouldering in prison because he is afraid of letting them out. But Mr. Birrell is not that kind of man. Fortunately, he has a less ponderous sense of responsibility, and a greater sense of freedom and truth. We sincerely hope that whatever he does in Ireland, he will *not* take the advice either of Mr. Walter Long and his crowd of ineptitudes or of Mr. John Morley and his crowd of platitudes. If he cannot find something better than Coercion to apply, let him apply epigrams. Birrelism is better for Ireland than Coercion any day.

* * *

The same people who squeal for Coercion in Ireland, troops for Zululand, deportations for India, and prisons for Egyptians, squeal like the Suffragettes of their fancy (the antipodes of the facts) for more charity and less justice for the starving poor. The "Times" of Saturday contained, we noticed, nearly two columns of closely-printed appeals to the charitable for various relief, assistance, help, etc., to private bodies. All the Tory and Liberal papers, in fact, are making themselves lazzaroni in preparation for Christmas. At the very same moment that they are trying to wheedle out of the pockets of fuddled sentimentalists a guinea or so by lurid descriptions of the condition of various poor, they in another column, or rather page, spill pints of ink in the attempt to show that public justice is demoralising. They deny, of course, that the feeding of starving children by the State or the granting of Old Age Pensions to the past-works or the provision of work for the unemployed is justice at all. They call it demoralising charity. But even if it were charity (which we deny), it would be infinitely less demoralising than the hysterical outbursts of semi-private charity —and, let us add, incomparably cheaper!

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However, it is certain that unemployment in the immediate future will outgrow the efforts of spasmodic charity. All our reports go to show that the country is in for another trade depression, with the inevitable sequel of unemployed processions, half-hearted rioting, frothy denunciations of the Government—and official apathy. What in the name of intelligence our mandarins are doing passes our comprehension. Here are Mr. Balfour, Lord Lansdowne, Mr. Asquith, Mr. John Burns, and the inevitable Mr. Walter Long (we will not so much as name a parvenu Doctor, now jackaling for Liberalism against Socialism), all shouting defiance at each other, irrespective of party almost, on such subjects as the House of Lords and the political unity of the Conservative Party. Who really cares about the unity of the Conservative Party or about the House of Lords? Nero fiddling while Rome was burning was political sagacity in comparison with these statesmen fiddling while an Empire is dying of heart disease. We suppose, at least, that England is still the heart of the Empire; or has it been moved to New Zealand? And if England is the heart, then by all that is Imperial, let us have the heads in communication with it. We implore Mr. Balfour to give up talking of unity, Mr. Leo Strachey to abandon his pin-pricking of Tariff bubbles (a very popular proceeding, we admit, since the "Spectator" had nearly 40 pages of advertisements, and must now be a regular Golconda). In fact, we implore everybody to give up talking nonsense, and to settle down to the problem of abolishing poverty root and branch. That done, we shall listen to everybody with exemplary politeness, even when they are as silly as Lord Hugh Cecil, who remarked that Socialism requires "laborious archangels with private means" to make it practicable.

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The fact is, of course, that the mere size of the tasks proposed by Socialists has thoroughly frightened these Imperialist journeymen, who are quite willing to guide the horses of Phœbus—the British Empire, you understand — but funk the smaller responsibility of organising industry so as to make poverty impossible. We could almost find it in our hearts to hand over the administration to men like Lipton and Lyons (the latter of whom finds time in the intervals of feeding a million or so people a day to write novels for his customers). Are Lord Hugh Cecil and the other rising hopes of the parties afraid of their beloved competition that they dare not do what a few Scots and Jews can do with an easy finger? The timidity of our business men no less than of our politicians so soon as they have public powers appals us. Men who have personally organised a world-business boggle at a municipal tramway undertaking as if it were a planetary affair. What is worse, they do not cease to lie about such works when undertaken by other and less timorous men.

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We have no particular love for the L.C.C., even in its Progressive dress, since its vice is the usual vice of puritans, namely, stupidity; but we admired and admire the courage of the late L.C.C. in boldly experimenting in direct works. At the last election it will be remembered that London walls were snowed over with posters asserting the extravagance and worse of the Finance Committee of the Progressive majority. The audit demanded by the righteous Moderates has just been published, with the result that all the Moderate assertions which won the elections turn out to be— statistics! A public opinion worth considering would instantly demand a dozen or so heads on a charger by way of satisfaction; though, to be sure, the heads so obtained would scarcely be worth the trouble. The point is that these same Moderates, who are usually Imperialists and Unsocialists as well, have not only shirked big public undertakings themselves, but have behaved like all cowards, and impugned the motives and capacity of the men who were not afraid.

* * *

On November 14 Mr. Keir Hardie left Tuticorin for Colombo on his way to Australia. In reply to an address of farewell Mr. Hardie delivered a speech, from which we make the following extracts:—

Now, let us see how the reform proposals made by the

Government of India and endorsed by Mr. Morley work out. If I had been so fortunate as to have Mr. Morley for my travelling companion these two months and he had observed the state of things in this country as I have done, I am sure he would have allowed his right hand to rot in the wrist before endorsing such repressive proposals. They are not reform proposals. In many respects they are not only reactionary but they even take away some of the few rights of citizenship which the Indians already possessed. Mr. Morley may not be aware of this fact, but one thing is certain. It is writ large all over the document containing the reform proposals, and of it Mr. Morley cannot but be aware. Its one underlying object is surely to place more power in the hands of the wealthy and the aristocratic classes. We at home do not call that reform. For a thousand years the fight has been to wrest power from the aristocrats and vest it in the common people. We have succeeded considerably in that fight and I am surprised that a Liberal Government, a Liberal Viceroy and a Liberal Secretary of State, with Mr. Morley's splendid record should be consenting parties to proposals of this kind. It will surprise me very much if, when these proposals come up, as they must, before the House of Commons, with its majority constituted as at present, they are allowed to pass through. . . . .

Gentlemen, bring your campaign to our very doors and you will see what follows in connection with your Congress in England. There could be a series of monster demonstrations held in all parts of the country. Two or three members of the Congress going with two or three sympathetic members of Parliament from the centre to the circumference of the country can meet the British people face to face, and this will produce a tremendous impression and great benefit. The result is all the newspapers are set discussing on India and her claims. That would be one great gain. Your appeal should not be to the Cabinet Ministers or members of Parliament, but to those electors who are the creators of cabinets and parliaments. Get the ear of Great Britain and reach the heart of its people and leave it to them to look after Cabinets and members of Parliament. I shall have certain proposals and certain suggestions to make on my return home. What the fate of those proposals will be, remains to be seen. But this I say, it will go before the people and before Parliament. I have been authorised by my party to study the conditions prevailing in India and to offer to its people a message of sympathy and hope. . . . .

I feel it a privilege to be the first spokesman of the working classes of England, to see for myself the conditions of the people of India. Remember, we, too, are fighting the battle of freedom, but freedom is not to be insular or isolated. We are not free if we sanction injustice or oppression. We have earned opprobrium, vilification and abuse because we championed the cause of the weak. Be it the Zulus in South Africa, be it to the people of India, we stand for justice for all. I shall leave your shores, feeling privileged that mine has been the first voice from the ranks of the coming power. Bear always in mind that you carry their sympathy in your struggle. I take with me tangible tokens of your kindness, but what I value more than all those mementoes is the hearty affection of the people of this country, which it has been my pride to receive. If the voice and thought are not different, my voice is not that of a person, but that of a growing movement which in its fruition shall have swept poverty from the world and given freedom to all its peoples.

* * *

To the letter by Mr. Bernard Shaw which we reprinted last week from the "Pall Mall Gazette" (Nov. 28), Dr. Saleeby made a rejoinder in the same paper on Dec. 9. Mr. Shaw's references to Westermarck were examined without, as far as we can see, effecting anything except proving both disputants to have read Westermarck carelessly. Dr. Saleeby certainly did not observe Westermarck's accuracy in using the term polygyny instead of the term polygamy. Polygamy, of course, is a criminal offence in England, and is quite incompatible with the system of monogamy; but polygyny is neither a criminal offence nor is it incompatible with monogamy. What Westermarck does say is not that civilisation up to a certain point is favourable to polygamy, but that up to a certain point civilisation is favourable to polygyny.

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The following extract from Dr. Saleeby's rejoinder to Mr. Shaw will convey to our readers the main plank of Dr. Saleeby's platform :—

It is evident that Mr. Shaw was largely determined to "go for" me by the fact that I am supposed to be an anti-Socialist. Now, my reply to Mr. Shaw's challenge, restated for the purposes of truth, is sufficient to show that, on certain definitions of Socialism, I am a Socialist. As I have said elsewhere, if the individualism I profess is an enemy to the salvation of children, then it is a rotten lie, and had best go quickly to its place with the Father of such. If Socialism means "the abolition of private property in the instruments of production and distribution," that is a proposal I do not profess to have plumbed, and have never discussed in public, though I incline against it; if it means the abolition of the family and marriage and private parentage, I am certainly an anti-Socialist; if it means, with Ruskin, that "the function of Government is the production and recognition of human worth," I bow before that noble and unexcelled definition; if it means, with Mr. Shaw, the libelling of motherhood and the degradation of fatherhood, I am an anti-Socialist; if, with Mr. Pease, the secretary of the Fabian Society, it asserts that "a logical Socialist can hardly attack marriage," I am with it so far. But at present the Socialists are rent by their practical individualism, and agree not at all.

As for myself, since none of the current names really fit me, I am inclined, like Huxley, in a similar case, to invent a new one and call myself a motherist or maternalist. Maternalism would point, I think, to the supreme paradox that the dominant creature of the earth is born of woman, and born the most absolutely, pathetically helpless of all living creatures whatsoever, animal or vegetable; it would note that this utter dependence upon others, mother or foster-mother, is not only the most unqualified known, but the longest maintained; it would observe that of all the human beings now alive, all that have lived, all that are to be, not one could survive its birth for twenty-four hours but for motherhood; it would note that only motherhood has rendered possible the supersession of instinct in man by that intelligence which, itself dependent upon motherhood for the possibility of its development, has dependent upon it the fact that the earth is now man's and the fulness thereof; and to the advocates of all the political -isms that can be named, and the small proportion of them that can be defined, it would apply its specific criterion: Do you realise that a mother is, so far as mankind is concerned, not only, as Coleridge said, "the holiest thing alive," but the most essential thing alive; do you regard the safeguarding and the ennoblement of motherhood as the proximate end of all political action, the end through which the ultimate ends, "the production and recognition of human worth" can alone be obtained; do you realise that marriage is, as Goethe said —and he meant monogamy, of course—"the foundation and the summit of all civilisation," *because* it makes for the enthronement of motherhood as nothing else ever did or can; do you realise that, metaphors about State maternity notwithstanding, the State has neither womb nor breasts, these most reverend and divine of all vital organs being the apanage of the individual mother alone? The -ism that answers these questions as I would have them answered is in so far my -ism, whatever letters precede that syllable: since I believe that motherhood has determined beyond all other factors the history of nations hitherto—being probably a real key to the unexampled riddle of Jewish persistence—and must continue to do until, perchance, science puts an end to the present necessity of individual death.

* * *

Mr. Shaw replied to Dr. Saleeby's rejoinder in the "Pall Mall Gazette" (Dec. 10). The following is his letter : —

"MARRIAGE AND ITS CRITICS."

To the Editor of the "Pall Mall Gazette."

Sir,—Since Doctor Saleeby seems to be in some doubt as to why I "went for him," I may say now that I did so because he made an absolutely unprovoked and scandalous attack on me and on another equally innocent writer. I seized the opportunity to give some useful instructions to the readers of the "Pall Mall Gazette," as well as to remind Dr. Saleeby that the ordinary courtesies of debate need not be suspended in discussions of sex.

Dr. Saleeby need not worry about Westermarck. I have read Westermarck, and have no reason to doubt that Dr. Saleeby has read him with equal care, as our statements concerning him agree perfectly. It is true that when I accepted Dr. Saleeby's statement, he immediately yielded to an irresistible impulse to contradict it; but the public will not blame him for a momentary loss of presence of mind.

Now for the real purpose of this letter, which is to help Dr. Saleeby in his work as Maternalist. Dr. Saleeby is quite wildly misled by maternalist sentiment when he assumes in the matter of State protection of children that "the State sinned and the State repented: the mothers were motherly all the time if they had had the chance." As a matter of fact, the mothers furiously resisted the State when it rescued the children from them. At this very moment, the proposals to carry the work of rescue a step further by raising the age of the half-timers in the northern factories is being so resolutely opposed by the parents that the reform will have to be carried over their heads by the constituencies in which the question does not arise. Dr. Saleeby's rhetoric about "shallow and cruel and brutally untrue libels upon mothers" does credit to his feelings; but he will be of no practical use as a maternalist until he gets rid of these sentimental illusions. He will find when he

comes down to practical work as a maternalist that neither the rich mothers nor the poor mothers will act up to his expectations. The rich mothers will not take care of their children at all: they will not even suckle them for fear of spoiling their figures. The poor mothers he will find divided roughly into three classes about equal in numbers. One of these classes is so utterly unfit to be trusted even partially with the care of children that there is nothing for it but to take their families completely out of their hands. The women of the second section are incapable of managing for their children; but if the State takes the management off their hands, they will give them some affection and such home care and influence as any normally kind-hearted adult can exercise. The third section will help to keep Dr Saleeby's faith alive by taking care of their children quite capably whilst they are out of school, and bringing them up as well as their means will permit. As far as I am able to ascertain, these are the hard facts of the existing situation.

But all this has nothing to do with the larger proposition which I put before the country in "Man and Superman," and which I referred to at the meeting of the Sociological Society in the words quoted by Dr. Saleeby as expressing what he calls "a literally hateful conception of fatherhood." The overwhelming social difficulty we are in at present is that the mere growth of population has produced political problems which are completely beyond the mental grasp of the human units who have to deal with these problems as voters. Dr. Saleeby may pour forth dozens of dithyrambs to fatherhood and motherhood and marriage and monogamy; but still he has to face the fact that marriage has not yet produced a capable citizen even for village purposes. Civilisation after civilisation has collapsed through this fundamental weakness; and there is every symptom that our civilisation is going to go the way of the others. I need not repeat here the reasoning which led me from this undeniable fundamental fact to the conclusion which so shocked Dr. Saleeby at the Sociological Society. All I need say is that before Dr. Saleeby can persuade me to sacrifice the future of human society to his maternalism he will have to tackle me with harder weapons than the indignant enthusiasm of a young man's mother-worship.

G. Bernard Shaw.

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The reference in Mr. Shaw's first reply to Kulin polygamy (not polygyny this time) reminds us of his letter on the subject which recently appeared in the "Times" (Oct. 5). In order to complete our record of the present discussion, we reprint the letter here in full:—

KULIN POLYGAMY.

To the Editor of "The Times."

Sir,—Will you allow me, as a subject of the British Empire, to join Sir George Birdwood in his protest against the gross insularity with which the subject of Kulin polygamy has been discussed in your columns since Sir Henry Cotton, by putting his denial of its existence in the form of a defence of Indian morality, assumed that the test of morality is simply conformity to English custom? In this all your correspondents except Sir George have followed him, the only difference being that his intentions were civil, and theirs openly offensive. To an Indian that can hardly weigh as a difference at all. If (to illustrate) an Indian paper were to publish a controversy between two Bengalis, one holding up the Archbishop of Canterbury to the execration of all pious Hindus as a Christian, and the other defending him as a man of far too high character to be tainted with the Christian superstition, the Archbishop would hardly feel much more obliged to his defender than to his assailant.

If the Empire is to be held together by anything better than armed force—and we have neither energy nor money enough to spare from our own affairs for that—we shall have to make up our minds to bring the institutions and social experiments of our fellow-subjects to a very much higher test than their conformity to the customs of Clapham. It is true that mere toleration for its own sake is out of the question: we are not going to tolerate suttee or human sacrifice on any terms from anybody, if we can help it. We are far too tolerant as it is, if not of other people's abominations and superstitions, at all events of our own, which are numerous and detestable enough in all conscience But before we begin to hurl such epithets as "revolting" and "abhorrent" at any customs of our Indian fellow-subjects, we had better consider carefully why we are shocked by them. Very few of us are trained to distinguish between the shock of unfamiliarity and genuine ethical shock. Kulin polygamy is unfamiliar: therefore it shocks us, and causes gentlemen of ordinary good breeding to use abusive and intemperate language in your columns. Under these circumstances, I, having ascertained that my opinion in this matter is representative enough to be of some importance, am emboldened to say that the institution of Kulin polygamy, as described by your correspondents, does not seem to me on the face of it an unreasonable one. Let me compare it with our marriage customs. We are told first that the Bengalis do not marry out of their caste. To them, therefore, the promiscuity which we profess must be "revolting" and "abhorrent"; but we have the ready and obvious defence that our promiscuity is only professed and not real, as our Deputy-Lieutenant class and our commercial traveller class, for instance, do not intermarry. Further, the Bengalis hold that it is part of the general purpose of things that women should bear children, and that childlessness is a misfortune and even a disgrace. It will not be disputed, I think, that this, under the surface, is as much an occidental as an oriental view. Again, the Bengalis attach great importance to their children being well-bred. So do we. On these points the only difference between India and England is that England holds her beliefs more loosely, less religiously, less thoughtfully, and is less disposed to let them stand in the way of pecuniary gain and social position.

How then do the parents of an English family, of the class corresponding to the Indian Brahman class, secure well-bred grandchildren for themselves and also for their nation? They use their social opportunities to put their daughters promiscuously in the way of young men of their own caste, in the hope that a marriage with some one or other will be the result Frequently it is not the result: the daughter becomes an old maid, one of the wasted mothers of a nation, which, as Mr. Sidney Webb and Professor Karl Pearson have warned us, is perishing for want of well-bred children. Even when chance is favourable, and the daughter finds a husband, she often refuses to become a mother because her religious and social training has taught her to regard motherhood as a department of original sin, and to glory, not in the possession of children, but of a husband; so that the childless woman despises the mother who has no husband.

What does the Bengali father do under the same circumstances according to Sir Henry Prinsep? He selects a picked man—a Brahman, representing the highest degree of culture and character in his class; and he pays him £700 to enable his daughter to become the mother of a well-bred child.

Now this may strike the parochial Englishman as unusual or, as he would put it, "revolting," "abhorrent," and so forth; but it is certainly not unreasonable and not inhuman. Far from being obviously calculated to degrade the race, it is, on the face of it, aimed at improving it. Sir George Birdwood has just told us in your columns that the Kulin "happen, for the most part, to be of fine physique." Sir George has no doubt also noticed that the products of our system happen, for the most part, not to be of fine physique. Is it quite clear that this is mere happening? Is it not rather what one would expect under the circumstances? And is the practice of taking deliberate steps to produce and reproduce men of fine physique really revolting and abhorrent to our British conscience as distinguished from our British prejudice?

Let us, however, do justice to our system, indefensible as it is in many respects. It secures what most men want: that is, a sharing out of the women among the men so that every Jack shall have his Jill, and the able men and attractive women shall not accumulate partners and leave mediocrity unprovided. If this were the end of public policy in the matter, and if the race might safely take its chance of degeneracy provided monogamy, even on the hardest conditions, were maintained, there would be nothing more to be said. But as the whole Imperial problem before us is fundamentally nothing else than to produce more capable political units than our present system breeds—in short, to breed the Superman—this is not a time to rail at experiments made by people who are not under the harrow of our prejudices, or to persist in calling the customs founded on those prejudices by question-begging names such as purity, chastity, propriety, and so forth, and to speak of a Brahman who is the father of a hundred children as a libertine with a hundred wives. Any man of thirty may have a hundred children without having a wife at all, and still be positively ascetic in his temperance compared with an average respectable and faithful British husband of the same age. And if the hundred children "happen, for the most part, to be of fine physique," the nation will be more powerful and prosperous in the next generation than if these hundred children were replaced by a hundred others of indifferent physique, each having a different father, promiscuously picked up in a Clapham drawing-room.

A system which limits the fertility of its men of fine physique to the child-bearing capacity of one woman, and wastes the lives of thousands of first-rate maiden ladies in barrenness because they like to own their own houses and manage their own affairs without being saddled with a second-rate or tenth-rate man, must not take its own merits for granted. It may be the right system; it may be bound up with all that is best in our national life and fortunate in our national history; it may be all that our stupidest people unanimously claim for it. But then again it may not. The evidence on the other side is weighty; and the population question is pressing hard on us. The case must be argued, not assumed; and the final verdict will be that of history and not of our modern suburban villas with no nurseries.

Yours truly, G. Bernard Shaw.

Lord Curzon on Problems of Empire.

It was perhaps fitting that Lord Curzon of Kedleston should have chosen Birmingham, "almost the central altar of British democracy," for the occasion of an impassioned address concerning the glories and duties of Empire. With picturesque and lofty eloquence, he expatiated upon the grandeur of the modern spirit of Imperialism, involving, as it does, the firm belief that "the British Empire represented no mere fortuitous concourse of atoms, but was a preordained dispensation, intended to be a source of strength and discipline to ourselves and of moral and material blessing to others." As an ex-Viceroy of distinction, Lord Curzon is no doubt fully entitled to summon our thoughts from the "sordid controversies and the sometimes depressing gloom of our insular existence," and to bid us "look forth into the larger fields of Empire, where duty still calls and an illimitable horizon opens." His speech, singularly virile and well sustained, was marred by a solitary error of taste which contemned the present Cabinet of insular Radicalism as repudiating the fundamental conception of Empire—a remark which was evidently intended for local consumption. The Imperialism of the future must concern itself, he continued, with the problem of unifying and consolidating the framework of British dominion. It demanded as a precedent condition compulsory military training, the substitution of Tariff Reform for our present obsolete fiscal arrangements, and for Imperial matters some form of Advisory Imperial Council.

Divested of their rhetorical garb, such sentiments in these latter days appear pathetically familiar and threadbare. Lord Curzon is reckoning without the modern spirit: he has not come back to the same England that he left. For fourteen years the Unionist Party have been preaching this doctrine, and the nation has ignominiously rejected them; and we warn all whom it may concern that pious aspirations and insubstantial dreams will no longer serve. Our quarrel with current Imperialism is not with its ideals but with its methods. A federation of British-speaking races united in the bond of common tongue and common aspiration is an ideal of which no party can claim the monopoly. Our Imperialists are well aware, much as they repudiate the idea, that the actual bonds uniting the Empire are those of capital and finance; that the exploitation of the Home Country is at last so complete as to demand a continually extended area of further possible exploitation. This is the real basis of current Imperialism: we must devour or be devoured. This is the genuine motive underlying the demand for increased armaments, for compulsory military training and naval supremacy; and it is precisely these trade relations which our sentimental commercialists fondly suppose will unite the world in the bonds of peace that are threatening Europe and the East with the prospect of continual war.

Other reasons there are in addition why we have always affirmed, and shall continue to affirm, that the only Imperialism worthy of the name is destined to be achieved by means of Socialism, and why we are working for it. Imperialism can exist only under the régime of a highly-developed civilisation, and England at present is not civilised. Can Lord Curzon declare with any truth, for instance, that the prosperity of the Mother Country is such that he would wish to see the conditions prevailing here reproduced elsewhere? If he cannot, does he suppose that the institution of Tariff Reform, compulsory military training, or Advisory Imperial Councils will appreciably diminish the evils that decimate our poorer population like a scourge? In a casual reference to Socialism, as being unable to solve our Imperial problems "because its attention was arbitrarily concentrated upon social and domestic issues," Lord Curzon has unwittingly exposed the radical weakness and inadequacy of Imperialism itself. Social and domestic issues have in the past been so criminally neglected by our statesmen that they must absorb the entire energies of every patriotic party for years to come. As a matter of fact, with a few negligible exceptions, our countrymen have no country to be proud of: it is not in any sense theirs: they are compelled to pay rent to a stranger before they are allowed to exist in it at all; the very bread they eat is only vouchsafed to them on the condition that a stranger is able to make a profit out of their labour. With so little wisdom are our affairs controlled that the producers of the nation, the real creators of wealth, are never certain that their subsistence will be assured to them a month in advance; we have an ominous army of unemployed, co-existing with a still more desperate army working sixteen hours a day for a penny an hour. And it is because we are condemned to stand helplessly by and watch this loathsome degeneration of British men and women that we demand that Imperialism, like charity, shall begin at home.

The British people, as Mr. Shaw so wisely insists, never have suffered, and are not suffering now, from lack of ideals: they are suffering chiefly from lack of sufficient food. It is for this reason that the Socialists are concerning themselves first of all with such unromantic questions as Unemployment, a Minimum Wage, and Old Age Pensions. They desire to see first a civilised and prosperous population at home before directing their gaze, as Lord Curzon would have them, upon the ends of the earth. An illimitable horizon opens here also, and the first and most pressing duty of all patriots is to set their hand to the regeneration of Britain itself. For to attempt to erect a stable Empire upon a foundation of proletarian wage-slavery is but to emulate the procedure of the Scriptural fool who built his house upon the sand.

Wages Boards and the Railways.

Two or three significant facts have come to light during the last few days which make us fear that the recent conciliation effected by Mr. Lloyd-George and the railway industry is likely to prove quite as bad as we expected. It has been announced that two of the great railway companies are to amalgamate, and it has been rumoured that women clerks are to be employed in place of men in the London electric railways. Neither of these facts, apart from their topical context, is of any very great importance. We all knew that the railway companies, while ostensibly competing, and thereby, as we are told, showering blessings on industry, were practically combined into a monopoly. We also know that in every other sphere men are being displaced by women wherever practicable, and their appearance in the railway industry was therefore only a question of time. What gives both these facts significance, however, is that they should come so soon, so very soon, after the conciliation between the railways and their men.

We are told that a Wages Board such as that established by Mr. Lloyd-George in the railway world is sure to be effective in raising wages: first, because such Boards have raised wages in Victoria and elsewhere, and, second, because it is inconceivable that wages should fall below their present level on the railways. In reply, it was urged that the Victoria Wages Boards have more than once proved abortive, that they have emphatically not suppressed sweating, and that in place of the Minimum Wage, the highest wage paid was fixed by the standard of the "reputable employer," who might, as Mr. Pease pointed out, be unable to pay a living wage at all. Again, it was urged that in the case of the English railways, it was possible that new and lower grades would be established as an escape from the expense involved in the present grades. And it is precisely this latter forecast that seems to be on the eve of fulfilment by the substitution of women for men in the booking offices.

We repeat that Wages Boards are fortunately an experiment outside party dispute; but we repeat that they are an experiment to be watched by Socialists with extremely jealous care. We may be quite sure that if they afford loopholes for escape from the responsibility of providing a living wage, and not merely a wage favourable to dividends, the railway companies will find that loophole. We may even be glad that the rail-

ways will find it, since we shall be compelled to modify, abolish, or strengthen the machinery already set up.

But just as these two facts on which we have commented do not stand alone, so the question of Wages Boards does not stand alone. On its isolated merits a Wages Board may seem a useful enough device for regulating wages without strikes; but progress towards Socialism does not consist merely of getting rid of the necessity for strikes. We can conceive many modes of averting strikes—some favourable and others unfavourable to Socialism in general. The mere avoidance of strikes may be extremely comforting to investors, but the method employed must be considered by genuine reformers. Even supposing that Wages Boards avert strikes—which is more than can be claimed for them—the question still remains: Do Wages Boards favour the economic revolution demanded by Socialists?

Again, as another of the contextual facts, we have to consider the general position of Trade Unionism in England. One comment on the recent conciliation was the placing by the Railwaymen's Association of a resolution in favour of Railway Nationalisation on the agenda of the Labour Conference. Another was the adoption of Mr. Holmes as Parliamentary Labour candidate at West Hull. Still another is afforded by the "Railway Review" of this week in its note: "We are surely shifting the ground of battle from the industrial arena to the political one." Is there any doubt after such facts that the question of Wages Boards is inseparable from the general Trade Union problem and its concomitant problems of political and economic change? To argue as if Trade Unions to-day are the Trade Unions of yesterday is mere political blindness. An entirely new spirit has begun to move; and what the Fabian Executive named the men's "wildest dreams" are no longer anything more than the pale phantoms of an almost forgotten yesterday.

Of two things we are convinced. First, that Wages Boards, whether after the Victorian or New Zealand model, are, if not useless, at least almost useless unless supplemented by a Minimum Living Wage below which no conciliation shall be permitted to go; and, secondly, that the future of Trade Unionism is not in the region of petty industrial changes, effected after enormous labour, heralded by Liberal trumpets and issuing at best in microscopic ameliorations of the existing wage slavery; but in the political arena, alongside the Socialist pioneers whose aim is to raise the condition of the humblest worker in England above the present precarious level of mere existence.

We therefore beg all advocates of Wages Boards to reconsider their ground, to look well before they leap with the Liberal Party into a principle which, so far as we can see, is unable to abolish sweating, unable to secure a Living Wage; and, in addition, diverts the mind of Trade Unionism from its true political and economic path.

We had just written the above when the reports of Mr. Richard Bell's speech at Willesden on Sunday were put into our hands. The Liberal papers, we observe, have been ominously silent on the main point of Mr. Bell's address, namely, his confession that the railwaymen "were being gulled" by the directors in the matter of nominations. His speech confirms our worst fears, and we now boldly repeat what we said when the terms were originally published: "Of the three parties to the dispute, the railwaymen have come off worst." If this is to be the effect of a Wages Board some revolutionary changes in its mechanism will be needed.

An Agricultural Policy for Socialists.

English politics become more interesting and more rational every day. It seems really possible that in a hundred years or so the members of our Parliament will be attending to affairs of national importance instead of wasting their time and our money in looking after the exclusive interests of a few rich landlords and manufacturers and Stock Exchange adventurers. The latest symptom of sanity is the proposal for an independent Agricultural Party in the House of Commons. Such was the recommendation passed last week in the Central Chamber of Agriculture by an overwhelming majority. It is interesting to note that the mover of this resolution was the same gentleman who, some three months ago at a local farmers' club, made various pertinent comments on the relations between landlord and tenants, concluding with the general statement that (I quote from the "Times" of September 23) "he thought it time that the tenant farmers stood up and showed that they had a little backbone. He himself was prepared to risk everything, and he would again tell Sir A. Acland-Hood, much as he loved him, that if the tenant farmers of the country were to be coerced by land agents, he (Mr. Kidner) would want his representative in Parliament to put a question there." The unfortunate member thus addressed, with a sublime unconsciousness of the humour of the situation, replied that "his position was one of difficulty . . . he really thought in the interests and harmony of the club that it would be advisable if they did not continue the discussion further." Here we have the germs of a most interesting political and social development, which apparently is going to mature with considerable rapidity; for, as stated above, this same tenant farmer who is "prepared to risk everything," has carried before the most important agricultural audience in this country a resolution calling for the formation of a new political party to express his views. That looks like real business. It would seem that the farmers have learnt the lesson which the Labour Party learned ten years ago, namely, that if you want changes in the law you must go to Parliament. Now, the Press has very quickly pointed out that this proposed agricultural party is foredoomed to fail; but it gives, as one might expect, altogether the wrong reason for this conclusion. It assumes that the party will fail because the interests of the farmers will clash with the interests of the labourers; but that is a trivial element in the problem. I imagine that it has been very deliberately put forward in the hope that the real clash of interests will get overlooked. There cannot be an agricultural party because the interests of the landlords, who will endeavour to control it, clash with the welfare of every man, be he tenant or ploughman, who puts an hour's work into the fields. There may be a temporary antagonism between the farmer and his labourer; but it is not altogether fair to throw the whole blame on the farmer. He pays his men miserable wages, and works them for excessive hours; but is that altogether to be wondered at when a financial hawk in the guise of a landlord is continually hovering on the chance of seizing a higher rent out of any surplus that remains to the farmer above a minimum of working expenses? Only 12 per cent. of the cultivated land of this country is owned by the cultivator; in other words, 88 out of every hundred acres are under the control of men who can demand from the worker a price for the use of a natural monopoly without any necessity for giving anything in return for that rent. When the agriculturalists get to business, it will clearly be seen that the farmers' fundamental enemy is the landlord. All that the farmer can hope of relief must come from concessions by this landlord; the labourers have nothing to give, because they are beaten down to the last farthing already.

Now there is another party in the English Parliament which has already discovered that the landlords are remnants of an earlier stage of civilisation, and must be abolished. On this primary point in their programmes, therefore, the Socialist Labour Party and the Agricultural Party, if it intelligently arrives, will be linked by common interests. But I think that this is by no means the only bond. I am unable to conceive of a complete Socialist State in England which does not have at its very foundation a thriving rural population. I cannot even imagine a tolerably safe England whose food supply depends on the chances of a half dozen torpedoes during a naval battle. I cannot imagine a sane England entirely shutting itself up in unhealthy factories or stifling mines, and submissively making cotton goods or digging coal for wiser people who prefer to live in the sun. On every side it seems imperative that Socialists should make the success of agriculture one of their chief concerns, on the grounds

of happiness, healthiness, and national safety. Now, it will be instructive to consider wherein, if at all, the Socialist agricultural policy would conflict with the best interests of the new party with which we are threatened. I confess at once that a difficulty arises; it is not altogether clear what the English Socialists' agricultural programme is. It is especially to be regretted that the Labour Party, for example, could not have met the Small Holdings Act of last session with a more constructive criticism than rather placid acceptance. It may be a useful Act so far as it goes, but it is such an insignificant step in the eyes of a Socialist. It was the Liberals' idea of rural reform, not ours.

The first thing that would occur to a Socialist Cabinet would be that the root of sound agriculture is the real education of both the overseeing farmers and the field workers. It is perfectly obvious that such does not exist in this country; in agricultural education, cattle-rearing excepted, we are the laughing-stock of the world. The first step, then, would be the granting of large sums from the Treasury to stimulate the County Council colleges and schools. By this method the charge would not be thrown on the ratepayers, for, in the understanding of a Socialist, a Treasury grant is to be raised out of a progressive income-tax levied almost entirely on the larger income. Probably the quickest method of advancing agricultural education would be to retain the Crown agricultural lands (71,000 acres in extent) under the direct control of the Board of Agriculture, instead of letting them to tenants, making of each estate (these lands are scattered over 22 counties) a model farm, worked on the latest scientific principles, and an example for the whole county to follow. These Crown land farms could feed the Army and Navy, the public hospitals, the prisons, and the Poor Law establishments at cost price. That would be indirectly a relief to the ratepayers, again throwing the ultimate cost on the large income. The advantage of an energetically administered system of agricultural education is obviously all for the good of the farmers. They are beaten in the market by Danish butter and French eggs, and in the vegetable and fruit trade, largely because the Englishman neither knows the best mode of production nor the latest co-operative method of distribution. Again, take the case of milk farming. At the present time the milk supplied, instead of being one of the most valuable of our foods, is one of our most serious national dangers. It would be the early business of a Socialist Government to assist the farmer to produce pure milk, to teach him the principles of hygiene and the economy of co-operative effort. The farmer would have a vastly extended market, inasmuch as he would have a cheaper and a sounder article to offer. But my space is filled, and I have scarcely begun to discuss what the Socialist agricultural policy would be. It is not, indeed, a fit subject for this treatment; for it is the most comprehensive of all our national concerns. There are still more persons employed in the work of tilling the land than there are in any one of our great industries. It is urgent that Socialists should realise this. Of one thing I am certain. Our policy, when it is formulated, will be one great gain for the tenant-farmer, if it be for no other reason than that we are going to take an idle landlord off his back.

G. R. S. TAYLOR.

Charles Dickens as a Socialist.

By Edwin Pugh.

Part I. *Chapter III.*

The Dark Years of His Boyhood.

III.

Affliction falls never so heavily and crushingly as when it falls on those who have hitherto known nothing of the inner meaning of suffering. On them it falls with a deadening effect of utter and irrevocable doom from which there seems to be no hope of escape, and in which there is not the least possibility of mitigation. (We have seen how even the child Dickens had that feeling; but for him, of course, there was a providential City of Refuge through the portals of his imagination.) It is not until we have learned to recognise that comfort and consolation are from within; and that man is a creature ultimately dependent not on material things for a means of joy and contentment, but on the causes that spring from his own heart: it is not until then that we are fit to face the more tragic issues that threaten the least and the greatest of us, with any likelihood of emerging triumphant from the conflict with them: the better and the nobler for the purifying and annealing process. The pain and sorrow that afflict those of us who have not yet appreciated how vast is the sum of pain and sorrow which racks the world, and to which the sum of happiness is only as the small piece of leaven that leavens the whole lump, are far more likely to narrow and restrict the bounds of our sympathy than to extend them. Thus it is well that we should be at some pains to acquaint ourselves with the lives of our less fortunate fellows whilst there is yet time, lest the hour fall when we ourselves shall be plunged into the outer darkness without having first enlightened our souls with understanding. And thus it was well for Dickens (and incidentally for us) that he should have touched life at so many points, also.

The dreary, weary days spent in the blacking factory near Hungerford Stairs: "a crazy, tumble-down, old house abutting on the river, and literally overrun with rats"; his monotonous hourly task, which was "to cover the pots of paste-blacking, first with a piece of oil-paper and then with a piece of blue paper, to tie them round with a string, and then to clip the paper close and neat all round until it looked as smart as a pot of ointment from an apothecary's shop . . . then to paste on each a printed label"; his long, tiresome journeys to and from the lodgings in Gower Street, where his mother and sisters were temporarily installed, pending the father's release from prison, and afterwards his walks to and from the Borough, involving the pathetic confession: "I was so young and childish, and so little qualified—how could I be otherwise?—to undertake the whole charge of my existence that in going to Hungerford Stairs of a morning I could not resist the stale pastry put out at half-price on trays at the confectioners' doors in Tottenham Court Road, and I often spent in that way the money I should have kept for dinner"; the lonely meals bought at some cheap, unsavoury shop, a saveloy and a penny loaf, an occasional fourpenny plate of beef, sometimes a plate of bread and cheese and a glass of beer partaken of in some frowsy public-house; the sad Sundays spent in the Marshalsea, and the secret shame of his connection with that debtors' prison as revealed in the following passage: "Bob Fagin was very good to me on the occasion of a bad attack of my old disorder . . . I got better and quite easy towards evening; but Bob (who was much bigger and older than I) did not like the idea of my going home alone, and took me under his protection. I was too proud to let him know about the prison, and after several efforts to get rid of him, to all of which Bob Fagin in his goodness was deaf, shook hands with him on the steps of a house near Southwark Bridge, on the Surrey side, making believe that I lived there"; and then the inevitable humorous touch: "As a finishing piece of reality in case of his looking back, I knocked at the door, I recollect, and asked, when the woman opened it, if that was Mr. Robert Fagin's house"; the hungry, aimless wanderings in Covent Garden Market to kill time when his belly and his pockets alike were empty; and arising out of it all this, the vindication of his superiority to the conditions that surrounded him: "But I held some station in the blacking warehouse, too . . . I knew from the first that if I could not do my work as well as any of the rest I could not hold myself above slight and contempt. I soon became at least as expeditious and skilful with my hands as either of the other boys. Though perfectly familiar with them, my conduct and manners were different enough from theirs to place a space between us. They and the men always spoke of me as 'the young gentleman'"; all these early and unwonted experiences had a transcendent value in the making of a Socialist out of the man and famous novelist, Charles Dickens, which it would not be easy to over-estimate; and, lightly as they are passed over here, it would be altogether impossible to omit.

(To be continued.)

Ibsen's Women.

No. 5. Rita Allmers.

As men and women go through life facts that have been symbols, almost without meaning to them, gain a deeper and deeper significance. "Little Eyolf" was written towards the close of Ibsen's career, and we find in it all the profound under-currents of family life treated with the clear insight of the fully ripened intellect. To the superficial playgoer the problem between the husband and wife seems strained and unnatural; any inexperienced person would have thought that having lost their only child the obvious course would have been to consider the possibility of becoming parents a second time, but it is the whole point of the play that Alfred Allmers never even thinks of such a possibility: Ibsen is quite right when he brings out the all-absorbing mystery that men and women cannot and will not be guided by logical reasoning.

Rita is a great lady owning land and gold; she is also tall and fair, entrancingly beautiful and ardent. She and her husband have been married ten years and had never been apart for twenty-four hours until Alfred started on his seven weeks' tramp on the mountains. Alfred, on the other hand, has a deep affection for his half-sister; he has married Rita for her beauty and her money, but always with the thought of providing for Asta. The impression given to the audience is simply that he is wearied of matrimony and longs for solitude and even death. But on carefully reading the play one discovers a far deeper cause for his wandering, groping state of mind. For years he has tried to relieve the boredom of too much affection by teaching his little crippled son and by composing a work on "Human Responsibility." When he goes out on the mountains he is brought face to face with the appalling truths that his ideas are all second-hand, that he has no first-hand knowledge of even the preliminary stage of the metamorphoses of the spirit, and that he is not a servant of the public "whose law is duty, whose aim is service, whose watchword is responsibility." When he finds this out he does not see how he can cure his sense of shame until the idea strikes him that he will renounce the hope of being an author and live out his responsibility for his crippled child.

He comes home so full of the idea of saving himself from despair by a metamorphosis of spirit that he takes no notice of his beautiful, ardent wife; whose desire to possess him entirely, heart and mind and body, has been intensified by his absence. His love is of the kind which men feel in their hearts to be unclean; the feeling, in themselves, which makes them contemptuous of a woman's love when it is openly manifested. Her love is intense and absorbing enough to give her no spontaneous consciousness of selfishness. She is, as far as she can tell, absolutely devoted to her husband; she has given him leisure and luxury, and in return she demands that he shall love her in her way.

When the dramatic crash comes at the end of the first act and little Eyolf is drowned, Alfred sentimentalises with Asta and is irritated beyond endurance by Rita's attempts at reconciliation. The second crash comes when he learns that Asta, on whom he had relied for pure sisterly tenderness, is not his sister at all, and that she also feels a passionate attachment for him. Then he indeed feels the earth clutching at him from all sides, and in his passion for the sea and sky he longs for the utter solitude of mountains, where he can rejoice in the peace and luxury of death.

Towards the end of the play Rita is in despair over her failure as wife and mother; suddenly the screams of children being beaten by drunken fathers and the sounds of women shrieking for help in the hovels on her estate come to her as a revelation. In an instant she flings aside all her old-fashioned ideas, all her old prejudices. She sees her course plainly. Her own home-life has been nothing but a cloak for intemperate sensuality. Down there among the hovels, human lives are being wasted and ruined in order to keep up the wretched mockery of home. She will take all those little children away from their unworthy parents, she will give them good food and clean clothing, she will love them more than she ever loved her own child, the poor little interloper that separated her from her husband, and she will see that the children on her own estate at least have the chance of growing up in health and vigour, with strong bones and pure blood in their veins. She sees clearly that human life is valuable in itself, and that no ideal of home ought to be allowed to prevent us from insisting that the children of the poor shall at least be clean and well-nourished, whatever their parents may be. She had known the unspeakable pain of bearing a child, and she had seen the vision of the "great open eyes" of her child looking up at her through the deep water; and they pierced her heart as they revealed to her that sad hopelessness of the children that are not wanted. Now she knows that her grief shall be fruitful at last. She will do all she can to ennoble the children for whom she makes herself responsible; she knows the uselessness of second-hand ideas. She has no grand educational schemes for stuffing children with trash, but she will feed them so that they may have brains to think with and limbs to work with when the time comes.

Her mission, the noblest that a woman could undertake, is to disclose the real nature of the fetish of home; for she sees that it often demoralises the happy and depraves the miserable. Her husband joins with her gladly in the work, and he looks her straight in the eyes as he says his aim and her aim are alike directed towards the topmost peaks of human possibility. The last word of the play is her thanks to him for his understanding.

The whole power of ignorance is organised against any real social progress. The home used to be only a harmless indulgence; a means for securing the average man the woman of his choice against the fascination of the more dangerous men who are above or below the average. But now the home is no longer a harmless indulgence. We are told that the children of the poor must not be given food and clothing at the public expense because the parents must be taught their duty to the home, and not allowed to spend their incomes in drink and self-indulgence. I would like to know how a generation of healthy children can possibly be reared on an income of a guinea a week for a family of six people. That means exactly sixpence a day for each person for food, clothing, shelter, insurance, amusement, travelling. This is a respectable average for a working man's wage, but a low average for his family.

People who talk glibly about economy among the working classes should try for a little while to see what kind of a life they could lead themselves on such an income, when rents are at 7s. 6d. for two unfurnished rooms in a slum. It seems to me not in the least surprising that the poor give up this and darker problems and spend their sixpence a day on beer to drown the thought of their wretched existence. The physical degeneracy of the poor and the self-indulgent is so terrible at the present time that it is above all important that if money and devotion are to be spent on anything they should be spent in ways that will ensure the health of the rising generation. A system of insurance among prostitutes in order that they need not be driven by starvation to practise their profession when they are out of health is one remedy that has been suggested; another is that the money that is spent on prisons and lunatic asylums should be spent upon the prevention rather than the punishment of crime and imbecility.

But such remedies, merely because they are founded on logical common sense, will never be carried out until passionate women like Rita Allmers, feeling their own motherhood is a failure, stand shoulder to shoulder and say: "We know the sorrow of women in childbirth, and we refuse to bear the waste of that sorrow any longer. The State asks us for children, but we reply that only when the children that have been born already are valued will we do our share in bringing more children into the world." Rita Allmers looked at the straight limbs of the little street urchins, and saw that if they were fed and clothed properly their chance was quite as good as that of her own child, accidentally crippled as he was.

Florence Farr.

The Congo Reform Association and Mr. Belloc.

Mr. Morel Replies to Mr. Belloc.

TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE."

Sirs,—I have never read anything more contemptible or cowardly than Mr. Belloc's attack upon the Congo Reform Association, or upon me, which I suppose it is really meant to be. For nearly four years the Congo Reform Association has been in the full glare of publicity. Men of the highest standing and integrity have lent their names to it, helped it, and worked for it; among them colleagues of Mr. Belloc in the House of Commons, from whom, had he applied for it, he could doubtless have received all the information he required to remove the suspicions which have been generated in his charitable soul.

The names of the Association's Executive, officers, and principal supporters, the names of the committee and officers of its various branches throughout the country, have been repeatedly published, and sent to the Press, and are forwarded to anyone desirous of joining the Association (Annex A). The Association issues every month an official organ, which is forwarded (inter alia) to all the principal newspapers in the country, and which contains a full account of the Association's work, and the general progress of the movement (Annexes B, C, and D). The Association has not published a financial statement because, in the opinion of its Executive, it was undesirable to disclose the slenderness of the resources with which it was fighting a King, who is also a multi-millionaire, with great vested interests behind him. But every subscriber and donor has received a copy of the attached summary of account (Annex E), which shows that a good deal can be accomplished on very little. This summary is not for publication, but at the present stage in the growth of the movement I think I may take upon myself to say here (*vide* Annex E) that the Association's TOTAL income from January 25, 1904, the date of its inception, to December, 1907 (three years and nine months) has amounted to £4,647, of which £150 odd has been obtained (*vide* Annex E) from the sale of pamphlets, etc., gratuitously written by myself on behalf of the Association. Of this gigantic sum, more than one-half has been received from the Friends! I may add that this total includes donations received from the various auxiliaries recently formed in different parts of the country (Annex A), each of which manages its own finances in complete independence.

Mr. Belloc's thinly veiled personal insinuations compel me much against my will to deal with the personal equation. A sketch of my own commonplace history and antecedents can be found in "*The World*" of December 4, 1906, and a brief reference to the part I have played in the movement can be read on pages eight and nine of "Red Rubber" (T. Fisher Unwin) and in the Preface to "King Leopold's Rule in Africa" (Heinemann). The formation of the Association was my own idea, with the object of combining the various forces which had been independently striving to bring about a better state of affairs in the Congo and of appealing to the world on one sole issue from a common platform, divorced from differences of politics, creed, or class. The "necessarily very large sums of money for starting this Congo Reform business," to quote Mr. Belloc's elegant expression, amounted to £100, which was supplied by a personal friend of mine, as poor as myself, and a third of which I was able to return to him, or rather to offer to return to him, for he would not accept it. The work involved has been enormous, and the greater part has inevitably devolved upon myself. The Association has never paid me a penny, and when, after some eighteen months of its existence, the Executive Committee pressed me to accept a salary, I declined, not because I could afford to decline it, but because I did not wish that it should ever be insinuated that I had started the Association in order to put money into my own pocket, whatever the amount of the work I might have performed for it. All this and a good deal more could have been ascertained by this Parliamentary Paul Pry if he had had the common decency, before launching his innuendoes, to consult three of the most prominent men associated with me during the first two years of the Association's existence, two of whom are now in the Government, and the third is Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons, viz., Earl Beauchamp (our first president), Mr. Herbert Samuel, and Mr. Alfred Emmott; while Lord Monkswell, our actual president, could no doubt have furnished him with information of a similar character concerning the Association and myself during the latter period of its existence, for the three gentlemen I have named were compelled to retire owing to their new positions. As a matter of fact, this Association has been conducted as probably no Association of the kind has ever been conducted, or ever will be. Not only have its officers done their work for nothing, but they have sacrificed time, money, leisure, and prospects on behalf of the cause they have undertaken. Men, either nationally or locally well known and respected, have flung themselves into the fight with an unselfishness rare in these days. Lord Monkswell spends half his time addressing public meetings, travelling at his own expense; John Harris and his wife, abandoning their missionary work, are wearing themselves out speaking almost every night all over the country; in Newcastle, Dr. Thomas Hodgkin, Councillor Robert Bowran, and Mr. Charles Diamond; in Plymouth, Alderman John Y. Woollcombe; in Liverpool, Alexander Guthrie and Councillor Arthur Black; in Bournemouth, Mr. Ralph Smythe; in Bristol, Mr. Robert Dickie; in Stroud, Mr. Morton Ball and Mr. Henry A. Blanch—to mention but a few names, are devoting themselves to this work.

And what have they to gain by it? What have any of us to gain by it? We are making this effort to save a helpless race from slavery of the most abominable kind, to free a people that will never know, that can never thank us or reward us. We do not pretend to be doing any more than what is the duty of every decent man who knows the facts; but there is a type of mean mind, of bitter ungenerous critic, so constituted as to assume *à priori* that any movement of this kind must necessarily be inspired by unworthy motives, so constituted as to be incapable of crediting his fellowmen with generous instincts. Mr. Belloc seems to me to be a perfect specimen of that class.

For the rest, I am not going to reply to Mr. Belloc's absurd questions on the general subject of Congo misrule. My two books, the Reports of His Majesty's Consular Staff, the Report of King Leopold's Commission of Enquiry, the evidence given month by month in the official organ of the Congo Reform Association, the Appeal to the Nation, recently issued, signed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the President of the Free Church Councils, by Catholic and Protestant Peers, Liberal, Conservative, and Labour Members of Parliament, etc., the action of Convocation, the action of the Free Church Councils, some 60 towns' meetings, hundreds, if not thousands, of other meetings all over the country, the debates in both Houses of Parliament, the utterances of the present and late Foreign Ministers—these are before the country, and they suffice. I will, however, conclude with these remarks. Those who cannot see further into this scandal than cruelties upon natives, who talk about the dangers of sentiment in politics, and sneer at what they dub an atrocity campaign are either lacking in intelligence or good faith. The indictment of Belgian, or more justly Leopoldian, rule in the Congo is not based upon atrocities, which are merely the outcome of a given condition of affairs; but upon the central claim set up by the Congo Administration, a claim which covers all its actions, directs its entire policy and activities, and renders the whole catalogue of its abominations fatal and inevitable. Stated in a single sentence, this claim is that the elements of commercial intercourse (that is, the produce of the soil) belong to the Administration qûa Administration, or to the Administration's financial partners, the concessionnaires, and not to the natives. The exercise of this claim is the great atrocity of European rule in the Congo. It is the most monstrous invasion of human rights anywhere recorded, and it has led to the enslave-

ment and to the extermination of an enormous number of human beings. Its existence is a menace to Africa, and a disgrace to Europe; and its perpetuation under the Belgian flag would imperil European peace.

Your obedient servant,

E. D. Morel,
Hon. Secretary and Member of Executive Committee, Congo Reform Association.

[Mr. Morel encloses the Annexes referred to, and we shall in due course take an opportunity of discussing the subject.—Eds. New Age.]

The Minimum Wage.

By Edward Carpenter.

A Paper read at the Conference on Sweated Industries, at Glasgow, 12th October, 1907.

The subject of the Minimum Wage has been very widely considered in various aspects and from various points of view; and I do not propose now to go into the general question. There is evidently a growing public opinion in favour of the constitution of Wages Boards and the establishment of some kind of legal minimum; and doubtless something will be done in that direction. There will be difficulties, of course, in drafting regulations, and there will be drawbacks to their operation, but these are things we must expect in any such case. I am now only desirous to establish a point which has, I think, not been sufficiently insisted on; and which will, I hope, remove one class of prejudice against, or objection to, the proposal.

It is generally tacitly assumed that a legal Minimum, by raising wages in low classes of labour, will handicap the employer, make the realising of a profit more difficult, and generally place a strain upon him, which latter, of course, he may overcome, but which will nevertheless remain a strain. I want to point out that in many respects this is the reverse of what will happen. And I believe that quite a few employers are beginning to realise that this is so, and therefore are favourable to a legal enactment—though no doubt the majority still are opposed to it.

The case in reality is very simple. Every one knows that the employer to-day has a most anxious time. The dread of competition, the continual fluctuations of prices, the fear of being undersold in the market, haunt him. He has no certain foundation for his business. He is like a man standing or working on boggy ground, with no firm footing anywhere. At any moment a competitor may undersell him; and one of the commonest causes of such underselling is the employment of cheap labour. Here are three manufacturers, say, in some particular branch of industry, all fairly equal with one another, and all going along fairly well. Then, all at once, a fourth comes in, with sweated labour, undersells the others, and breaks up the trade. Painful fluctuations and disturbances set in, prices come down, ruinous alike to employers and employed; and ultimately perhaps the former, even against their own wish, are forced to adopt the wage-cutting devices of their new competitor.

Now we must contend that to rule out or prevent this operation by fixing a minimum below which the wage shall *not* go, is a benefit, not only to the employed, but to the employers themselves. It gives them at last some firm ground beneath their feet. It takes away one large cause of doubt and risk and uncertainty; and simplifies greatly for them the problem which they are handling.

Imagine 10 or 12 men—a sight you may often see in large ironworks—standing round in a circle and holding a heavy iron plate, which they have to handle and perhaps pass on to some machine; and imagine the ground on which those men stand to be partly big boulders and partly mud. You will appreciate at once the dangers and difficulty of their work. At one moment the plate will be tilted in this direction, throwing an unbearable weight on one man; at another moment it will be tilted in that. No man will have certain footing or be able to use his strength properly. Now suppose them all to step up 6 inches on to a solid and level stone pavement. It may be a slight exertion to get there, but once there, the whole conditions will be different. The work will be carried on with a certainty, an ease, and an economy of labour, out of all comparison with what existed before. Somewhat corresponding will be the advantages to employers when by the fixation of a minimum wage the financial ground beneath their feet shall have been made comparatively solid, and the conditions so far equal for all.

Trade Unions, of course, have already done something of the kind in the higher grades of industry; and I believe that many employers are quite ready to admit that their action has been helpful. The Unions have, in fact, secured their trades to some degree against ruinous fluctuations. It is only necessary to imagine for a moment the effect of the total disappearance of the Unions—say in the Lancashire Cotton trade—to realise that such a disappearance would mean, widespread confusion—the pushing in of new competitors with cheap or sweated labour, the bankruptcy of old employers, and endless disturbance and chaos in a great industry.

The truth is that, within limits, it does not matter to an Employer if wages *are* high, provided all other employers have to pay equally high. It may matter to the *Public*, of course (who may have to pay a higher price for the article), but not to the Employer. We come, therefore, now to the question of the interest of the Public.

That the absence of a Minimum Wage (whether that minimum be obtained by Trade Unions or by Wages Boards) may mean a cheapening of price to the public, must of course be admitted. But, at this time of day, I think no one will say that that *in itself* constitutes a sufficient reason. We all feel that any such gain to the Public might be very ill secured by the degradation and misery of a large body of workers. And in the case of the so-called Sweated Industries—with which we are specially dealing—there are reasons for supposing that the enhancement in price (due to the minimum regulation) would be almost imperceptible. In these industries wages often bear such a very small ratio to cost of materials, profits, salaries of superintendence, etc., that a rise of wages need make but little difference in the price of the article.

Take the case of shirts that are "made"* at from 8d. to 1s. a dozen—say, one shirt made for 1d. That shirt is sold for 2s. Doubtless in some cases for more. Suppose the woman's wage *doubled*, so that she will get 2d. instead of 1d. Her week's wage will in consequence rise from, say, 7s. to 14s.—which latter, though a poor enough wage, will be positive affluence to her. The price of the shirt, other things remaining the same, will rise 1d. The shirt, therefore, would cost 2s. 1d. instead of 2s. Can we suppose that it would be hard on the public to ask them to pay 2s. 1d. for the shirt, in order that a whole class of miserable workers should be redeemed to better conditions?—or can we suppose that the demand for shirts would be diminished by this extra charge? The more probable result of it all, of course, would be that the 2s. price would remain as before, and that the employer would accept a slightly reduced profit.

Nor must we forget a thing, which is constantly being overlooked when these questions of better wages are being discussed, namely, that markets, instead of being ruined by better wages, are greatly stimulated thereby—for to-day Political Economy is beginning to see, much more clearly than of old, that markets and trade rest on the well-being of the mass of the peoples—that is, on the mass-wages. Whatever, therefore, cripples wages and the welfare of the masses necessarily cripples trade and the markets. Into such a general question of Political Economy, however—interesting as it might be to discuss—we must not go now.

(To be concluded.)

* The term "making" does not include cutting out, sewing on buttons, and making buttonholes, but it includes practically everything else.

Driving Capital Out of the Country.

By G. Bernard Shaw.

VII.

The Economics of Globe Trotting.

From the point of view of the parasitic proletariat the emigration of our proprietary classes would be an unmixed misfortune. Not only would their prey escape them; but their desperation would be aggravated by the knowledge that foreign parasites were profiting by the loss. Under the present system, they have already more than enough of this kind of irritation. For example, an immense capital is sunk in the construction of a trap for pleasure seekers on the South coast of England, called Brighton. Another trap of the same kind is constructed on the south coast of Europe, called Nice, with a subsidiary trap called Monte Carlo. The result is that the richer pleasure seekers break through the Brighton trap and push on to Nice. Parasitic Brighton is naturally furious. Its capital is depreciated or annihilated: every year it has to cater for a poorer class: already it can hardly hold its head higher than Margate, where the air is better. There is no consolation for the Brighton hotel-keeper in Tariff Reform: what he wants is that the out-going tourist be forcibly stopped at our ports and compelled to enjoy himself on his own shores. But here he comes into conflict with that powerful section of the parasitic proletariat which makes motor cars and sleeping cars, and has its hotels for birds of passage on the great routes that lead to Nice. Thus, whilst the parasitic proletariat of Brighton strives to keep the rich at home, another equally powerful section is trying to drive the rich abroad; and as the rich, always seeking exclusiveness—that is, always running away from the poor (small blame to them), and then finding that they want to run away from themselves—tend strongly to do the most expensive thing, and to avoid boredom by globe-trotting, they go abroad more and more, and are plundered by foreigners instead of by their own countrymen. Note how little is said about the enormous export of income that takes place in this way. It is no doubt to some extent compensated by the money spent in England by Americans on their way to the Continent; but it is none the less a dead loss to this country, involving the production and export of commodities which are consumed abroad by foreigners who send us absolutely nothing in return except their own relatively few and frugal travellers.

All along the great railway routes, you hear the echoes of the complaint of the deserted Brighton hotel-keeper. When I first visited Pisa, it was a place at which a stoppage on the journey to Rome was so convenient that even people who had seen the leaning tower and the Campo Santo half a dozen times were to be found passing the night at the Pisan hotels. When I was last there the best hotel was half empty, and the proprietor gave me a piece of his mind, which I shall not readily forget, on the subject of the fast through trains, with refreshment cars and sleeping cars, in which travellers pass from Calais or Ostend to Rome without breaking the journey. It is the same everywhere. Each successful trap to catch our rich ruins some other trap, just as Kensington and Hampstead ruined Soho and Bloomsbury.

It will be replied at once that Bloomsbury and Soho are not ruined. True; and for the matter of that, neither is Brighton, and neither will England be when Socialism has ruined every idler in it. But the parasitic industries of the neighbourhood have been ruined. The sort of people who used to live in Golden Square and Soho Square hardly know at present where these spots are: new industries and new classes of workers have replaced the old business and retinue of fashion; and this process did not accomplish itself without ruining a good many individuals. The price we pay for our Unsocialism is that progress acts destructively. An improvement does not relieve the people who worked the old method: it ruins them. The railway ruined the stage-coach: the motor car is ruining the railway: the flying machine will no doubt ruin the motor-car. It is part of the defence of Unsocialism that its continual threat of poverty gives men an incentive to snatch livelihoods from one another; so that, as the invention of new processes is the only honest means of doing this, Unsocialism stimulates invention. That being so, Unsocialism must not bring forward the ruin of any particular class of capitalists as an objection to Socialism. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. The motor cab capitalist is ruining the old-fashioned cabman without remorse; and when his turn comes to be ruined by the aeroplane, he need not hope that we will remain on the ground for his sake. And similarly, if the Unsocialists, who ruin whole classes and neighbourhoods by the introduction of new methods and new machines, imagine that the Socialists will stop because certain classes fear to find their occupation (or no occupation) gone, and certain forms of fixed capital scrapped, they show very little knowledge of human nature. Their own defence in such cases is that though individuals are ruined, the country as a whole is benefited. The Socialists have the same plea to offer. Suppose Socialism does ruin the region just north of Piccadilly exactly as plutocracy ruined the once fashionable region north of the Strand and Fleet Street! What of that? Are not these regions more productive than ever? Was not their ruin an economy from the national point of view—even from the metropolitan point of view?

Besides, the ruin was not necessary in the nature of things. It was necessary only in the nature of competitive capitalism. Mere displacement of an industry, or improvement in its methods, has no terrors for the workers in a socialised industry. In the army, when the Snider rifle scrapped the Enfield, when the Martini scrapped the Snider, when the Lee-Metford scrapped the Martini, no soldier or officer was ruined. Woolwich arsenal was none the worse when the Woolwich Infant was discarded. A private telephone company may ruin a private telegraph company, a private wireless telegraph company may ruin a private cable company; and these disasters may spread through the cash nexus and ruin insurance companies and banks in widespread calamity; but nobody in the postal service is a penny the worse for all this; and nobody out of it would be if the whole business—telephones, cables, wireless and all—were in the same public hands instead of in half a dozen private competing ones. On the contrary, everybody would be the better; for the time saved and the labour spared by the new methods would be shared by everybody instead of, as at present, going to create a new set of idlers.

To-day, one sometimes wonders whether the inventor of the power loom ever hesitated when he thought (if he ever did think) of the thousands of handloom weavers whom he was condemning to starvation; whether the linotype might not make its way faster if it were not so much more humane to wait until all the old compositors are dead; whether the man who first foresaw what an enormous boon the combination of Atlantic steamships and British North and South Western Railways would be, also foresaw the slow starvation of dozens of little coast towns with their tiny harbours, their petty fleets of trading schooners, their populations of skippers and marine store dealers. Aberystwyth, for instance, is to-day a fairly prosperous watering place and a university town; but there were long years during which it was only a decaying port not knowing what was happening to it except that work was mysteriously going and poverty mysteriously coming. On this side of Unsocialism its friends do not dwell. They tell us always of the fortunes drawn in their sordid lottery, not of the fortunes lost in it. They tell us of how So-and-so helped himself to riches, not of how he helped Thingumbob to bankruptcy. They urge the nation not to keep all its eggs in one basket lest the first fall should smash them. They forget that a policy of separate baskets does not involve a policy of separate owners, and that a still surer plan is to make your basket too big to be dropped, and to have too many eggs in it for any shock to smash.

They forget also that one of the greatest economic advantages of living in society is that men can pool their risks and avoid ruinous losses by that form of Socialism which we call insurance. No doubt there are objections to insurance. It gives people an inducement to burn their houses and commit suicide and murder. But as a matter of practical experience it is not found that these inducements prevail except with people already in desperate circumstances. The man who burns his insured premises is either a criminal or is at his wits' end for money. The people who murder their children for the insurance money—a thing quite extensively done, apparently, by the British parent—are so abominably poor that their children die in heaps anyhow. They could not insure at all but for the fact that so many of them have to let their policies lapse from inability to pay the premiums punctually, such lapses being what the companies really gamble in. In reasonably comfortable circumstances the only desire the normal man has concerning insurance is that the event against which he has insured may be put off as long as possible, or, better still, never occur. On the whole, that form of society which provides most completely for insurance of all practicable kinds has an enormous advantage over forms which not only involve bankruptcy at every forward step in industrial methods, but actually depend on these risks for their motive power. Socialism scores heavily against Unsocialism on this point. And when the Unsocialists plead that Socialism may ruin them, we can only reply that it is like their impudence to imply that their own system gives them half as much security.

We see now that such ruin to individuals as may be produced by the transition from Unsocialism to Socialism is not worse, to say the least, than would be produced by the decay of neighbourhoods and the introduction of new methods under the existing system. And there would be immense compensations. In my next article I shall give some idea of how they will occur.

(To be continued.)

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

Human Bullets. By Tadayoshi Sakurai. (Constable and Co. 5s. net.)

In a few days we shall be all revelling in Christian sayings; all swearing to forgive others and forget ourselves. But for the moment we must be allowed a little of common humanity. We cannot forego the delight of picturing the Anglo-Hebrew Jingo proprietors of largest and biggest circulations taking part, not in pheasant battues with kings, but in an attack with a Japanese Forlorn Hope. Imagine Lord Burnham, instead of ladling out soup to weary war veterans, leading his warriors through a ravine, marching "over such a tremendous number of the wounded that it took us some time to reach the end of this long line. Their groaning, hard breathing, suffering, pain was pitiful." "No stretcher nor medicine chest could be brought there. The dead and wounded men, piled one upon another in nooks and corners, some groaning with pain, some crying for help. We hardly found space to walk without stepping on them. It was an infernal tunnel of the dead and dying." . . . ." We jumped over or stepped on the heaped-up corpses, and went on holding our noses. A sad groaning came from the wounded who were buried under the dead."

Through this ravine filled with wriggling wounded men the lieutenant and his company had to pass three times. A few days later, in the assault on the Northern Fortress and Wang-Tai Hill, he was wounded, first in the arm, and immediately afterwards the right leg was shattered by a shell. Relief was out of the question. There he lay within a few yards of the enemy surrounded by the dead and dying. Unable to move and without a weapon to commit "honourable" suicide, he vainly begged a wounded soldier to kill him so that he might avoid the disgrace of being made a prisoner. Presently the Japanese shells commenced to burst over the heads of the fallen, small fragments injuring the lieutenant's wounded limbs. "Legs, hands, and necks were cut into black fragments and scattered about." The Russians caught hold of him, but believing him already dead, he was neither moved nor bayonetted, as were others around him.

It has been my lot to know something of war, to help bear the mangled, writhing bodies from the field of slaughter, to find, in forgotten ditch, some living being with maggot-begrown wounds, to help repair these shattered limbs. These are not the experiences that make us at all in love with the soldier's stupid calling. Stupid because the soldier is not a free man, but is acting under the influence of suggestion; the dupe of blessed words and fine phrases. Lieutenant Sakurai's modest and realistic story brings out very well the hypnotic influence to which he and the Japanese armies were all unconsciously submitted. Throughout there breathes the fighting spirit of one who feels the "bones crackle and the blood boil up" as soon as mobilisation was announced. The officers and men were all too willing to be used as human bullets, and the commanders obviously took advantage of this spirit; they had no compunction in sacrificing thousands of lives in fruitless assaults on the most strongly entrenched positions. East Kikuan was the objective for the regiments in which the lieutenant served; it was during the first assault that he was wounded. Similar or even more horrible scenes were repeated in the many subsequent assaults that were made. Port Arthur did not surrender until some months later.

There is a graphic description of the national enthusiasm at the war's outbreak; men who were rejected for service committed suicide. "For ten years we had been waiting and preparing for a chance of chastening the unjust." "Through the abundant grace of Heaven and the illustrious virtue of His Majesty, the Imperial forces defeated the great enemy both on land and sea." Blasphemy is quite a universal sentiment. The Japanese (a primitive people untouched by civilisation) fought so well because they were led to believe they were combating for something on which their hearts were set. Privation, thirst, disease, wounds, death itself were welcome could they but triumph. The Russian soldier belonged to a more advanced, although less well educated, type of civilisation. He could not work up an enthusiasm for a land which he saw was unnecessary to his welfare. His heart was with his own people, from whom he had been dragged, in the villages he had left, the essential occupation he had abandoned. Hence corruption, bribery, cowardice, and common sense. At least if they did not see clearly through the whole sham, the Russian army had vague intuitions, half emotional stirrings and hints as to the gigantic folly of the pitiful business. Perish the Russian Empire, but let me remain two-legged! This is human and intelligible.

Lieutenant Sakurai is a young barbarian, and I like him all the better for speaking quite ungenerously of the foe. After the fight at Waitu-Shan he exclaims, "How cleverly and quickly they scamper away!" After the battle of Taipo-Shan, "our hearts involuntarily hated our opponents, who we wished had yielded to us more easily, but who resisted us to their utmost—and butchered our men from their secure trenches, thrusting out their guns from the holes." There are, of course, the usual charges about the abuse of spies and flags, the shooting of wounded men, and so on. If true, it must be remembered that the Russian soldier was not out for glory, but fought under compulsion. No wonder if he felt indignant with the Japanese, who seemed to be enjoying the struggle for its own sake. Not unamusing is the lieutenant's anger with the Chinese "natives," who "know only the value of gold and silver, and do not think of national or international interests. It has never occurred to them to try to think why it was that Japan and Russia were fighting on their farms; they were only anxious to make good the damage done to their farms and crops." Base Chinese natives, stupid Koreans, who only wanted to be let alone—a plague on both your houses they exclaimed. Perhaps the Japanese will also be looking nearer home. The rise of Socialism—but no! I cordially recommend this story of Japanese efficiency in the field as a Christmas gift to the sons and daughters of Imperialistic Socialists and to members of the Fabian nursery. M. D. Eder.

REVIEWS.

Society, Sin, and the Saviour. By Father Bernard Vaughan. (Kegan Paul and Co. 5s.)

A thing of sound and fury, signifying much. All the hidden cruelty, the savage lusts, the empty bigotry of all priesthoods are here displayed pandering to our so readily evoked barbarian instincts. The Father revels as he recites the scene of flagellation; the shedding of blood arouses his oratory; the pound of flesh must be had in the scene of the crucifixion. Mayfair flocked to the Church of the Immaculate Conception when its morbid, erotic passions could be gratified. If modern civilisation forbids these fetish worshippers to be delighted witnesses of public scourgings or of the minutio monachi, at all events their dormant appetites can be stimulated by dramatic, or melodramatic, recitals of bloodshed.

Psychiatrists know, indeed, that among the sickly such recitals are often more stimulating than the actual sight of these horrors. Mental pathologists understand the meaning of the crowds that flocked to hear Father Vaughan exclaiming: "I will not have done with this picture of Jesus Christ, all broken and bruised from the soles of His feet to the top of His head, lying half dead, white and ruddy in a stream of blood . . ." Sermon after sermon is defaced by pictures of physical torture; there is small doubt as to the type of person to whom these things appeal.

Father Vaughan suggests that we are living in the after-glow of Christianity; he believes the present is the worst period in the history of our country, and he refers to a golden age fifty years ago when "the statement of a City merchant was his bond." Fifty years ago! Yes! it was a golden age—for City merchants. The Children's Employment Commission was then revealing to a scandalised nation the tortures these honest merchants inflicted on the babies upon whose labour in mill and mine these honest merchants battened.

Ignorance of recent English history is paralleled by forgetfulness of some rather elementary Christian teachings. Socialism is reproached for its "anti-militarism, and what I must call its anti-patriotism . . ." "Where there is lack of patriotism, there you will look in vain for loyalty." We are left wondering if Father Vaughan has ever read Matthew v. Christ did most zealously expound doctrines—of Human Equality, of Non-Resistance, of the Mystery of Justice—which to some to-day appear fanciful, but shall a Catholic priest repudiate them then?

And what shall we say of the one positive remedy indicated? "Can it be otherwise than criminal to allow the alien into our household that he may snatch the bread from our poor brothers and sisters?" We expect this wilful ignorance of our social diseases on political platforms, but the pulpit might at least be silent if it is too lazy to study the causation of, and the remedies for, sweated industries. Nor would a little generosity of feeling have here been amiss: refugees from French Catholic institutions have just found a shelter in this country, and these aliens are running establishments which do labour under some suspicion of sweating.

We cannot believe that Father Vaughan is sufficiently naïve to dream for one sermon that mere thunderings at the luxury, the vulgarity, and the selfishness of Society will prevent the waste of a single coin in Mayfair. The Churches have been alternately fawning upon and scolding at the wealthy for many a century. The results are patent. It is well for mankind that the Catholic peoples are more understanding, more heroic, and more generous than their priests. Under Christianity there arose the cruellest systems of human slavery recorded by history—physical slavery this was. The Church still seeks to impose a greater tyranny: "Think the mind of the Church, do the bidding of the Church, promote the interests of the Church, and you will abide now and for evermore in the love of God . . . For you nothing else really matters." Father Vaughan's mind, Father Vaughan's bidding, is it?

We hold no brief for Science, but we know that Father Vaughan cannot make good his statement: "We welcome true knowledge, no matter from what source it comes." We would but remind him, for example, of the not quite forgettable judgment against Galileo; we would but utter that name of magical syllables, Giordano Bruno. We are not especially interested in the Higher Criticism, in the rejection of trivialities like the Resurrection. The Church, for its own ends, destroyed practically all the Gospels, and thereby probably prevented for all time our understanding of one of the world's greatest mystics.

Essays in Socialism. By E. Belfort Bax. (Grant Richards. 6d. net.)

In doing us the service of re-publishing in a cheap and convenient form these twenty-six essays, Mr. Belfort Bax offers them as hints and suggestions rather than as dogmas for the Socialist Movement. As hints and suggestions the essays are of first-rate importance, and if, as often happens, the suggestions we receive set us on the opposite road to Mr. Bax, doubtless his object will be equally attained. For we may frankly say that while on ninety-nine points we cordially agree with the author, in the hundredth we disagree so violently that we half regret our forced agreement on the rest. Mr. Belfort Bax, like so many modern Europeans, is an out-and-out anti-feminist of such extreme prejudice and, it must also be confessed, of such extreme virility, that his views deserve to be met with the strongest attack. Unfortunately, no woman writer known to us is capable of meeting him on the ground he has selected; since blind prejudice, even when entrenched behind indubitable facts, is quite impregnable. We do not propose to defend the Feminist Movement at this moment against Mr. Bax, but merely note that the subject is so much on his mind that three whole essays, peppered with quite feminine italics, are needed to cleanse his bosom of the perilous stuff.

For the rest, we are glad to see the new essay, "Socialism: What It Is and What It Is Not." Mr. Bax is a convinced opponent of that hopeless form of Socialism which would limit all its meaning to plain economics.

> It may be convenient (he says) for Socialists with a view to election expediency to seek to confine the definition of Socialism to the economic issue abstracted from all the other issues of life and conduct. But the attempt to limit the term Socialism within the four walls of an economic definition is, in the long run, futile. . . . The conviction that Socialism involves a complete revolution in all departments of human life, and that though beginning with the economic change it does not end there, is ineradicable alike with friend and foe, because founded in the nature of things. . . . It is no use, then, pretending that while the economic structure of society is undergoing a fundamental revolution, other aspects of social life are to remain unscattered.

That is a view with which we agree. Moreover, it is a view which badly needs expression. Nothing strikes us as more feeble than the attitude of Socialists who go about decrying the public discussion by Socialists of Love and Religion, while all the time hailing with effusion the discussion of these subjects by anybody else. We may, too, be quite sure, as Mr. Bax is, that we shall be compelled to discuss them if only in self-defence. Mr. Bax boldly plunges into the taboo subjects. In an essay on "Early Christianity and Modern Socialism," he compares and contrasts the two great movements; in another admirable chapter he

The cold weather beverage
Rowntree's Elect Cocoa

relates "The Natural History of the Nonconformist Conscience"; in another he examines the meaning of Democracy, and declares that Socialism must overthrow Democracy as well as Aristocracy; in short, he exercises his freedom as a thinker to express his ideas, policy or no policy. The book is a stimulating sixpennyworth.

South African Poetry and Verse. Edited by Edward Heath Crouch. (Walter Scott. 3s. 6d.)
"I Heard a Child Singing." By Veronica Mason. (Mathews. 1s. net.)
Spring in London. By E. A. (Smith Elder. 2s. net.)

It is invidious in Mr. Crouch to give the title of Poetry and Verse to this collection. Verse would have been quite enough, for with possibly one exception, none of the compositions attain to poetry. Curiously enough, the exception is by a man still remembered in South Africa as a social reformer of the Old Radical type—Thomas Pringle, who died in 1834, and was the "Father of South African Poetry." The poem is "The Emigrant's Farewell," beginning with the familiar lines:—

> Our native land—our native vale—
> A long and last adieu.

Father as he is declared to be, we suspect a good many crossings in the breed since his day. Many of the verses in this collection are weak imitations of such distinguished poets as Mr. G. R. Sims. Scots ballads have formed a better model, and we can even (after a dose of Sims and water) appreciate a South African echo of Macaulay's Lays. Of anything distinctive there is, however, no trace unless we include scraps of Kaffir as in F. C. Slater's "Lullaby Song," with its mystic refrain:—

> Lala, lala, 'mtwana wam;
> Lala, 'sana lwam."

Otherwise the thought is quite ordinary and the language only too intelligible. For example, the "Thoughts suggested by a Little Shell at Cove Rock" are remarkably like the thoughts suggested to any young and rather pious person by a little shell at Brighton, or anywhere else. A shell on a mantel-shelf would do equally well. Mr. Price's "pale diaphanous wonder of the dawn" suggests the Lincolnshire fens quite as much as the illimitable veldt. On the other hand, there is nothing of the reputed "colonial" spirit in the book. With occasional breaks, the stream of verse flows on in South Africa as in England now, tamely and sweetly. This collection, nevertheless, is interesting and not without merit.

We understand that Veronica Mason "heard a Child Singing" in Tasmania. Strange, again, that, except for native words, children's songs are alike all over the Empire. Elkin Mathew prints the little songs so well that the reader is predisposed to regard them as poetry. Only a succession of verses such as this could undo the printer's spell:—

> Good-bye, sweet Day, Good-bye!
> So happy you and I
> Have been through all your pleasant stay,
> But now you gently go
> Across the World, I know,
> Etc., etc.

There is, however, one pretty picture new to the English child:—

> High up, along the clear blue sky
> Black cockatoos come sweeping by.

Those black cockatoos are worth a shilling.

"E. A." has not only an ontology, but, if we read him right, a scheme of metaphysical reform. Good, only why not express it in prose? Lucretius, it is true, wrote a poem on the nature of things; but E. A. is not Lucretius, or even a modern type of that mode of thought. We might almost say of him what he says of a greater Him; the quotation, in fact, will serve several purposes:—

> Or haply from the fierce primordial glow
> Of worlds [words] in being, through the urge and flow,
> His spirit, labouring to express the plan,
> Which through far æons was to end in Man,
> Drew forth from matter forms . . . .
> . . . . born to pass away.

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Hazell's Annual, 1908. (Hodder and Stoughton. 3s. 6d. net.)

We will not go so far as to say with the publishers that Hazell's is "the one book of reference indispensable for everyone"; but without the shadow of doubt it is as indispensable as any other of the many annuals. In some respects it combines all the features of the rest, being a Topical Encyclopædia, an Annual Digest of Events, and a Statesman's Year Book rolled into one. We have tested its accuracy in matters known particularly to us, and on the whole it has borne the test very well. We shall have nothing to complain of if all the matter is as impartial and full as the sections on Labour and Socialism. It is remarkably up-to-date, too, there being several events recorded which occurred only in mid-October. This is a testimony to the efficiency of the Editor, Mr. W. Palmer. As, however, he has sent us a copy of the Annual, we cannot hold him guiltless for omitting THE NEW AGE from his list of Socialist papers. Our consolation is that he omits the "Clarion" as well.

Comrades. By Maxim Gorky. (Hodder and Stoughton. 6s.)

Maxim Gorky has grown fifty years older in the last decade. His creatures no longer dash their heads against brick walls in an impotent, blind fury, not even railing against an inexorable, unrecognised fate. There is work to be done in the world; men and women have been found able and willing to do it. Gorky is now the apostle of revolution, full of hope-compelling belief, as all must be who will fashion a new world. If here in this comfortable, soft England our hearts turn leaden on counting our scant changes, it is not because of capitalism, nor of the unemployed, nor of a harlot Press. Against these we can fight. But it is a decrepit England, an England fallen "to the dead cold damnation of disgrace." France, Hungary, Poland, Italy rebelled and evoked some responsive answers in our land. The mighty struggles, the sacrifices, the unceasing slaughter of the Russian people scarce provoke a comment. Nay, we protect our Indian frontier with the dead bodies of the Russian revolutionists.

"Comrades" is the development of a beautiful, simple soul. Pelagueya Nilovna is the wife of Michael, the best locksmith and strongest man in the village; she lived in the house silent always in anxious expectation of blows. The locksmith never spared her his favourite epithet "you dirty vermin." Life in the village went on in a monotonous regular routine. The factory whistle shrieked at its appointed intervals. The factory life absorbed the bodies and souls of the workers. "Meeting one another, they spoke about the factory and the machines, had their fling against the foreman." On holidays the men drank swiftly, and young people behaved just as "hands" do elsewhere. The father dies, leaving the mother with one son, Pavel, employed at the factory. Pavel becomes imbued with Socialistic ideas. He brings books home; his bearing to his mother is kind, but there is little intercourse between them. This went on for some two years, to the increasing concern of the mother. At last he explains that if the books were found he would be sent to prison. He tells his mother of his hopes, his views about the people. She understands nothing, but is all solicitous for his welfare; she finds him looking thin and ill. The house becomes a meeting-place for the revolutionists. The mother grows to love many of Pavel's comrades, even to look favourably upon their enthusiasms. "What queer people you are. All are your comrades—the Armenians and the Jews and the Austrians. You speak about all as of your friends; you grieve for all and you rejoice for all." Pavel strives to organise a strike—is sent to prison. Who shall now carry the revolutionary literature into the factory? Pelagueya, suddenly inspired, sees that this must be her work. She smuggled the papers into the factory when she carried in the dinners. Thus a new revolution was born. Pavel returned home, but remained, as ever, cold, dour, untouched by sentiment. There is not time for filial devotion nor for love-making with Sasha, the bright, blue-eyed yet stern and active revolutionist. Following a May Day demonstration, Pavel is again imprisoned. His mother now undertakes more extensive journeys to spread the light. She is a witness to a scene where the moujik Ryvin, afire with unconquerable melancholy rage, had been caught by the police. The chief calls on Nikita, a peasant, to give Ryvin a box on the ears. Nikita raises his hand. Ryvin exclaimed, "Now look, people, how the beasts choke you with your own hands." After this scene Nilovna is overcome by a feeling of impotence and loneliness, yet she loses neither heart nor head. Her sympathy, her devotion and simple love inspire all who come in contact with her. Her son and his friends are exiled to Siberia. Five hundred copies of her son's speech at the trial are ready for distribution. She insists upon carrying them. "She would have bestrewn the whole earth with the words of her son." At the station a spy detects her with the valise. Information is given to the police. The mother, knowing she is undone, throws the leaflets broadcast amongst the passengers. She is seized by the gendarmes. They beat her, catch her by the throat, and so choke her. "You poor, sorry creatures" are her last words. So ends the story of this common, illiterate woman of the people. There are others left who will continue the struggle.

All the characters in the book are direct and simply drawn. Russian dialogue, notoriously difficult to render into English, often appears rather barren and stilted, but even in a translation the story is full of charm and vigour.

The Little Burma Girl. By Mrs. Parsons. (2s. 6d. net. Methodist Publishing House. London.)

These are two rather charming books for very little children, illustrated by the author, amateurishly certainly, and yet with a poetic daintiness and humour that appeal very strongly to a child, who will not discern the curious early-Victorian sentimentality that hardly endears them to the adult mind. In "Sunshine's Garden," which is a pleasantly discursive series of natural history "talks," there is a quite delightful picture of the mouse conversing with the lizard among the bluebells, and the tom-tit's remarks about her own children and the frog's are clearly veracious. It is unfortunate the "Little Burma Girl" has so ugly a religious bias.

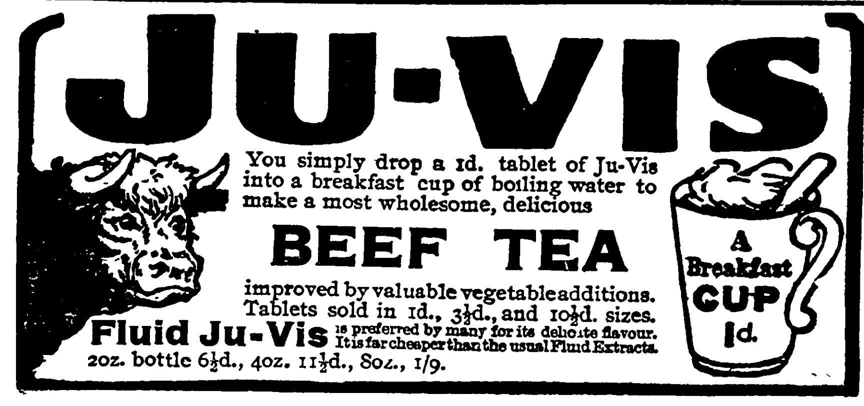
BOOKS RECEIVED.

"Lord of the World." By Robert Hugh Benson. (Pitman. 6s.)

"Growth of English Industry and Commerce in Modern Times." By W. Cunningham, D.D. 2 vols. (Cambridge University Press. Vol. 1, 10s. net; Vol. 2, 7s. 6d. net.)

"A Pocketful of Sixpences." By G. W. E. Russell. (E. Grant Richards. 7s. 6d. net.)

"The Christmas Book: Lest we Forget." By Cecil Heuland. E. Grant Richards, 1s. net.)



"The Claims of French Poetry." By J. C. Bailey. (Constable. 7s. 6d. net.)
"Human Bullets." By Tadayoshi Sakurai. (Constable. 5s. net.)
"The Literature of Roguery." By Frank W. Chandler. 2 vols. (Constable and Co. 12s. net.)
"The Curse of the Romanovs." By Angelo S. Rappoport. (Chatto and Windus. 16s. net.)
"The Magic Water." By Elise H. Delépine. (Bird. 3s. 6d. net.)
"Comrades." By Maxim Gorky. (Hodder and Stoughton. 6s.)
"The Wagnerian Romances." By Gertrude Hall. (Lane. 5s.)
"Sir Charles Wyndham." By Florence Teignmouth Shore. (Lane, 2s. 6d. net.)
"The Heart of Gambetta." By Francis Lane. (Lane. 7s. 6d. net.)
"The Uprising of the Many." By Charles Edward Russell. (Unwin. 5s. net.)
"I heard a Child Singing." By Veronica Mason. (Elkin Matthews. 1s. net.)
"Spring in London." By A. E. (Elder. 2s. net.)
"The New Ethics." By J. Howard Moore. (Ernest Bell. 3s. net)
"Alice's Adventures in Wonderland." Illustrated by W. H. Walker. (Lane. 1s. 6d. net.)
"The English Stage of To-day." By Mario Borsa. (Lane. 7s. 6d. net.)
"Railway Corporations as Public Servants." By Henry S. Haines. (Macmillan.)
"Where Men Decay—A Survey of Rural Conditions." By D. C. Pedder. (Fifield. 2s. 6d. net)
"Jesus in London." By E. Nesbit. (Fifield. 7d. net.)
"The Literary Man's Bible." By W. L. Courtney, M.A., LL.D. (Chapman and Hall. 10s. 6d. net.)
"The Glade in the Forest." By Stephen Gwynn. (Maunsel. 3s. 6d.)
"The Northern Iron." By George A. Birmingham. (Maunsel. 6s.)
"The Poems of Coleridge." "The Life of Stirling," by Thomas Carlyle. World's Classics. (Frowde. 1s. net.)
"History of Music in England." By Ernest Walker. (Frowde. 7s. 6d. net.)
"The Master Beast." By Horace W. G. Newte. (Rebman.)
"The Rosicrucians, their Rites and Mysteries." By Hargrave Jennings. (Routledge.)
"The Liberal Year Book for 1908." (Liberal Publication Dept. 1s. net.)
"The True Theology." By J. T. Freeth. (Allenson. 1s. 6d. net.)
"The Unpardonable Sin." By James Douglas. (Grant Richards. 6s.)
"The Reformer's Year Book, 1908." (4, Clements Inn, W.C. 1s.)
"Feeding the Wind." By Lewis Carroll. (Chatto and Windus. 1s. net.)
"The Táin—an Irish Epic told in English Prose." By Mary A. Hutton. (Maunsel. 10s. 6d. net.)
"The Man in the Moon." By William Nathan Stedman. (Watford.)
"Production: A Study in Economics." By P. H. Castberg. (Sonnenschein. 10s. 6d.)
"Cobwebs of Criticism." By Hall Caine. (Routledge. 1s. net.)
"Three Plays with Happy Endings." By St. John Hankin. (French. 3s. 6d. net.)
"Society, Sin and the Saviour." By Bernard Vaughan. (Kegan Paul. 5s.)
"Finn and his Companions." By Standish O'Grady. (Unwin. 1s.)
"A Book of Caricatures." By Max Beerbohm. (Methuen. 21s. net.)
"British Colonial Policy, 1754-1765." By G. L. Beer. (Macmillan.)
"Daily Mail Year Book, 1908." (Associated Newspapers, Ltd. 6d. net.)
"The Song of our Syrian Guest." By William Allen Knight. (Bird. 1s. 6d. net.)
"South African Poetry and Verse." By E. H. Crouch (Scott. 3s. 6d.)
"The Licensed Trade: an Independent Survey." By Edwin A. Pratt. (Murray. 1s. net.)
"Fourteen Years in Parliament." By A. S. T. Griffith-Boscawen. (Murray. 10s. 6d. net.)
"Canadian Constitutional Development." By H. E. Egerton and W. L. Grant. (Murray. 10s. 6d. net.)
"Human Justice for those at the Bottom · An Appeal to those at the Top." By C. C. Cotterill. (Smith, Elder. 2s. 6d. net.)
Reviews, etc.—Literary Digest (New York). Akademie (Prague). Board of Trade Labour Gazette. The New Quarterly. Hindustan Review. The International. Women's Industrial News. National Review. Parents' Review. Grand. Strand. Fry's. School. Albany.

DRAMA.

The Agitator.

At the Hicks Theatre Mr. Frohmann presents a new one-act play as a refresher to that spendthrift extravaganza "Brewster's Millions." And to add to the piquancy of the repast the curtain raiser gives us a glimpse of the hard conditions under which the workers are allowed the privileges of making profits for their masters and piling up millions to be squandered by their Brewster owners. The contrast is certainly interesting and ought to be theatrically effective, but the question remains as to whether "The Agitator" is a definite sign of change in things dramatic or merely an accident. Were "The Agitator" a play of genuinely Socialist character, the question would not need to be asked; as it is, however, one cannot be so positive. The scene of the play is certainly encouraging, being a room in a mean street, "Battersea way." The heroine, "Pickles," is the leader of a strike in a Jam and Pickle factory, the villain is the young boss of the firm, and sentimental relief is afforded by the nobility of a newspaper reporter. In construction the play is simple, opening in Pickles's room, with a meeting of girls swearing to go on to the death and progressing through an "interview" with the reporter to a final struggle of Pickles with the young boss. The interview with the reporter gives us Pickles's life history, how she has kept a home over the heads of her mother's nine children, when the mother became helpless, how she has one by one got the children 'sylumed into Orphanages, got her mother in a Home and a tombstone on her father's grave. This was very well done, and not a bit overstated. Pickles's language and sentiments, even the enjoyment of her father's funeral arrangements, were the genuine article. But, unfortunately, the reporter, when the other girls had gone, kissed Pickles's hand in farewell, and Pickles let him, like any stage lady that ever lived. Immediately after this one of the girls returns as a delegate from the others to say they can't go on. She begins well by saying she has "an awful sinkin' in my inside," but ends badly by declaiming that the strike can't last over "another dinner time." The first phrase may pass muster, although I have a sneaking medical impression that it refers to the feeling of dyspepsia and not of hunger; the second, in an environment where dinner is a problematical uncertainty, is too theatrical. Leaving Pickles stunned by this blow the delegate goes and the firm's foreman comes to ask her to throw up the sponge and, incidentally, marry him. This is, you will pardon the expression, a bit sloshy, and when, on his refusal and exit the young boss arrives with presents of flowers, cake and jam, one resigns oneself to theatricality. Pickles does, presumably; she staggers with weakness and looks ghastly, starving, but nevertheless she scorns the cake; and the idea of jam, quite rightly, since she knows how it is made, makes her feel sick. But no play at all is made with her hunger and the temptation of food. The renunciation of a piece of cake by a starving woman is at least as great a thing as the renunciation of love by a stage heroine. It deserves more earnest treatment and cannot be dismissed in a couple of words. It is possible when one is really starving—I quote from the experience of typhoid fever—to dream for a whole day and night of

the joys of one "quarter" of an orange and to weep tears of gratitude for the benefit of a spoonful of bread and milk. Mr. Bernard Shaw has treated the matter in the chocolate cream soldier episode in "Arms and the Man," so that one cannot help feeling that Mrs. Beringer has lost a big opportunity of enforcing the moral and adorning the tale. Despite these lapses the last scene between the boss and the girl gets in some good work in expressing rather crudely the opposition and class war of capital and labour. The young boss declaims against Pickles' assertion of her rights and tells her she is just his "slave," that the firm own the girls and that they must work for the wages and under the conditions they, the firm, dictate. Pickles stands up for her own and the girls' right and arraigns the brutality of the capitalist attitude in vigorous language. Melodramatically considered, this is excellent, but when one comes down to facts the lamentable conclusion faces one that capitalist bosses do not have these clear-cut class-war ideas, they are usually amiable Christian gentlemen "doing the best" under difficult circumstances. It is, indeed, practically impossible to imagine anyone outside the ranks of the S.D.F. making use of quite such violent language as the young boss indulges in; it is utterly impossible to imagine any young boss being such an ass as to give the game away by doing so to the leader of a strike. The boss's final complete capitulation is mere sentimental nonsense. It is this melodramatic cum sentimental tinge about the play that makes me hesitate in saying that it is a sign of definite change in things theatrical. Undoubtedly, it is a sign that dramatists and managers are waking up to a knowledge of the value of the motives of industrial conflict for stage purposes. But would the public stand, and would managers present, a play that gave the more cruelly human facts as they really are and not seen through melodramatic and sentimental spectacles? All of which is said without prejudice to the opinion that "The Agitator" is a gasp of relief in a weary dramatic world and an achievement on which Mrs. Beringer is to be heartily congratulated. The importance of the play is very much increased by the acting of Miss Marjorie Murray. Her sunken cheeks, her chloratic look, her nervous gestures and her unsteady walk made up a picture of distressing realism. Miss Murray made herself more the factory girl than I should have thought possible; except for the hand-kissing episode, which was, of course, dictated to her by the part, there was not a false note in the performance. Miss Murray was the factory girl who consults the doctor any day of the week and who tells him her story of long hours, bad food and low wages. Once more the dictum is justified that what the stage is waiting for is not the actor or actress, not the dramatist, but only the manager who shall have the courage to recognise the tendencies of the age and give both the chance to make their success.

L. Haden Guest.

ART.

Drawings by Mr. A. E. John, at the Carfax Gallery.

Before one can venture to write of this exhibition, there are certain preliminary questions to be answered. This is not surprising, for the atmosphere of the Carfax Gallery generally incites to philosophy and kindred amusements; whereas so many of its rivals are merely picture shows. But let us devote ourselves for a few moments to Mr. John. He has granted to the people at large the right to freely inspect his recent drawings; they are of varied kind, pen, pencil, and brush work. They are the most intimate moments of an artist's life; his vague impulses towards pictures, sketches of possible decorations, first ideas for portraits, and so on. Now, if you consider it for a moment, it is somewhat strange that an artist should thus take the public into his confidence. I could understand it if he called his professional brethren to his studio; if, with closed doors and under pledge of secrecy, he placed before them this extraordinary series of sketches which, I am sure, positively teem with points of technical interest. I can imagine him explaining to them what exactly he meant by that wash-drawing (18), entitled "Les Enchantées," a picture of two women, one of white flesh and one of a brick colour, clasping each other under a blue and green cloud, with mauve mountains in the distance, then either a valley or the sea, and symptoms of a bush in the foreground. I would give much current coin to be within that closed studio door and hear Mr. John's explanation. As it is, I am reduced to conjectures. It is possible that the artist has received a commission to illustrate a book in the manner of Blake. I firmly believe that is the truth; yet, on the other hand, there are persistent thoughts that behind the door they may be shrieking with laughter, and a twinge of imagination goes so far as to suggest the name of a well-known comic paper. Then, again, there are those studies for portraits of ladies (Nos. 28, 46, 62, 72, for example); "just my first idea of how to pose Miss X., or Mrs. A.," the explaining voice is saying . . . "Oh, Lord, yes, she has two eyes, but this is only the merest hint. You need not mention it to her." And then, further profitable technical talk. But what has all this to do with the public? I don't think it is fair to Miss X. to hang this study in a public place. She might see it; and I'm sure it does not do her justice. I am not at all sure it does Mr. John justice.

There is, surely, a sufficiently clear line between the finished art work and what is the merest preparation for it. If artists are willing to exhibit all the hasty, immature thoughts which flit through their brains on the way to the final result, there is certain to be an audience ready to crowd behind the scenes. But if we once begin this system of exhibiting the mental workshops of Art, where is it going to stop? Why not publish the first sketch of a play, a novel, a symphony? Some publisher might find the rough draft of the "Ode to the West Wind"; with the rhymes out of tune and the metre limping. Personally, I do not want to hear bad rhymes and metres, even if they are Shelley's. Someone did find Beethoven's notes for the third movement in the great C Minor; and anyone who wants to maintain that the sweetest melody ever written was a deed of sudden inspiration had better suppress those notes which are not great at all. Indeed, I can imagine this system going to outrageous lengths. Why should not the "Spectator" publish "Scraps from Mr. H. G. Wells's waste paper basket"? It would brighten the "Spectator," of course; but would it be fair to Mr. Wells, or to us? The "Daily Mail" might induce Mr. Hall Caine to give to the world his first vision of Glory Quayle, but one hesitates. Yes, this examination of workshop chips might easily become a morbid waste of time.

I hope Mr. John will forgive this long defence of his reputation. It is necessary, so that the public may understand that these studies and sketches are not the real end of his Art. Just to show what he can do when he pleases, Mr. John has sent that lovely pencil drawing of "Philomène" (74); consider the respectfulness of each line that he puts in the face and figure; there is no confusion, not one stroke too many. Then there are two others, (36) and (48), likewise restful and beautiful; and one can find finished ideas in (4) and a few others. But if there is rhyme or reason in that head of "Cleopatra" (41); or in that "Nude Girl holding a flower" (32), with a red blob for the flower, and four red streaks for the letter box, or the mountain, or the sideboard she is leaning against, then I have not discovered either the rhyme or the reason. But Mr. John is very well worth investigation on your own account.

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A CORRECTION.

TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE."

In fear that the readers of THE NEW AGE should think me utterly ungeographical, permit me to apologise for a misprint. There are no niggers in Siberia, and Siberians do not speak English. I meant the glorious unconquerable Republic of Liberia. GEORGE RAFFALOVICH.

* * *

THE ZULU CRISIS.

TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE."

With Dinuzulu "arrested" and a civil trial promised, it might be supposed that the Zulu crisis was at an end, but I fear it is not so.

I am not afraid of the native "rebellion," of which no evidence was ever produced, but of the continued existence of martial law, which may ultimately goad the natives into acts of violence.

Martial law means that no news except "official news" will be allowed to leak through, that any suspected native may be shot without proper investigation, that every act, whether private or public, of a white man will be subsequently "indemnified," while no act of a black man will be similarly treated.

Martial law is the abrogation of the British Constitution and of all the rights contained in it, and except under the most rigorous necessity it is a monstrous abuse of the powers delegated to a Colonial Government.

It is the business of the Imperial Government to insist that this abuse is removed at the earliest opportunity. It can do this constitutionally through the Governor of Natal. Meanwhile it should send out properly qualified persons to investigate the whole situation on the spot.

F. W. P. L.

* * *

THE EVOLUTIONISTS AND MR. BELLOC.

TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE."

Mr. Belloc referred to "evolutionary trash" in your issue of December 7. In the present issue, the evolutionists go for Mr. Belloc, like spry terriers after rats. One of them asks whether Mr. Belloc can improve on the evolutionist's conception of the "Cosmos, the All," "in a state of flux." Having had a pretty prolonged and intimate acquaintance with that "Cosmos," and "state of flux," and as Mr. Belloc may be too busy to reply, I would like to put in a word or two. If the evolutionist wants more information than it is practical to afford here, he will find it in the second chapter of my little book, "Did Christ Claim to be Son of God?" and more exhaustively, in my book, "The New Science of Causation."

The evolutionist predicates about a "Cosmos, or All." This, obviously, can be nothing but three classes of experiences: sensings, feelings, thoughts. Unless some agent knows *all* these experiences, there can obviously be no "Cosmos." The evolutionist implies that he is this knower, but stultifies the implication by ignoring himself and contemplating nothing but the experiences. So, he ignores the fundamental and vital truth that he, as knower, must cause to exist the "All, or Cosmos."

In writing that "men flounder on towards new conceptions," the evolutionist really flounders into the bog of confounding the conceptions with himself, as knowing them. He really implies that the conceptions, not the men, "flounder on": one lot of "conceptions," as it were, kicking out of the way another lot.

I cannot now enter into more detail. The only remedy for the evolutionist's present state is that he shall attain some A.B.C. knowledge of the metaphysic of causation. His present dealing, in your columns, with evolution warrants the definition applied to it by Mr. Belloc. When the evolutionist has so extended his outlook, it will be early enough for him to wax satirical at the expense of the "painted environment" of the Churches. There is plenty for him to do, at present, in rubbing off superfluous paint affording gaudy decoration to his own "environment."

H. CROFT HILLER.

* * *

FUTURE OF TRADE UNIONISM.

TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE."

While I am in general agreement with the attitude taken up in your paper, and especially with your criticism, and that of Mr. Taylor, of the Manifesto issued by the Fabian Society on the railway settlement, I am utterly unable to take your view with regard to strikes. Your view, and that of a great many English Socialists, seems to be that the strike should be superseded by the method of compulsory arbitration. Now I want to point out in the first place that it does not follow that because in a land which is comparatively so little developed, industrially speaking, as the Australian Colonies or New Zealand, where the class antagonism has not yet shown itself to any great extent, an institution has proved a success, that the same institution will do so in Great Britain. Who are the classes on whom you are going to rely to act impartially in a dispute between employers and employed? Are not these the very classes who are steeped to the eyes in all the phrases of the bourgeois economics? The men whose first thought is to secure to the employer his 10 per cent. profit? Is there such a thing as a really impartial authority on these points? I know of none.

It seems to me that while arbitration and conciliation are excellent so far as they render strikes less frequent, yet they owe their very efficiency to the fact that in the last resort the workers can always resort to the strike, that the worker can in other words remind the employers that he is an indispensable element in the industrial machinery; and it seems to me that the weakness of the English trade unions in recent years has largely been that the employers knew that they would never kick. Why, compare the fact that while the free-born English railwaymen were being treated as dirt by the English railway directors, the Austrian railway workers managed to force their will on the Austrian State Railways as well as on private companies—not by political action be it noted, but by direct action—in this case passive resistance. Not only that, but when they had virtually no political powers the Austrian miners were able to force a 10 hours law against the powerful coal barons, men with enormous economic and political power behind them, by the means of a strike.

It seems to me that the whole tendency of the English movement is to exaggerate the importance of the political movement and to ignore those elements of strength which lie in the hands of the worker as a producer and consumer. To secure the friendship of the intelligent or the professional classes the workers have to show them their economic power. The political movement will have so much the more power and efficiency the more it is backed up by a powerful economic movement outside Parliament.

In fact, much as I regret the exaggerations and fallacies of the syndicatist movement in France and Italy, I feel that it is so far justified, as it represents a reaction against the idea that we can win Socialism by Parliamentary methods alone—and both these countries are what may be called Parliamentary countries, it must be remembered—in fact, the suffrage in both countries is a great deal more democratic than in our own. And yet in both countries you see the organised workers turning (through their organisations) their backs on politics. And why? because they have been led to expect too much from politics alone.

JOHN B. ASKEW.

* * *

SOCIALISM AND SEX RELATIONS.

TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE."

The letter from Miss Farr reprinted by you some weeks ago from the "Spectator" contains a phrase which all Socialists should resent. It is intolerable that Miss Farr should have to apologize for terrifying Socialists and talk of having mercy on their susceptibilities. Before a middle class Socialist movement can be effective, it is certain that the snobbish attachment of the bourgeois to the smart set will have to be broken down, and I know nothing better than moral shock for the purpose. I defy Miss Farr to shock me, though I freely confess that she has often failed to convince me.

L. S. TAYLER.

* * *

FREE DISCUSSION.

TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE."

The letter of your correspondent "Attica" is absolutely amazing. I desire to congratulate THE NEW AGE on the publication of Mr. Ellis's most illuminating article, the tone of which I consider unimpeachable. All will surely agree, who believe that moral problems no less than others will gain in lucidity from the dry light of science, and who recognise in Mr Ellis not only a high-minded Socialist, but a scientific criminologist of the first order.

ANOTHER READER OF THE NEW AGE.
Trinity College, Oxford.

* * *

SOCIALISM AND THE LABOUR PARTY.

TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE"

THE NEW AGE seems mightily concerned about the election of Labour candidates; the last object of its love and devotion being Mr. Holmes, the defeated candidate for West Hull.

We are very generously informed that Mr. Holmes is not a professed Socialist, but what does that matter? Socialists must discharge their vast stores of energy in some direction, and why not in helping an anti-Socialist to win a seat? Why not?

Sirs, is not a Socialist one who believes in the public ownership of land and the machinery of production and distribution? If this is so, how can certain Socialists justify

their action in supporting a man who has frankly avowed himself not to be a Socialist, and who, if returned, would belong to a party that isn't Socialistic? Mr. Holmes not being a Socialist must necessarily be opposed to Socialism, else he wouldn't have contested the constituency as a candidate in favour of the perpetuation of our present crazy economic system. It is realised by many Socialists that the springing into existence of the Labour party has only added to the confusion, and that, instead of only two parties to cross swords with, they will in future have three. The Labour party's programme, if carried out to the letter, would be just as much an advance towards Socialism as being on top of the Manchester Town Hall is to be nearer the moon. The Labour party as a party do not accept the principles of Socialism or they would label themselves with a different ticket and refuse the admittance of anti-Socialists into their ranks.

The Labour party's policy is one of tinkering and patching up, leaving causes severely alone. In this respect they are not unlike the old parties, they, too, being anxious to bring about a few petty reforms. What is very urgently needed now is the formation of a real Socialist party calling itself by that name and working now and always for Socialism.

It is difficult to believe that a Socialist organ should find it necessary to point out to its readers why an anti-Socialist should receive the support of Socialists. I very confidently say that the views expressed in this letter represent the opinions of a good number of Socialists—in Manchester, at all events.

SOCIALIST.

* * *

THE IRISH MUDDLE.

TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE."

Plato's ideal commonwealth was to be built on a basis of slavery; the English Socialist ideal commonwealth (according to your contributor) will be based on a subject Irish democracy; subject, because it could never dispense with the control of the English democracy in majority.

Mr. Bernard Shaw, in the preface to "John Bull's Other Island," points out that the national question is keeping every other intellectual and social movement at a standstill in Ireland. The national question must first be settled. The recent Socialist Congress showed conclusively that the Socialism of the nearer future will consist of the central facts of common ownership modified in each case by national temperament and the peculiar forms of Capitalism and relics of Feudalism extant in each country. "The parliament of man, the federation of the world," is an ideal for Marxian and other Socialists to aspire to, but long before that we shall see the nations each with its characteristic form of Socialism; the national form of government is a more characteristic outcome of racial temperament than even the national art, music, or literature. Irish Socialism must develop on Irish lines: the English and Irish races are so radically different in temperament that their lines of development would differ largely. "However iniquitous the means by which the Act of Union was consummated, it has passed into history." This is either an obvious truism or an argument for retaining the Union. To test the strength of the plea, let Socialists substitute "English Capitalism" or "the English Land System" for "the Act of Union" in the sentence.

To say that the wrongs of England and those of Ireland are essentially the same begs the question. The administration of justice (save the mark), with its "Peter the Packer"; the military police, producing Sergeant Sheridans; the questions of land, education, over-taxation, are non-essentials in the view of your contributor. It seems natural that the Irish people should tackle these non-essentials first, seeing that they make life so intolerable to the non-ascendancy man.

To speak of "past wrongs" in the same breath with Cromwell and Pitt is somewhat misleading. Michael Davitt and many others have been evicted; Irishmen in plenty can remember the Famine Year (which Bernard Shaw calls the Starvation Year), the shooting at Mitchelstown, the judicial murder of Allen, Larkin and O'Brien in response to the English people's demand for blood. Can it be wondered that the Irish democracy think twice before trusting the future of their nation to such a people? If those wrongs are not recent enough we cannot forget the volley fired *into* the crowd of mere rioters at Belfast, instead of over their heads as English law ordains. These things need not be remembered with bitterness—a good business-like nation will judge by results and act accordingly.

To be brief; some of your readers, like myself, may be interested in an explanation of the following points:—

What is meant by saying that the Irish slum-dweller of Liverpool (voteless, probably, and at any rate outnumbered) has Home Rule here?

What is the ready way that the English people have of disposing of unreasonable opponents? I suppose it is not the gentle persuasiveness of the machine-gun, so successful in Zululand?

It must be pointed out that to remove the English garrison (of whatever sort) from Ireland, and to remove the English garrison from England is not, as your contributor says, an identical thing.

Such petulant articles as this will not predispose the Irish people to change their masters from the English governing clique to the English democracy. I live in hopes of seeing an article on Ireland which is not "superior": your contributor, in two passages, implies that the sole aim of Ireland should be to secure "the respect of the British people." Fortunately the Irish nation is learning that a nation, like a man, needs self-respect first, and that alone.

KOINOS.

* * *

THE FABIAN MANIFESTO.

TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE."

The recent Manifesto issued by the Executive Committee of the Fabian Society on the Railway Settlement appears to have given rise to some misconception as to the basis upon which it is proposed to institute Wages Boards, on the lines of Victorian Legislation, for our Sweated Trades.

It will be remembered that the Executive of the Fabian Society congratulate Mr. Lloyd George upon having set up in England the first "Wages Board," and they add, that it is to be hoped that what has been done in the railway industry will promptly be done in the Sweated trades.

May I point out that the proposed Wages Boards as embodied in Mr. A. Henderson's Sweated Industries Bill explicitly recognises Trade Unions and Trades Councils, conferring upon them power to demand an inquiry into any trade represented by them. More than this, the workers under the Bill are allowed to nominate representatives to watch over their interests on the Board.

In Victoria, in organised Trades, the workers are invariably represented on the Wages Boards by Trade Union officials, and in Trades where there is no organisation the officials of other trade unions are often chosen. The spectacle of a Conciliation Board such as will be established under the Railway Settlement, on which a shunter or a signalman will, in person, tell his Directors what he thinks about his wages and hours, is not one that will fill any experienced Trade Unionist with enthusiasm. The first principle of Trade Unionism is the right of the individual worker to be represented by officials whom the employers have no power to victimise.

It is, therefore, clear that no analogy between the Railway Conciliation Boards and the proposed Legal Wages Boards is possible. The Sweated Industries Bill was drafted primarily to provide machinery for the determination of wages for the trades where, under present conditions, the organisation of the workers is practically impossible, but the passing of the Bill would be, in itself, a modification of these conditions, and would, it is hoped, lead to the Trade Union organisation of the workers concerned.

MARY R. MACARTHUR.

* * *

MR. BELLOC AND HERESY.

TO THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW AGE."

Would you allow me to make an apology to Mr. Belloc? Misunderstanding the sense in which he used the word "developed" in his recent article in THE NEW AGE, I gave it as my opinion that his proposition "that to a Catholic, man is a finally developed being," was dangerously near to heresy. I withdraw my own opinion, and moreover cordially subscribe to his as an accurate statement of Catholic truth.

W. E. CAMPBELL.

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