A Question for Socialists, by Hilaire Belloc, M.P.

THE NEW AGE

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

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

SIR EDWARD GREY'S circular note to the Powers suggesting the appointment of an independent Turkish Governor for Macedonia is satisfactory if only as evidence that the British Foreign Office is really anxious to secure immediate reform. It seems more than doubtful whether our proposal will be accepted by the other Powers even as a basis for negotiations with the Porte, but it is something that we should have taken the initiative instead of waiting for Austria or Russia to move. The geographical position of these two countries may originally have justified the action of the European Concert in appointing them as its representatives in South-Eastern Europe, but experience has shown that they cannot be relied upon to initiate real reforms in Macedonia. Naturally enough, they have regarded their own economic interests as paramount and have given these the first place in their dealings with Turkey.

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With the possible exception of France, who is fully engaged in Morocco, there is no one of the great Powers so disinterested in this matter as Great Britain, and we have therefore solid grounds for believing that negotiations instigated by ourselves have the greatest possible chance of being brought to a successful issue. We congratulate Sir Edward Grey on having translated speeches into action, and on having thrown, for the moment, the onus of delay upon the other members of the Concert, but we hope he will not too easily feel himself relieved of his responsibilities in the matter.

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Sinister rumours have reached London during the past week of a possible diplomatic rupture between Japan and China over the Tatsu Maru incident. We cannot believe that there is serious reason for these fears as yet, although the Japanese Jingo Press have been showing somewhat extreme excitement. The matter in dispute is a question of fact, and it is impossible for us to know with any certainty which party is in the right. Japan has every right to resent the capture, in neutral waters, as she believes, of a vessel carrying the Japanese flag. But the Chinese officials assert that the seizure took place not in neutral but in Chinese waters, and that the vessel was conveying arms and ammunition to Chinese insurgents. Under the circumstances our ally's ultimatum seems to have been delivered with overmuch haste, and unless she agrees to an impartial investigation into the facts before taking further action she will not be likely to get much British sympathy.

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Mr. Morley's statement in the House last week in regard to the administration of the Indian Sedition Law was wholly unsatisfactory. Mr. O'Grady asked the Secretary of State whether he was aware that native editors were being severely punished for alleged sedition which was in fact merely Nationalist propaganda, and whether, in view of the fact that the Government campaign against the Press was regarded by the natives as a campaign against the faith and aspirations of the people, he would take steps to have the term sedition strictly defined and the penal code generally amended. Mr. Morley replied, or rather avoided replying, by saying that the word sedition did not occur in the text of the penal code, and added, "so long as the persons concerned give expression to their 'faith and aspirations' without attempting, in the language of the code, to excite hatred, contempt, disaffection, or enmity between class and class, they will, I am quite sure, not be disturbed."

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This sort of verbal jugglery is utterly unworthy of Mr. Morley. His attempt to raise a laugh at Mr. O'Grady's expense by exposing that gentleman's inaccurate knowledge of the wording of the penal code was the merest debating society trick—hardly the sort of thing one expects from a Minister who stands even higher in the world of letters than in the world of politics. Mr. Morley, as well as everyone else, knows that what these editors are charged with, and punished for, is sedition, whether it is called by that name or not; and he knew that what Mr. O'Grady wanted was that the crime itself should be clearly defined. Mr. Morley may, if he chooses to be credulous and optimistic, feel sure that the loose words of the code which he quoted are not being misinterpreted and used as a weapon of oppression by inferior Courts. But we are far from being so convinced as he appears to be, and we hope that Mr. O'Grady will take an early opportunity of raising this matter again, and will insist upon receiving a more courteous and a more satisfactory answer.

The most important political event of last week was the second reading debate and the division upon the Labour Party's Unemployed Bill. For the first time the principle of the "right to work" has been seriously discussed by the House of Commons, and although on Friday last it was rejected by an overwhelming vote, the hundred and sixteen members who supported it have no reason to be disappointed. It will come up again and again in the future, and each time with added force and familiarity. And when at last it is embodied in English law and becomes part of the birthright of every British subject the names of those 116 members will perhaps be raked up—and not for derision. One wonders how many of the gentlemen present at the debate realised that it was a historic occasion.

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The right to work, that is to say, the right of every man to access to the means of production, practically involves Socialism, and it is difficult to say what would be the results of recognising it legally in its crude form at the present time; we should not like the task of proving that they would be wholly beneficial. But that is no reason why the inherent justice of the principle should not have been recognised, if only by a platonic second reading vote. Mr. Ramsay Macdonald admitted on behalf of the Labour Party that Clause III of their Bill was none too well drawn, and that the right to work, if granted, must be surrounded by many precautions. But in a speech of considerable eloquence he asked the House to accept the principle as being the only conceivable solution of the Unemployed problem.

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The House, however, rejected it for the simple reason that half the members do not understand the problem and the other half do not want it solved. The President of the Local Government Board, however, we are not inclined to place in either of these categories. He stands in a class by himself. He does not appear even to believe that there is a serious problem. Once again he seized the opportunity to dilate on the happy conditions of life in this best of all possible countries. His hesitation to accept this particular Bill or indeed to do anything in a hurry, it is possible to understand and even in some sort to approve. But in view of his origin, his past record and his presumed knowledge, his present general attitude of extreme and unqualified optimism is nothing less than astounding. It would be interesting to know what the electors of Battersea now think of their Dr. Pangloss, and whether they consider him any longer a fit person to deal with an urgent and crying need.

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Another instance of the incorrigible pedantry of the Government occurred the other day. We published among these notes in our last issue, a letter from the Fabian Society, urging that the question of street trading should be dealt with in the Children's Bill, and suggesting a new clause which would effect what is required. On Thursday Mr. Nield, the member for Ealing, called the attention of the Home Secretary to the omission, and asked him whether he would accept an amendment in Committee.

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Mr. Gladstone replied that the question of street trading and a number of other questions arising in connection with the employment of children, were omitted from the scope of the Bill because they were of a controversial character, and might imperil its chances of success. It is not possible that Mr. Gladstone really thinks that there would be such strong opposition to a clause designed to keep young girls off the streets, as would imperil his whole Bill. The truth is probably that the proposed clause touches upon a fresh subject, and ought by the traditions of legislative procedure to be dealt with in a separate and comprehensive measure. In other words, reform is to be shelved, and the conditions under which children are daily going, morally and physically, to the dogs, are to be allowed to continue indefinitely, in order that the Home Secretary's official sense of technical propriety may not be outraged.

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Fifty of the leading firms of Stockbrokers have addressed a letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer protesting against the provisions of the Licensing Bill on the ground that the precedent thereby created will depreciate the value of all classes of British investments. We do not wish to dispute the contentions of this representative band of City gentlemen, but we cannot help being reminded of the protest meeting held by the image makers of Ephesus when Paul visited their city and preached against their goddess. The "trade" were on that occasion, it will be remembered, called together, and exhorted by their leader, Demetrius, who pointed out that not only was the craft by which they had their wealth "in danger to be set at nought," but that the magnificence of Diana herself was at stake. "And when they heard these sayings they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians.' And the whole City was filled with confusion."

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This week it is Peckham that is filled with confusion, and by all accounts filled with money as well. The directors of Meux's Brewery Company have brazenly announced their intention of sending the Conservative candidate, Mr. Gooch, a cheque for £71 for election expenses, and an offer of the services of their staff for canvassing purposes. We are far from regretting the publicity of the gift. Such an open attempt at corruption, although it is not a Corrupt Practice within the meaning of the Act, will hardly aid Mr. Gooch in his "disinterested" opposition to the Government Bill, though he has been wise enough to refuse the money. But this sum is merely a drop in the bucket compared with the sums which are being spent more or less privately by the Brewers' organisations. It is really time that the Government introduced their promised measure to make it illegal for public companies to use their funds for political purposes.

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This, of course, will by no means cover the question entirely. Were a law on these lines already in force the situation in Peckham would not be materially different from what it is. It would still be possible for enormous sums to be spent by various political organisations, in support of one or other of the candidates, without their having to be included in the statutory return of election expenses. Reform in this matter is even more urgent than in the other. It can easily be effected by throwing upon the candidates themselves the onus of proving that all money spent in aid of their respective candidatures, other than that included in their returns, was spent either without their knowledge or against their express instructions.

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Before leaving the subject of the Peckham election, may we venture to suggest to the Suffragettes, with whose cause and tactics we are in complete sympathy, that they would not lose popular support in the country if they refrained on this occasion from opposing the Liberal candidate. There is no possible doubt as to the

subject on which this election is being fought, and opposition offered to the supporter of the Government cannot be construed otherwise than as opposition to the Licensing Bill. Under these circumstances, a graceful withdrawal, together with a clear understanding that it is not to be treated as a precedent, would probably aid the cause of woman's suffrage enormously and would certainly save it from an undesirable stigma.

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We notice that the Commission appointed by the Transvaal Government to enquire into various questions relating to the mining industry has reported in favour of the entire abolition of native labour and its replacement by white labour within a short period. This proposal is probably too extreme to be adopted in the near future at all events, but it may possibly be accepted as an ideal to be aimed at in the more or less distant future. Certainly it seems to provide a most desirable, and—if it ever be practicable—an unexpectedly simple solution of what is perhaps the most difficult labour problem that has ever faced a British Colonial community.

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Mr. Rudyard Kipling has written, apparently in his sleep, a series of "Letters to the Family," the first of which appeared in the "Morning Post" on Thursday last. It seems that even he is at loss to find words to express his loathing of the present Government. "Every form of unfitness," he says, "general or specialised, born or created during the present generation, has combined in one big trust—a majority of all the minorities—to play the game of Government . . . On the other hand, which is to our advantage, the isolation of the unfit in one political party has thrown up the extremists in what the Babu called 'all their naked *cui bono*.' These last are after satisfying the two chief desires of primitive man by the very latest gadgets in scientific legislation. But how to get free food, and free—shall we say—love, within the four corners of an Act of Parliament without giving the game away too grossly, worries them a little."

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It is impossible to place any other construction upon these remarks than that they are intended as a gratuitous and—shall we say—"stalky" thrust at the members of the Parliamentary Labour Party, a body of men whose personal honour does not require to be defended here. The Imperial Poet is hitting below the belt with a vengeance. If his is the generous frame of mind engendered by the cult of modern Imperialism, it is time we found another word to express our belief that there is a great future in store for—shall we say—the British Federated Commonwealth.

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Another attack upon Socialism, of a more honest but hardly more intelligent character, was made last week by Lord Rosebery in his presidential address to the members of the Liberal League. "Socialism," he said, "is the end of all things. Empire, religious faith, freedom, property—Socialism is the death-blow to all . . . I read with pained surprise the protest on behalf of Socialism signed by 100 ministers of religion, who lend their honoured name to a system which I will not now characterise."

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"Pained surprise" expresses exactly the feeling which we should expect Lord Rosebery to have about Socialism. It does largely mean the end of the things for which he stands and of which his life has been made up. Landlord, Liberal, peer, racehorse owner, dilettante statesman, perhaps millionaire—he is all these things, and they may all be expected to disappear with the coming of Socialism. At all events he has evidently made up his mind to oppose Socialism. He gave the Liberal League a call to arms and put before them a programme containing "five salient points"—sane Imperialism, hostility to protection, hostility to an Irish Parliament, hostility to Socialism, and an efficient Second Chamber. Does Lord Rosebery really think that this is a programme?

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The Finance Committee of the London County Council have recently issued a report showing the amount of work which has been referred to the Works Department during recent years. It shows that while for the five years ending March, 1907, about 34 per cent. of the total work undertaken by the Council was secured by the Works Committee, during the Moderate rule the proportion has fallen to 15 per cent. This we understand is a part of that policy of encouraging private enterprise which is based upon the theory that it does not matter how much of the public money is wasted so long as it goes into the deserving pockets of independent contractors, who know better than the Council how to spend it, and who, moreover, have a right to some attention from the men they helped to elect.

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Another Committee of the Council, the Education Committee, distinguished itself last week by definitely voting the sum of £8,500, in addition to previous votes, for the erection of flagstaffs on the schools, and by refusing once more at the same sitting to contribute a penny towards the feeding of the children. We have already commented upon this contrast on various occasions, and we have nothing further to add now, except to point out the curious carelessness of the Moderates in controversy. When, a few weeks ago, the "Daily News" stated that the proposed flagstaffs would cost £10,000, that journal was violently denounced in the Council for its misleading and grossly exaggerated statements. The flag outfits, it was said, would cost nothing like that sum. And already something between 85 and 90 per cent. of it has been voted!

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The excommunication of the famous Abbé Loisy has come as a heavy, though not altogether unexpected, blow to many members of the Church. The Pope certainly has the courage of his convictions, and seems to care little how many of his more distinguished children he banishes so long as the Modernist movement inside the Church is suppressed.

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We have received the following comments from a Catholic correspondent:—

"Intelligent Churchmen are asking themselves 'what will His Holiness do next?' All sorts of questions and possibilities occur to one's mind. The most persistent is 'What would the Catholic Church do with a mad Pope—one, that is to say, so mad that there could about his madness be no two opinions?' Suppose the Holy Father were to do something which must convince even his supporters that his brain had given way. Suppose he insisted on being led by a halter to browse on the Campagna on the ground that he was one of his own Bulls? Or suppose he wrapped himself in gold cloth and climbed on to the high altar at St. Peter's announcing that he was the Golden Calf and must as such be worshipped? What would the Church do? She couldn't reasonably obey him. Would she shut him up, as other lunatics are shut up, in an asylum? And if so, would there be a new Pope? And what would become of all the acts and deeds of the insane Pope, done while the madness was 'coming on'? These are purely speculative points, but ones which might at any moment come into the region of practical politics. Cardinals, like the rest of us, must have their anxieties."

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[NEXT WEEK.—A long poem by John Davidson, "The Testament of Sir Simon Simplex Concerning Automobilism"—in effect an ironical Anti-Socialist manifesto.]

The Unemployed Workmen Bill.

ONE by one the cards are being placed on the table. Indeed it would almost seem that the Government has thrown down the remainder of its hand. The ultimate result of the debate on the Unemployed Workmen Bill on Friday of last week is in the exhilarating land of the unknown future. If it results in a Socialist-Labour candidate in every constituency where there is the remotest chance of ejecting a Liberal, then it will be well.

But there are points which are already perfectly clear. The Labour Party, with the wisdom which comes from the frank acceptance of stern fact, has decided that its primary business is to come to grips with the problem of unemployment. Last month there were over six in every hundred of the organised workers of this country vainly asking for the privilege of being allowed to work. The unorganised wage-earners were notoriously in a still worse position. In the vast majority of the cases, these men represent women and children whose livelihood depends on the wages which cannot be found. Add up these dry statistical figures, and the problem is appalling; translate them into the terms of human starvation and reckless despair, and the problem becomes unbearably hideous. The men responsible for the government of this country—this being their third session—have no solution to propose; they are clinging, with the energy of anticipation, to the report of a Poor-Law Commission which is now sitting, and the unemployed go on tramping. It may be a selfish thing to think of ourselves and our fellows, instead of the future, but the Socialists cannot wait, so they have launched their Bill. What are its main terms?

First and foremost, it lays it down that the only real remedy for unemployment is work. That may seem a wild flight of imagination to politicians who have got it into their heads that the only possible remedy is poor relief. Nevertheless, the Socialists are right; it is their mission once more to bring the Tory and the Radical statesmen back from the visionary dreams of the Poor Law to the stern realities of work. The Bill, with continued determination to face the facts, declares that it is the essential duty of the State, whether through local councils or central officials, to find an opportunity of useful labour for all those citizens who are ejected from the labour-market by the working of economic laws over which the individual has no control. The millionaire having gold and silver, desires protection by a State policeman; the workman, having only a few odd pence in the house, is not over-anxious about the policeman, but is determined to have another official who will protect his right to his labour-power, the only wealth he has. Both citizens are sound Socialists in their acceptance of the principle of State control.

But the Bill goes on to say to our governors: If your capacity for government goes no further than the organisation of a few men to walk about in rubber shoes at night and regulate the traffic during the day; if you cannot think of any method by which to offer the applicant work; then you must ignominiously confess your incapacity by paying, out of public funds, a sufficient maintenance to the man to whom society refuses the elementary right to earn his living. Work or maintenance—there is the irreducible minimum which Socialists demand shall be made the legal, as it is now the moral, right of every citizen.

For the rest, the Bill is a matter of comparative details, important though they be. Thus, it provides that where the applicants for work are of the unemployable class, they shall be set to work which will aim at producing "ultimate improvement" in their condition. Where there is "deliberate and habitual disinclination to work," a magistrate can make an order for compulsory detention for a period of six months; a period, be it noted, which must be passed "in the performance of reasonable work." In both these details the Bill is a well conceived constructive attempt to train the inefficient man into a profitable citizen. Again, the cost is to be thrown, as far as possible, on the central government and not on the ratepayers. Finally, the machinery of the Bill is based on the admirable precedent of the Education Committee of co-opted expert persons, which was the ideal laid down by the Education Act of 1902.

Such, in brief lines, is the Bill. It has been met by a storm of violent criticism, such as has met no measure since the great Reform Bill, I had almost said. Mr. Asquith summed it up in the words: "This is an entirely novel principle. It is a principle which involves in its application the complete ultimate control of the whole machinery of production." The Labour Party scarcely realises that it has drafted so comprehensive a piece of legislation as that; but (angels of light shine on them) do the gentlemen of the Commons not yet understand that the Socialists of this country are spending each year thousands, nay, hundreds of thousands, of pounds, through their Independent Labour Party and Social Democratic Party and Trade Union organisation, for no less purpose than to upheave this present system of capitalism from its root? Is it likely that these men and women squeeze this money out of their miserable pittance of wages for anything less than a "novel principle;" when Tory and Radical gentlemen are willing to pay for the privilege of running politics on the old system free of all cost—except misgovernment? The Labour Party's Unemployment Bill stands for a new conception of government, or it is worthless.

The old system has been tried; it is a pitiable commentary on our courage that it has been tried with patience. We are told that this Bill is rash, that it may bring chaos into industrial affairs. The chaos is there already; if we must live in social horrors at least let us relieve the monotony by a "general post." You will note that it is the people in the few armchairs who want to sit quiet. It may be indiscreet to look further than the end of their noses; but there are some persons in this world who are weary of discretion; and there is always the Fabian Society as a retreat when we must exchange adventure for the cowl or the veil. But the Labour Party is firmly convinced of the sane reasonableness of its Bill; and it was a great moment in its history when Mr. Ramsay Macdonald told the House of Commons that he and his fellows would stand by the "right to work" as the birthright of every citizen. And when that right is gained—as it will be—then Magna Carta will be unimportant.

There is one point to make clear. If it can be shown that the effect of this Bill will be to get public works, whether local or central, done by inefficient workmen, then it stands condemned. The public work, as, in fact, all work in a well organised society, must be done by the most capable workmen that can be discovered or manufactured. The employees of a borough must be chosen because they are the best available in the market; not because they are unemployed. But this Bill, after laying down the purely Socialist principle that profitable labour is the right of every citizen, and that its provision is the ultimate duty of the State, goes on to declare that its immediate duty is to provide training for the inefficient, compulsion for the laggards, and mere maintenance in the last resort. It is clear that until our Councillors and Presidents of the Local Government Board are wise men, they will not be able to organise economically profitable work. They must confess their failure by providing maintenance in its place. And this means that the Unemployed Workmen Bill is, immediately, a Poor Relief Bill; it is an attempt to protect the workers from the insolent endeavour of the capitalist to pauperise the victims of his system. The organising of State work will be a matter for infinite care and thoughtful planning; the granting of honourable relief must come at once. The Government has offered its earnest sympathy for the distress of the unemployed. Once for all, do the members of the Cabinet really imagine that it is the work of Parliament to sympathise? Their business is to legislate.

G. R. S. TAYLOR.

The Price of Coal.

OF all the subjects with which the Government are proposing to deal during the present Session, the regulation of the hours of labour in coal mines is by far the most complex. If the Eight Hours Bill, which Mr. Gladstone introduced last month, should ever become law, it is impossible for even the most expert economists to forecast with any certainty what its effects will be. Indeed, it can only be regarded as a great experiment which may possibly lead to results entirely unforeseen and undesired by its official sponsors.

There are three parties who are all directly concerned, the miners, the mine-owners, and the consumers. The case for the Bill from the miners' point of view need not be stated here. Public opinion has long been satisfied that the hours spent in such arduous and dangerous employment ought to be regulated by law for the benefit of the worker.

The owners' case against the Bill is rather more uncertain. Their chief public contention seems to be that the enforcement of a uniform eight hours measured "from bank to bank" will be unfair to the older mines. Their reasoning is clear. The older mines have deeper shafts and longer galleries than the newer ones, so that more time—sometimes as much as half-an-hour—is taken in travelling from the mouth of the pit to the face of the coal, and all this time has to be reckoned in the eight hours. Hence the owners of these older mines will get less coal for the same expenditure of wages than the owners of mines where practically the whole of the eight hours can be used in actual cutting. Hitherto the miners have borne the difference by working proportionately longer hours; now it will fall on the owners. But this only applies to a certain section of owners. As a class they are fully aware that they will be able to shift any losses which the limitation of hours may involve on to the shoulders of the consumers, and it is from the consumers, particularly the large manufacturing consumers, that the real opposition to the Bill comes.

It must be admitted that the consumers' case is a strong one. They assert that if this Bill is passed the price of coal will inevitably rise by something between 1s. and 2s. per ton, which will involve the ruin of many industries and will throw thousands of men out of work; and it is impossible to prove that they are wrong. If the total output of coal is reduced the price will certainly rise; so that it comes down to a question of whether the output will, as a matter of fact, be reduced or not. And it is here that the great complexity of the matter appears.

Let us take the typical case of a miner who under present conditions is in the habit of working four full days and one short day, and who voluntarily absents himself on the remaining day of the week. It is clear that if, after the proposed limitation of hours has taken effect, he works only just as hard as before and for the same number of days per week his individual output of coal will be reduced, and it is on this assumption that the opponents of the measure have based their calculations. But is such an assumption justifiable? The evidence given before the Home Office Committee seems to indicate clearly that in collieries where comparatively short hours obtain already there is less absenteeism and greater efficiency than the average. This is what one would expect, and although the psychological factor involved is strictly incalculable, yet it seems fairly safe to prophesy that when our typical miner finds that his hours per day are limited he will seek to keep his wages up by attending with greater regularity and working more efficiently. And if to these considerations you add the possibility of the pressure of demand leading to the introduction of new and better machinery and to the wider adoption of the multiple shift system, it becomes clear that the total output of coal need not necessarily be reduced at all, but may even be increased as a result of the proposed change.

We are bound to admit, however, that this view, although perhaps sounder than the opposite one, remains mere speculation. It is quite possible, perhaps on the whole likely, in view of the difficulty of increasing rapidly the supply of properly qualified miners, that the output *will* be reduced, and that the price of coal, therefore, *will* rise for at least a year or two after the enactment of a legal eight hours.

This brings us to the really important question which is raised by the Bill. How much longer are the public going to allow themselves to be fleeced by the coal owners? In this particular industry price is not a question of "fair profit" any more than the rents paid for urban sites are "fair profits" for the landlord. In both cases competition is eliminated except amongst the purchasers. The price of coal and the price of urban land is fixed simply by what the public will pay. The artificial rigging of the coal market is a phenomenon which recurs with every recurring winter. If it is not practicable at the moment to nationalise the supply of coal, at least it is possible for the consumers, that is to say the nation, to insist that its price shall bear some fair relation to the cost of production. And it is this possibility which has been realised by a few of the owners, and which actually inspires their opposition to the present measure.

Sir George Livesey is not, as far as we are aware, personally interested in the coal supply except as a consumer, but he has always stood for extreme individualism in industrial affairs, and the views which he expressed before the Home Office Committee may be taken to represent the feeling of the propertied classes.

He pointed out that the limitation of hours was the chief matter of difference between the Miners Federation and the Durham and Northumberland Unions, and added frankly, "If that is removed then it looks to me as if the whole coal industry of England might be under the control of one consolidated union, and I don't like the look of it." He proceeded to forecast a combination of workers and owners versus consumers whereby prices would be raised to such an extent that the consumer would rebel. If you do anything now, he said in effect, you will eventually be driven to such interference on behalf of the consumer as will amount to nationalisation.

For various reasons we fear that Sir George Livesey's prophecy is hardly likely to be fulfilled as a direct consequence of the Eight Hours Bill. But at least there is now a favourable opportunity for the public discussion of the whole question. The relative claims of consumers and producers have got to be adjusted on some temporary basis, and this can scarcely be done without an examination into all the conditions which govern the price of coal. The miners on the one hand seem justified in demanding certain changes, the public on the other hand have every right to object to the increased price which experts seem to agree will follow upon those changes. The Government cannot ignore either party. Probably there will be a compromise since Liberalism is in the ascendant, but no compromise can be satisfactory unless it is based upon principles which can be applied when the same question arises again—as it must arise—in the future. If the dispute between the miners who want short hours and the consumers who want cheap coal is to be settled by a bargain, the owners must be made a third party to that bargain. It is the obvious duty of the Government when they are defining the rights of the first two parties to say definitely how far these wealthy gentlemen are to be allowed in the future to stand aloof and to settle according to their own sweet will what we are to pay for a prime necessity of life.

C. S.

Women and Women's Rights.

By the Hon. Sir Hartley Williams.

WOMAN'S claim to exercise the franchise, to have equal rights with man, and to have those rights recognised by law, has been the subject of much adverse criticism. Much of that criticism is, we venture to say, unjust, and much of it is, or is in course of becoming, untrue. It is said that woman is not the intellectual equal of man, and can never become so; that she has little or no capacity for reasoning: that she is as a rule deceitful and untruthful, not straightforward; that if she were given the franchise, it would be of little or no use to her, as she would exercise it in obedience to or under the coercion of her husband: that she is not capable of exercising it intelligently; and lastly that women, as a whole, do not want the franchise. Naturally, in discussing these questions, we must not let our judgment be influenced by particular or exceptional instances or by the consideration of a particular class or by special classes, but contemplating women in the mass, we must form our judgment on a survey of an average of women and of a like average of men.

To clear the ground and narrow the issues, we may admit that intellectually the *average* woman is not *at present* the equal of the average man, but with greater freedom and liberty she is rapidly becoming so. That she has not attained this standard of equality at an earlier date is not her fault, nor is this non-attainment attributable to any want of inherent capacity, but it is owing to the want of opportunity, to the state of bondage, repression, and subjection in which for thousands of years she has been kept by man. That with opportunity she possesses the power of attaining the standard is a matter on which doubt cannot reasonably be entertained.

It may also be admitted that *at present* the reasoning powers of women have not been developed to the same extent as those of men. The cause of this deficiency is precisely the same as that which has just been mentioned. Until recently, their mission has been that of unquestioning submission. Until comparatively recently they have not enjoyed, nor were they allowed, the privilege of reasoning or thinking for themselves. But with increasing freedom, liberty, and opportunity, the development of their reasoning powers is progressing rapidly; that this development is not taking place at the expense of that rare gift which they possess, the intuitional faculty, is a matter of sincere hope.

It may further be admitted that the average woman, though considerably more unselfish and patient, is less straightforward than the average man. The cause of both this superiority and inferiority we may easily discover in the past history of men and women. In the dim past, for generation after generation, in order to save their skins, their limbs, or their lives, women were forced to trick and deceive their masters, and during the same lengthy period they had continually to be thinking of, and ministering to, men's interests, pleasures, and comforts, and to submit to his tyranny without protest or complaint. It is small matter for wonder, therefore, that under such conditions women developed unselfishness and patience on the one hand, and deceit on the other, while the men became selfish, arrogant, tyrannical, and impatient.

We now come to the allegation that if woman were given the franchise it would be of little or no use to her, as she would exercise it in obedience to, or under the coercion of, her husband, and that she is not capable of exercising it intelligently. One answer to this is that it is an allegation wholly unsupported by evidence. It is an allegation founded on an inference drawn from the past history of woman. Further, the allegation is completely rebutted by the experience of those countries in which women enjoy the franchise, as in New Zealand and in some of the States of Australia. Those who are conversant with the facts know that in those countries the exercise of the franchise by women has been in intelligent support of those candidates for Parliament who have pledged themselves to expedite and favour measures calculated to ameliorate the social conditions and to assist the social progress of the people—by way of example, measures for the diminution of the liquor traffic, for the further extension and improvement of factory and shop legislation, and for the fixing under statutory powers of a minimum living wage in every branch of industry and trade; for the settlement of disputes between employers and employed, and thus avoiding strikes. So that not only is this astounding allegation unsupported by evidence, but all the evidence we have clearly refutes it. It is so nebulous, hollow, and flimsy that one is tempted to say that it is dishonest, coined in the desperation of resistance to the demand of intelligent human beings living in a civilised community to have a voice in the direction and influencing of legislation which may, and often does, affect them either directly or indirectly. Again, those who raise this bogey argument affect to have forgotten the secrecy of the ballot and the fact that if tyranny or coercion was attempted by the husband, the wife of the woman would be quite sufficient to enable her to carry out her purpose, protected, as she would be, by the secrecy of the ballot.

Then we come to the allegation, of a like nature with that last mentioned, that women, as a whole, do not want the franchise. This is a veritable parrot-cry of those who are afraid to give, or are averse to giving, women a vote. We have to repeat that this is also an allegation absolutely unsupported by evidence. There has been no referendum to the *women* of England upon the subject, and if an analogy may be drawn from the attitude of women in other English-speaking countries, the presumption is that their sisters in England do want it. There is no doubt a considerable proportion of English women who do not care one straw about the franchise, who do not want to be bothered with it, as is the case with thousands of men, but why should the apathetic and inert attitude of this proportion debar the still larger proportion of women who desire the franchise from obtaining their right as intelligent human beings living in a civilised community to have a voice in moulding and influencing the legislation of their country? As so many men do, those women who do not care to exercise the franchise, or are too apathetic to do so, can gratify their inclination by not voting.

Here it may be observed that irrespective of the "Suffragettes," there is a great army of English women who earnestly claim this right. The "Suffragettes" are, as it were, the Bashi-Bazouks or Franc-Tireurs of this large regular force, and though their activity, efforts, and guerilla attacks probably have some effect, it is somewhat of a misfortune to the cause that their extremely lively doings and actions seem to have focussed the public attention, while the earnest wishes and aspirations of the regular army have been lost sight of and ignored. There is no argument, we venture to say, against the concession of this right which has not been and cannot be, refuted. The parrot-cry of "Women do not want it" is the most persistent weapon of its opponents. A referendum of this issue to the women of England would settle it definitely one way or the other. No doubt, as a result of such a referendum, we should find a considerable number of malcontents, a comparatively large dissentient minority. Be it so, the decision of the majority will not hurt the minority. Those who do not want to exercise the right of voting can abstain; but there is no reason on earth why their reluctance to enjoy a valuable right of citizenship should debar preponderating numbers of their own sex from exercising that right. To end with a query, will clean, hard-working, respectable, and long-suffering wives or drinking, dirty, lazy, husbands make the more righteous and responsible voters?

The Obligations of Force.

An Open Letter to the Editor.

Your excellent article, "La Force Oblige," tempts me to wish you had begun where you left off. So much is said, so much is always said in England, in praise of force, its necessity and so on, and so little of the obligations attaching to force, that by the time you had reached the phrase, "La Force Oblige," I began to wish for a second article. After all, we Socialists are not at bottom reductionists, or even peace-lovers. It is simply the stick taken up by our panic-stricken enemies for our political chastisement when we are accused of Little Englandism and excessive pacificism. I know with whom I would rather man a barricade, even a barricade on the field of civilised battle (if such things are possible there). Give me my pick of the Socialist movement, and Earl Roberts or Colonel Pollock may have the rest of the citizens. No, it is a mistake to confuse us with reductionism or pacificism or Little Englandism or anything involving decrease of force. Our object is quite the contrary: to increase force and to place it always on the side of intelligence.

* * *

May I say that both your leader writer and the Labour Party went wrong in different directions on this matter? You argued last week as if Socialists wanted peace solely in order to work out internal problems without let or hindrance: in short, international peace was necessary to national Socialism. I do not agree. Peace is no more necessary to Socialism than war. Neither of them has anything to do with practical Socialism. Socialism is a question of intelligence pure and simple. The question is, are there brains enough in England to reconstruct society on an industrial democratic basis? Nobody has yet shown that this reconstruction is more rapid in time of peace than in time of war. The South African War did not delay Socialism: the peace that has followed does not obviously advance it. No, a peace without intelligence is precisely as useless as a war without intelligence. Neither matters a rag doll to the mind of man.

You were right, however, in criticising the Labour Party's attitude (the word is flattering) on the question of Armaments. Such mere cheeseparing antagonism is the nearest approach to class-bias I have seen in them. What it all amounted to was that they were terrified by millions. The long succession of ciphers took their breath away. Yet what was it after all? It is about time the Labour Party began to think in millions. Besides, on the question of Armaments they alone had the right to an idea. What use can Liberals have for force? I can understand their policy of Retrenchment: it's good for children not to play with lyddite bombs. The Tories, on the contrary, have never been afraid of powder; being, indeed, too stupid even for that. The Socialists alone have a notion of the game that is a-foot, a game in which it's certain that present-day Navies and Armies will have to grow before the end comes. And what is that game?

Pure intelligence, of course. To win over all force for the service of intelligence here in England and everywhere: never to allow the stupid the use of force anywhere at all; always to associate high intelligence with big battalions: to *reverse* the revolting tradition that intelligence must always be defeated, by establishing the counter tradition that force may always be obtained by intelligence.

Do you see now the line the Labour Party should have taken? Let me outline the necessary speech: "We of the Labour Party are not afraid of force; we are not afraid of voting you your Navy and your Army. Tell us, you experts, what you need to carry out our commissions. We will not deny you a gun or a man of the extremist demands. Only when you have got your force, we demand that it shall be employed (mark that—employed) in raising, maintaining, and increasing such human conditions here and elsewhere in the world as shall ensure the victory of intelligence over stupidity, good will over enmity, honesty over roguery and health over disease. Make your Army and Navy instruments of this intention, and we will vote you with both hands all you need. Yes, and if a citizen army is necessary, citizen army you shall have. We are not reductionists, we are not pacifists; but men with a mission of intelligence. Yes, and, in the long run, with a mission for the world. No intelligent and good-willed person, be he German or Japanese, Negro or Russian, need fear us or our Navy or our Army. Wherever our ships go or our men go, wherever the British flag advances, intelligence follows. Once assure us of this, and we of the Labour Party [why can't I write Socialist Party?] will be as enthusiastic supporters of the Navy and Army as any of your wise old veterans or idiot youngsters."

* * *

Don't let the Peace people trouble you. They haven't an idea beyond a Quaker silence in which to exchange gossip. Not that they want such a silence: but they must say they do. At bottom theirs is a device for facilitating intelligence too, only a poor device. Naively enough, they say: "Abolish armaments and you will be compelled to trust to discussion, hence to the cleverer brain." It reminds me of two navvies compelled to settle their difference with their hands and feet tied. How soon would they burst their willow withies? Besides, the denial of the use of physical force does not make people intelligent, but cunning; look at the ——, but why name the weakest and cunningest race in the world? And cunning is a thousand times more dangerous enemy of intelligence than brute force: which is why, for example, your really intelligent man is always ill-treated by the clever; the clever are cunning only. What the Reductionists and Pacificists are after is the development of cunning—their particular strength as likely as not.

* * *

The thing to hammer at in all this talk of force is, therefore, its use. Always say yes to force on condition that force will say yes to intelligence. There are plenty of people who are willing to pay for armaments if only the liberal-minded few will find an excuse for using them. *Any* excuse will do, even a noble excuse. Mark, the defence of the Empire is not good enough. Defence is never a good rallying-cry for soldiers. Attack's the word. We want (let us be frank) a Navy and an Army for attack; only we must attack the right enemy. And the right enemy (I weary you with repetition) is stupidity.

You remember Plato made his Guardians soldiers; but there is a greater point still in the Republic. How does the famous sentence run? Till philosophers become kings or kings philosophers the world shall not have peace—something like that, is it not? Interpreted: Till philosophy is on the side of the big battalions, or the big battalions on the side of philosophy the world will not flourish. Well, let Socialists cultivate both.

R. M.

Art of the East and of the West.*

By Ananda K. Coomaraswamy.

IT is impossible to understand Indian art without understanding the whole culture and historical tradition of which it is the direct expression. It is useless to treat art as an isolated phenomenon apart from the life of the people who made it. Neither can Indian art and culture be really comprehended without sympathy; and sympathy for Indian culture is a rare thing. The orthodox Christian, the materialist, and the Imperialist are all, in so far as they are what I have called them, constitutionally unable to sympathise with the ideals of Indian civilisation. Add to this the strong temperamental difference between Oriental and European, and it is easy to understand that lovers of Indian art have been few.

I give a typical example of the ordinary attitude, a quotation from Mr. Maskell's book on "Ivories"; "There is a sameness, a repetition, an overloading, a crowding and elaboration of detail which become wearisome before we have gone very far. We are spoken to of things, and in a language of which we are ignorant. We regard them with a listless kind of attention. In a word, we are not interested. We feel that the artist has ever been bound and enslaved by the traditions of Hindoo mythology. We are met at every turn by the interminable processions of monstrous gods and goddesses, these Buddhas and Krishnas, Vishnus and Ramas, these hideous deities with animals' heads and innumerable arms. these dancing women with expressionless faces and strange garments . . . In his figures the Hindoo artist seems absolutely incapable—it may be reluctant—to reproduce the human form; he ignores anatomy, he appears to have no idea of giving any expression to the features. There is no distinction between the work of one man and another. Is the name of a single artist familiar? The reproduction of type is literal: one divinity resembles another, and we can only distinguish them by their attributes, or by the more or less hideous occupations in which they may be supposed to be engaged."

I quote this ignorant and childish rhodomontade only because it is so typical. Perhaps the easiest way to show its true value would be to ask you to imagine similar words spoken by an Oriental, who should substitute the word "Christian" for the word "Hindu." "Enslaved by the traditions of Christian mythology, interminable processions of crucifixes and Madonnas" —would not this be an idle criticism of mediæval European art? The one true word of Mr. Maskell's is his confession of his ignorance. The one thing strange is that he does not, nor do his like, hesitate to criticise and to condemn, often in violent language, what they do not understand at all, and in saner moments would hardly pretend to understand.

I take another instance. Professor Nelson Fraser, an English teacher in India, and a student of Indian art and religious ideas, tells us that one day he had a young lady visitor from England, something of an artist, and she was examining his treasures gathered from East and West and of all periods. She flitted lightly over the Hindu brasses and settled down on a case of Greek coins. I remonstrated against this, he says, and pointed out that she might see the Greek coins any day at the British Museum, whereas she might never see the bronzes again at all. "I don't care for grotesques," she answered; "I don't understand these things."

And so we come to one serious difficulty: the Indian ideal of beauty is not the Greek to which the Western artist is accustomed; nor does it appear to us that art, to be great, need necessarily be beautiful at all. There is a higher quality in art than that of beauty. There is something in great ideal art that transcends the limited conceptions of beauty and ugliness, and makes a criticism founded on such a basis seem but idle words. In art, as in life, we pray for deliverance from the bondage of the pairs of opposites, the "Delusion of the Pairs."

And even when the representation of physical human beauty is the immediate aim, we find that the ideal of the human form is different in East and West. The robust muscularity and activity of the Greek athletic statue, or of Michael Angelo, is repugnant to the lover of the repose and the smooth and slender refinement of the bodies and limbs of Orientals. It is the same with the features and the colour. For example, the perfect colour in our eyes, which we call fair, is a light golden brown, and not at all the snow-white paleness of the European ideal. But the real division lies deeper still. The absence of mystery, the altogether limited ideal of Greek art, its satisfaction with the expression of merely physical beauty, conceived as an end in itself; the dead mechanical perfection of its decorative details; the intellectual rather than imaginative aims—all these things make it possible for us to look upon the great classic art which has so profoundly influenced the aims of later Western art, as having striven for, and perhaps attained, a goal to which we do not ourselves aspire.* The Venus of Milo, for example, is only a very beautiful figure, a combination of perfections, intellectually selected and skilfully combined. It is limted by the idea of beauty and that physical beauty. This is perhaps an indication of the point at which the Eastern and Western views of art part company. The Western artist sees nature with his eyes and judges art by intellectual and æsthetic standards. The Indian seeks truth in his inner consciousness, and judges of its expression by metaphysical and imaginative standards. Art is not to please, but to manifest. We are told, for example, that Zeuxis, when commissioned to paint a figure of Helen for the people of Croton, stipulated to be allowed to use as models five of the most beautiful virgins of the city. The Indian artist, on the other hand, would have demanded opportunity for meditation and mental concentration, in order that he might visualise the idea of Helen in his inner consciousness, aiming rather at discovery than creation, desiring rather to draw back the veil from the face of superwoman than to combine visible perfections by a process of intellectual selection. The result would be a work suggesting, more or less perfectly in accordance with his keenness of inner vision and technical capacity for its material embodiment, the real Helen as she lived in the national consciousness, a Helen more real than she who in the flesh brought death and sorrow to the Greek and Trojan heroes.

The Greek, indeed, was above the "æsthetic nihilism" (to borrow a phrase from Professor Gardner) which sees the aim of art in the faithful reproduction of nature; but he made an intellectual selection from natural forms, instead of seeking the highest truth where alone it is to be found, in one's inner consciousness. It is true that Greek art was to an extent religious; but it failed in the greatest qualities because the religion expressed in it was in no sense transcendental, and this is the explanation of the humanism, almost the bourgeois character I might say, of the Greek gods.†

The great cat-gods of Egypt, the sublime Buddhas of Java, the four-handed gods of India, even the great Chinese dragon, seem to me to be greater imaginative art, more to belong to the divine in man, than do the Hermes of Praxiteles or the Venus of Milo.‡ The ideal

*Extract from a lecture delivered to the Art Workers Guild in Clifford's Inn Hall, London, January 10th, 1908.

* "Greek work, as known to us," says Prof. Gardner, "is restrained on the emotional side; nor has it any touch of mysticism." I may say that in these remarks I refer to Pheidian and later art only, not to such beautiful archaic art as the Antenor of the Acropolis

† There are, for instance, many Apollos, of which it is said that there are equally good grounds for regarding them as representations or even portraits of athletes. (Walters, "The Art of the Greeks," p. 73.)

‡ I do not mean, of course, that Greek art could be spared from the world, or that it is not one of the great achievements of humanity; only that it was in certain respects definitely limited, and does not necessarily stand on a pinnacle by itself as the greatest of all art the world has seen.

of the last is limited, and the very fact and possibility of its attainment show it. Once the spell of this limited ideal is broken, you can never again be satisfied by it, but seek in art for that which has often been suggested but never can, and never will, be perfectly expressed—the portrayal not merely of perfect men, but of perfect and entire divinity. You seek for an art which, however imperfectly, seeks to represent neither particular things nor merely physical or human grandeur, but which aims at an intimation of the universe, and that universe conceived not as an empirical phenomenon, but as noumenon within yourself.

And if it is thus possible for us to feel unsatisfied with even the refined, and in a large degree idealistic, art of Greece, you will understand how much less the naturalism of modern European art appeals to us—the pictures of Poynter, the portraits of Sargent, the landscapes on the exhibition walls, the jewellery of Lalique, or to go farther back, the wood-carving of Grinling Gibbons or the naturalistic borders of the later mediæval manuscripts. All these are pictorial, reminiscent, or anecdotal in their character. But when we come back to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, with the glorious work of the imagers at Chartres, the sweet ivory Madonnas, the crisp and prickly borders of the manuscripts, and the Gothic rose bequeathed to later times as the symbol of the idealism of the Middle Ages, then at last we find an art that expresses or endeavours to express something of that which we too desire to say. I have repeatedly been struck by the "Gothicness" and, in Ruskin's sense, the "Christianity" of Oriental art. From this point of view, indeed, I should like to classify Gothic, Egyptian, Indian, and Chinese art as Christian, and Greek, Roman, Renaissance, and modern European as pagan, or to use more general terms, as religious and materialistic respectively. To speak again of the present day, I do not say that there is no art in the West which, from our point of view, is great. There has been such art, but it has come only from men fighting desperately against the spirit of the age, living in another world of theirs and ours. Of these, Burne-Jones and William Morris are the greatest: the former in that his work possesses something of that impersonality and aloofness which we seek for, and because he uses form less for its own sake than as a manifestation of something more changeless and eternal, because, too, he was made wise by love to paint not the beauty of the passing hour or the transient emotion, but the changeless might and glory of the gods and heroes; and Morris was great because he proved again that all art is one, the distinction between art and craft illusory, and that this single art is not merely a trivial pastime, but essential to humanity and civilisation.

It appears to me that in the immediate future we may, both in England and in India, have less and less art. English art appears to me to flourish at present mainly as an exotic, a luxury for those who can afford it. It appeals to a special class, and is not a spontaneous expression of the national life as a whole. Its appeal, like that of most of the later Japanese art which finds acceptance in the West, is trivial, not fundamental; it must be pretty and pleasing; its aim is primarily æsthetic, where it should be prophetic. This divergence between art and life and art and religion appears to me to be increasing. It is a sign of the times. I cannot think it possible for great art to flourish again in England, or in India either, till we have all once more civilised ourselves and learnt to believe in something more real and more eternal than the external face of nature. Till then great art can only be an inevitable fruit of an abundant life. The signs of the awakening of this life in England and India respectively are the movements called Socialism and Nationalism. But their ideal at present is one of a very material prosperity, and not till the pressure of the economic factor is, at any rate, partially relieved will serenity and beauty be restored to life itself, and make possible again great national art. That is why we must expect less and less of art in the near future, but not without hope of change beyond change.

A Question: By Hilaire Belloc.

MR. DEXTER'S letter has given me a motive to write, for he says with great justice that all the personalities we have been having are not to the point. I thoroughly agree. Personalities are most in place in a biography after people are dead, or in a private letter, if you must write when they are alive, or in a quarrel as to who shall exercise public power; but they are bad art in the limited cadre of a newspaper whose point is the discussion of Collectivism. I want to return to that subject, and I want someone to reply: for instance, Wells.

I want someone to tell me why, in his opinion, a social system in which the legal control of modern means of production was widely distributed among the citizens would not endure?

I have chosen the terms of that statement carefully, and I think it is a root formula. I say "legal control" because that is the essence of property. Someone must own, the State or John Jones, or somebody must own every object that is not derelict, and the external conditions of ownership are the powers of control over the object guaranteed by the laws of the community: powers which the community will defend by the use of public force against the attempt at control by any other but the recognised owner.

I say "modern" because, admittedly, the complexity and expense of our modern machinery, coupled with modern facilities of communication, have created the problem we are trying to solve: admittedly, high distribution is natural in the case of simple and inexpensive forms of machinery where communications are difficult.

I say "production," and do not add "distribution and exchange" because the last two are but final phases of production.

I say "widely" and not "universally" or "equally" because, *first*, it is not the satisfaction of every single individual, but the health and happiness of the general life that counts, and *secondly*, because not an exact level but a minimum of consuming power and, above all, of security is admittedly the aim of reform.

I will repeat the root formula. *Given a social system in which the modern means of production are widely distributed among the citizens, why should it not endure?*

If any one will furnish the reply he will do the readers of this paper and himself and me a great service because he will be throwing light beforehand on what is likely to be the issue of the near future in Europe; but before the reply is begun it would save the readers trouble and the replier trouble and myself trouble if I bring the thing to an issue by excluding irrelevant or redundant matter—and I will tabulate such matter. As to irrelevancy:—

(1) It is irrelevant to say "Ah! there you are with your cut and dried formula! Not thus are large human things discussed! Practical conditions," etc, etc. It may be so. It may be that clear and hard thinking is no use. The history of the human race does not support the contention—but no matter! My question is an abstract one, and contains a formula. It can only be met by a reply of similar nature. You must show me how the known working of the human mind, the known process of history, certain ascertainable and definite economic conditions, will render such a social system unstable.

(2) It is irrelevant to say that redistribution in a congested state is much harder to effect than further centralisation.

Undoubtedly it is. It means much more detailed work, far more "hot-house" culture of origins, more devotion and self-sacrifice on the part of the pioneers—probably that terrible thing *violence*. It would be slow, it would be exceedingly laborious, it would be partial—like every movement that has ever benefited mankind—but would it be unstable once accomplished?

If I show a man a way to get slowly out of debt and he says "it wouldn't work, so I'll cut my throat," and then adds "it would be quicker to cut my throat," his replies betray muddleheadedness. Either it really *won't* work and cutting his throat is the only alternative, or it will, but he isn't patient enough to wait. Both

can't be true. As to saying one "can't" subdivide, that is mere balderdash. If the State can acquire, the State can sell again to the small man on any length of term it chooses.

(3) It is irrelevant to say "Whether it would work or not, Collectivism is much jollier." You can leave humanity to judge of that. It is universally true that mankind wants to *own* if it can. Not to "enjoy," but to "own." To some abnormal men — especially to nomads—the idea of "ownership" is difficult. They think of property simply in terms of sensual enjoyment, as the Jews do who run our hotels (what hotels and what enjoyment!) But men normally and universally desire, if they can, to *own*. Now it is the whole force of the Collectivists that they can and do persuade many that a permanent sub-division of property, however desirable, however much the soul of man hungers for it, is impossible under modern conditions. They are reluctantly persuaded—they are persuaded against their will and affections—but they are persuaded, and they mournfully conclude that Collectivism is the only alternative to our industrial hell.

Perhaps the Collectivists are right. But I shall want strong and clear proofs before I'll believe it.

As to redundancy: It is redundant to say that there would be more friction and competition under such a system. I know that. It is simply a question of what price you will pay for an end you think desirable. It is redundant to say the idea involves an action revolutionary and mechanical. Of course it does. Any definite act accomplished with a very difficult and clearly definable object is revolutionary and mechanical; for instance, the Battle of Hastings.

Lastly, I implore that phrases wholly meaningless be excluded—at however great a cost of nervous effort—and that errors in history due to dependence upon secondary, tertiary, and septuagessimary authorities be not cited in support. Don't, as you love me, bring in the phantom Juggernaut called "economic force." Don't use the phrase at all, save of such factors in production as escape the human will—*e.g.*, the necessity of the presence of Capital or the Law of Diminishing Returns. Don't say "the evolution of the last three centuries," etc., etc. It hasn't. I assure you it hasn't. Don't say "the discovery of the trembling Jigger made the old catch-and run Jigger worthless and *therefore* the small master *necessarily* fell to," etc., etc. He didn't "necessarily." There isn't any "therefore." Unless you establish the truth that he was politically free and that his psychology was the common psychology of the race. If he was prevented from making laws, if his capital had been stolen or destroyed by unjust laws, or his philosophy and mental power destroyed in some anarchy, then all these, and not the mechanical accident controlled him.

— And don't say Pumpernickel is against me for (a) there is no authority in matters of reason, (b) Pumpernickel is a fool anyhow, nowadays even on guns and certainly on economics. Farewell.

The Pentagram.

(à M. Henri Farman on his aeroplane achievement.)

In the Years of the Primal Course, in the dawn of terrestrial birth,
Man mastered the mammoth and horse, and Man was the Lord of the Earth.
He made him a hollow skin from the heart of an holy tree,
He compassed the earth therein, and Man was the Lord of the Sea.
He controlled the vigour of steam, he harnessed the lightning for hire;
He drove the celestial team; and Man was the Lord of the Fire.
Deep-mouthed from their thrones deep-seated, the choirs of the æons declare
The last of the demons defeated, for Man is the Lord of the Air.
Arise, O Man, in thy strength! the kingdom is thine to inherit,
Till the high gods witness at length that Man is the Lord of his spirit. ALEISTER CROWLEY.

Kith and Kin.

BELOW the Lion's Head, which here rears its titanic crest, and a mile beyond reach of the sapphire waves of Table Bay, is Martha's garden. It has a guava tree, high-grown although the winter gales which blow upon its undefended boughs hinder the fruit. In the garden also is an old blue-gum, wide and shady. But neither under the guava tree nor under the great finger-leaved eucalypt is Martha's favourite haunt. Where the garden narrows towards the house-wall is a great clump of the female aloe a-scarlet with flower-spikes spearing above the fat water-gorged fronds, in the shade of the aloe Martha sits sewing or drowsing when her work in the house is done.

She is there making a new coat for her husband, who has gone into the town to visit his rich son, at the grand hostelry where many attendants will wait upon him. Old Morris might have forty pounds sterling every month if he would abandon Martha. Yet he does not so. The wealthy Louis, who is swarthy as ever Jew was born, raved at the brown skin which announced the caste of Martha.

He was never able to persuade his father. Morris rebuked his son, and was rebuked in his turn. None the less, he arrayed himself, and went every week to the magnificent rooms wherein Louis and his wife and his brother Morris feasted and lounged and wrangled with each other on points of manner and vocabulary. . . .

In the garden sits Martha sewing the coat for her husband. Her dark hair lies flat along her head. Her eyes are blue. Her teeth are tiny. Her pale pink lips are merrily shaped. Only the tropical over-luxuriance of her figure and the skin around the finger-nails tell of the nameless ancestor. She, who must be despised, is remembering an episode of her young life. Little indeed may she find to remember since her marriage with the Jew. Nothing happens to her now more noteworthy than the departure and return of old Morris from his visits. Thus it is that Martha revels in the details of her earlier youth. This noon-tide, however, lights with no gleam the merry white teeth. Martha is thinking of Oom Jan, her father's brother. When Piet Balozzi died he left his baby daughter to the care of his brother Jan. Jan promised to rear the child in the Portuguese faith. Faithfully he performed his vow. But in the veins of the child ran also the Huguenot blood which preferred exile to acceptance of the Holy Faith. And of the two beliefs, what cared that tropical ancestor for one or other?

Martha was never devout.

Therefore it was easy for Oom Jan to believe when he heard the lie about his niece and her master.

Oom Jan reached his rifle down from the wall: "I will shoot her dead," he avowed. And he left the house.

His wife ran across the veldt to the winkel where Martha worked. Martha was shutting the door for the night.

"Oh, child, where is your baas?"

"He is at Cradock in the Colony."

"Your uncle was told you were in a house of sin in the town this night."

"You see me here."

"Yes. Lock the door and come home with me. Oom Jan has gone to search the unholy houses in Kimberley."

"The fool!"

. . . . .

The coat is not finished. But Martha stays no longer in the garden.

The sky has become paler and glass-like, and a wind blows from the sea. The rubbish stirs in the grass. The day is now at its height, and there is a certainty of a dust-storm breaking. Martha gathers up her work and goes towards the house. She is not merry now. She goes silently into the kitchen. There her dinner is ready to be served. She takes up the pot and looks around for the spoon. It has fallen. As she stoops unwieldily to reach it, she gasps and sighs. "I am growing old and ugly," she says aloud. "What does it matter? What does anything matter when lies live so long. . . . Foy. To this day in Kimberley people will tell you that Balozzi's niece went to the bad." ANNETTE DOORLY.

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

Immortal Russia.

I.

I WAS sitting in a little café in a little street just off the Rue Ste. Honoré; it was one of those streets which are familiar in the centre of Paris, more like a chasm than a street; it was one of those cafés common to every town in France, a little narrow place with little tables and white cloths, awaiting diners, and a row of smaller round tables and iron chairs between two wooden partitions abutting on to the pavement of the street. I sat at one of these.

My eyes had wandered up the tall stucco front of the opposite house. It had a double door with upper panels of fretted iron-work, behind which was glass, and the rows of tall windows had shutters painted a dull red. One of the shutters was unhinged, and swung to and fro—I wondered idly why no one fastened it. The house was painted grey—Parisian grey, the grey that looks as if it had once been white, which it probably had been; the grey that turns to purple and blue with the changing light. I again wondered why. I wondered why it did not turn green and pink and saffron—and saw no reason why it should not do so, or even chequer and line and foliate—why not?

No, it was not absinthe. It was bock, *le bon bock*, in a pointed flagon—and, as yet, I had not touched it. It was simply idleness. I had nothing else to do, and I was the only customer. Presently, however, two young men sauntered in and occupied chairs in the corner on my right. They were dressed in the sober black of the gay city, with black soft hats, delapidated of brim, and flowing black ties hanging over their coats. One was clean-shaven, the other the same, save for a line of black hair on the upper lip, like a strayed eyebrow. In a little while they were joined by a third, a tall heavy-featured young man, also in black except for his hair and beard, which were flaming red; the first cropped short, the last wild and bushy. He was clearly a Russian; if his beard had been black, he would have been the Russian of fiction. The others were Russian also—that is why they looked like Frenchmen and spoke the language of France. They talked quite quietly but earnestly. I could only catch a word or so. The moustachioed youth seemed dejected. "What's the use?" he kept on asking. The red Russian was reasonable, rational, argumentative; whilst the clean-shaven man showed something like passion; he seemed to burn with a fierce enthusiasm which now looked like hate and now like the sort of love you give to a child. I only caught one phrase from his burning lips: "Russia is immortal!" It was uttered with the irrational finality of conviction. And just as I had thought idly about the swinging shutter and the iridescent greyness of the house opposite, I thought, or rather felt, about Russia.

II.

I saw Russia in a fresh light. Her wracked and tortured body was no longer the shuddering of a people awaiting the coming of a leader. It was the expression of the long agony of the pathway to Freedom. Russia has no supreme man because she is a supreme nation—the Russians are the master-people of civilisation. If the Revolution fail, Russia will still be supreme. She will be supreme in spite even of victory, as she is supreme in spite of defeat, because she can abandon herself with eternal hope and without regret. Russia has the spirit to take great risks and to make great sacrifices. She is like an admiral who survives by burning his ships.

The very weakness of Russia is a kind of strength. The Governors are strong in their mortality before the bullet and the bomb; the people are strong in their tortured bodies and in the long silences of Siberia. The personality of Russia is a flaming sword—its metal has been fired by revolt and tempered by snow—it shines like a beacon over the world. It shines in their passionate and perfect art, which Russians do not only make for themselves, if they make it at all for themselves. Perhaps they do not want art because they are too busy living and dying. Art is civilised and tame; art is for Paris, for London, for Vienna, not for Warsaw and Moscow and Odessa. Russia thrives on sacrifice, not art. She conquers the invader by burning down Moscow and the Revolution by precipitating it.

There is, however, an art she keeps for herself. It is the great ironic art—the art of tragedy. Tragedy is her normal state. No other nation as a nation can love and hate like Russia. No other nation could bear such sufferings with dry eyes and with laughter. Her life to the outer world looks like an infinite succession of deaths—yet of no people does the world expect so much. Russia is the prophet out of the Galilee of civilisation—her cross lies heavy on her, but she does not cry out that she is forsaken of God—she laughs.

The throne of Russia is fenced about by lies, glorified by the Church, and defended by rifles, whips, and swords. The Czar withholds from his people the freedom he has given to the Cossacks in exchange for their services as the instruments of his tyranny. The peasants, after having been freed from one form of slavery and thrown into another, are shot down because they cry out in their bondage of want, and their little starving communes are destroyed. And so it is always; what one hand of the Little Father gives the other takes away. Yet he cannot kill his people any more than they can kill him or his system. But, after all, he is not killing them, he is creating them. The Russian people is not yet born; the pains of Russia are the pains of labour. Russia is a woman in agony.

Again, paradox that she is, she is more than this. She is not wholly woman, although the central figures of her drama are women, Sophie Perovskaya and Marie Spiridinova: she is almost a god. She kills and laughs. Assassination with her is virtue. She rushes into the fiery furnace, certain that one day she will come out unscathed. Individually her people are satyrs; in the mass Dionysos—that is why they sacrifice themselves with joy.

Death stalks through her cities. It dogs the footsteps of student and peasant and workman, and of the Cossacks marching bomb-file through the streets of Warsaw—yet the cafés are crowded, and hilarious shouting and the clatter of glasses almost drowns the orchestra screaming madly "La Matchiche" or dreaming voluptuously "Quand l'Amour Meurt"; and over the smouldering chaos of Baku, over the pain and death of the desolate city, floats like a challenge the ribald song of a chanteuse.*

III.

My eyes again drifted towards the swinging shutter of the house opposite; no one came to fasten it. The little tables began to attract people; they sat in twos and threes chatting, smoking, drinking. A plump woman sat next to a plump man; she ate olives dreamily out of a white paper in her hand, between appreciative draughts of bock. The man read "L'Aurore," every now and then reading a passage aloud for her ears. An elderly gentleman drank black coffee out of a tumbler, and looked into space through clouds of cigarette smoke. A dejected person with lank hair dropped water out of a bowl on to an oblong piece of sugar held in a spoon over a glass of absinthe, his eyes following the delicate green clouding of his liquor with enthusiasm. "Le Matin?" queried a newsvendor at my elbow. "No thanks," I said forgetfully in English. His face lit up intelligently, and he offered me first the "Daily Mail," then some mildly indecent picture postcards. He recognised my nationality.

The three men were still drinking and talking, talking, talking—every word a dream of Russia—every thought a pain. Russia is immortal, I reflected as I turned down an empty glass. "Vive la Russe" were the parting words I heard as the three were joined by another, and I walked away into the laughter of Paris.

HOLBROOK JACKSON.

*"The Red Reign: The True Story of an Adventurous Year in Russia," by Kellog Durland. (Unwin. 7s. 6d. net.)

Books and Persons.

(AN OCCASIONAL CAUSERIE.)

I SEE that Robert Murray Gilchrist has at last published another novel, "The Gentle Thespians." Some years have elapsed since his last. And this is a pity, because for a finely distinguished and not "powerful" writer like Murray Gilchrist the one method of achieving merited success is to fling a new book at the public's head regularly at least once a year. Murray Gilchrist's best work lies in his short stories, some of which are merely and quite simply perfect. But he has written one novel, "The Courtesy Dame," which is remarkable, and another "The Labyrinth," which is astounding. "The Labyrinth" is like a rich, mellow, naïve eighteenth century tapestry; whenever I think of it, I think of it as the one truly original modern English novel. Few people have appreciated it. It is full of noble and romantic gestures. "Kiss higher than the hand!" says one of its heroines to her lover. Worthy of Cleopatra's "Here's my bluest veins to kiss!" Murray Gilchrist lives in the Peak, in an ancient hall, which may have suggested his "house with eleven staircases." He is a stylist. Perhaps in about twenty years it will be the correct thing to have read him.

* * *

The "Athenæum" has at last reviewed the "Times" "Historians' History of the World." Pretty reading! pretty reading! Yet a scrupulously fair article, and less unfavourable than I should have expected! Naturally the "Historians' History of the World" has come in for a magnificent banquet of praise. Famous journalists have vied with one another in ecstatic laudation. There is no connection between the advertisement and editorial departments of leading organs, but human nature is human nature. When a man comes to the advertisement counter and gives an advance order for £900 worth of advertisements of a particular article (the advertisement counter of one famous paper did receive this order from a "Times" representative before the publication of the "History"), well—it is not surprising if the advertisement manager and the editor happen to lunch together that day and the fact leaks out. The most scathing review I have seen—indeed, the only scathing review I have seen—of the "Times" compilation appeared in the "Manchester Guardian." It was exceedingly able and gave chapter and verse for its animadversions. But the review has not prevented the "Times" from conspicuously advertising in the "Manchester Guardian."

* * *

People within the veil of the temple say persistently that Lord Northcliffe is going to get the "Times," with the assistance of Mr. Moberly Bell—or perish in the attempt! They point out that these two ingenious persons by a curious coincidence recently found themselves together in Paris. They ask, if Lord Northcliffe is not at the back of Mr. Moberly Bell, who is? What is the name and style of the individual who is ready to furnish the £300,000 which Mr. Bell says he can put down? After all, even in Fleet Street, the number of millionaires willing to prove their faith in Mr. Bell to the extent of £300,000 is not legion. Also, why is the "Observer" so respectful to Mr. Moberly Bell? It is notorious that Lord Northcliffe wants the "Times." He wants it, and he must have it. Morally he deserves it, as a sort of final scalp. He is getting tired of his own papers, which is not surprising. He is not alone in that. However, the "Evening News" is doing a steady 400,000 a day. It sells better in London than even the "Daily Mail;" in the halcyon days of the Camden Town murder, it went up to 700,000.

* * *

Meanwhile, to return to books, the Harmsworth reprints of classics are being sold off at a startling reduction by various booksellers. If they were unique value at a shilling, what are they at sevenpence? At the moment I have an absurd prejudice against shilling reprints. I lately bought "Trials from the Newgate Calendar," published by "Sisley's Limited, makers of beautiful books." Opposite the title-page is this: "The debt which the man of liberal education owes to the great minds of former ages is incalculable," etc. Where is the connection? Beyond the title-page is an introduction by the editor of a Sunday paper. There is neither table of contents nor index to this beautiful book; and as the running title is uniformly "The Newgate Calendar," it is impossible, without turning over every page, to learn what special trials the great minds of former ages have been through.

JACOB TOWSON.

REVIEWS.

New Worlds for Old. By H. G. Wells. (Second notice.)

When Mr. G. K. Chesterton explained in these columns the other day that he was not a Socialist because he had never come across a Socialist Utopia which attracted him in the least, Mr. Wells replied, in effect, "Come and join us then, and bring your own Utopia with you. If you have a special knowledge of humanity and of the everyday needs of the common man, you're just the person we want." And that is exactly the spirit which pervades "New Worlds for Old," and disarms most if not all possible criticism.

There are a hundred and one things in the book, proposals, prophecies, aspirations, points of view, which one might be disposed to criticise and perhaps reject, but one feels that Mr. Wells himself would probably be the first to acquiesce. He is tremendously concerned with details, but no dogmatist about them. He recognises, perhaps more fully than any other Socialist writer has recognised, that Socialist theory, so far from being complete, is in truth little ahead of Socialist practice, and that the co-operation of the whole people is as necessary to the development of the one as to the achievement of the other.

Mr. Wells has written a great propagandist book, but he has refrained from any attempt to expound an economic theory. For this he will doubtless be greatly blamed by a certain school of Socialists, but I cannot help thinking that he gains far more than he loses by the omission, in the added force and simplicity of his appeal to the class for whom the book is written. Indeed, I am not sure that he loses anything at all.

At all events, it is certain that he gains enormously by avoiding that concentration of gaze upon one side of the social picture which is characteristic of most of our propagandist literature. He does not seek to arouse your resentment with harrowing pictures of the world's misery; he says frankly at the outset, "On the whole—and now-a-days almost steadily—things *get better*. . . . The world is now a better place for the common man than ever it was before." This may be a truism, but I am glad Mr. Wells has said it so emphatically, because I believe that it is just the unnecessary hesitation of many Socialists to admit obvious facts of this sort together with their persistent habit of regarding the national life from the point of view of the cosmopolitan outlaw, that has probably been the chief factor in delaying the spread of Socialist ideas in this country.

Mr. Wells is not, and does not feel himself, a cosmopolitan outlaw. He is an Englishman who wants to see his country's affairs managed with more intelligence and with less muddle and waste, and he bases his appeal not on abstract and vulnerable theories of value or economic justice, but on the commonsense and "Good Will" of his reader. He represents that ever-growing class of men and women who have reached Socialism by other paths than the Marxian analysis of Capitalism, who do not, and fortunately never will, understand the principles of the Class War, and who care little whether the work they want done is done by

a Socialist, Labour, Liberal, or even Tory party. "There can," he says, "be no official or pontifical Socialism. It springs out of the common sanity of mankind. . . . . Socialism no doubt will inspire great leaders in the future, and supply great parties with ideas; in itself it will still be greater than all such things."

There you have in a nutshell Mr. Wells's view of Socialism. It is something above parties and larger than any formulas; it is the will—the Good Will—of the people consciously directing their own affairs with less regard for private interests and more care for future generations. Land, railways, coal mines, must belong to the people, not because private ownership is unjust, but because private ownership in these things obstructs the rational development of life and narrows its possibilities for our children. Modern Socialism as presented here, is not doctrinaire or pedantic, it does not propose to abolish all property and all competition and all inheritance, it only wishes to get rid of these things just in so far as they are against public utility. "The modern Socialist is not a communist," he rather seeks to preserve "all that property which is an enlargement of personality." "Modern Socialism does not propose to maintain any dead-level [in the matter of salaries] to the detriment of able men; it has cleared itself of that jealous hatred of prosperity that was once a part of class-war Socialism."

All this indicates the broad and healthy tolerance and the scientific spirit in which Mr. Wells has approached his subject, but it is impossible within the limits of this article for me to give any idea of the peculiarly stimulating quality of the book or of the illuminating illustrations and points of view with which it abounds. The admirably clear statement of Socialist neutrality in regard to Marriage and Free Love deserves especial notice—for the rest I can only advise everyone to read the book for himself.

There is just one matter in which Mr. Wells seems hardly to have been quite fair. He discusses at considerable length the position of the Fabian Society in the Socialist movement, and treats it as if the limits of its outlook and usefulness were identical with those of one of its distinguished members. The uninformed reader would gather from his chapter on Administrative Socialism that the Fabian Society had until recently contained nothing but bureaucratic elements, and that on this account its propaganda had been altogether lacking in inspiration. This is hardly true. After all there are few ideas in Mr. Wells's own book which are not already to be found, expressed more or less adequately, in some odd corner or other of Fabian literature. Mr. Wells's particular merit consists not in his originality—originality was not wanted—but in his bold eclecticism and in the extraordinary coherence and simplicity with which he has presented a great idea. He had, in fact, the advantage of approaching Fabianism with a mind entirely free from the earlier traditions of Socialism, and he has made the most of it.

But this is only by the way. The important thing is that "New Worlds for Old" marks an epoch in the history of English Socialism. It heralds the end of the deadening influence of the exotic communism of the eighties and the beginning of a truly national movement, which, except as regards certain broad outlines, has yet to develop its policy and its programme, and whose gathering strength will not be measured by the membership rolls of Socialist Societies but by the effective awakening of the people and of the people's representatives to a realisation of our need for scientific and constructive civilisation. For the first time, perhaps, it is made clear that the outsider is asked not to accept a cut and dried scheme of social organisation, but to come and add his own knowledge and experience and his own ideals to the general stock, in order that our programme may develop itself in accordance with the natural genius of the people.

There will, perhaps, be some critics of this book who will say of it that it is not Socialism. One can but reply that after all the only useful definition of Socialism is that which is accepted by most of the people who call themselves Socialists, and that this book seems to contain more of the living essence of modern Socialism and fewer of its excrescences than any other contemporary work.

CLIFFORD SHARP.

Our Heritage of Thought. By Barclay Lewis Day. (J. M. Watkins. 6s. net.)

Among the hallowed associations of early childhood's unhappy hours is a compendium, the sole appropriate word, of learning entitled Maunder's Treasury of Knowledge. Our edition, our most prized possession, of which no Socialist State shall ever rob us, is dated 1845. Victoria's accession to the throne was still ignored by the editor, whose references to William IV. as reigning sovereign were in the style of "Largest Circulation's" comments upon Edward VII.; a miracle of diplomacy, a paragon of virtue, and so on. The rest of the Treasury was up to this sample. Whenever we desire some inaccurate information upon art, philosophy, the use of the globes, etc., wherewith to besplash an opponent, we turn to Maunder's. We do not seek to place "Our Heritage of Thought" on the same exalted pedestal; no one could ever usurp Maunder's pride of place in our eyes. Still, "Our Heritage of Thought" blunders along amicably enough whenever Mr. Day essays to form judgments of his own. Take the opening lines addressed "To my readers": "This book is simply an earnest endeavour to find out facts." As if to ascertain facts were the simplest thing in the world, requiring but a little earnestness and perseverance. Mr. Day should have started his "short review of some leading ideas of dominant thinkers in the East and West" by asking what is a fact? He would have discovered that facts are plastic things; that his longings to know "the origin of our current ideas on all those subjects of thought which have for us the deepest interest" was the vainest of quests. His aim was not, he says, "to study the world's religions, and still less to waste time over the many superstitions which have clouded thought from age to age." What a naive idea it is; superstition clouding thought. Had he sought to understand those superstitions, Mr. Day might have arrived at something himself. However, it is not quite fair to complain because this book is not some other book. As a compilation from academic or text book accounts of philosophies ranging from Egyptian clarities to Spencerian mysteries, the abstract is accurate enough. The clue to Egyptian thought is obtained from the current English translations; but as Mr. M. W. Blackden has said, "of the mysteries of Egypt who shall show us the path to knowledge? Assuredly not the College and Museum Egyptologist." Mr. Day pleasingly quotes Dr. Budge as saying "it is difficult to render the exact shades of meaning of Egyptian texts, but the general sense is well made out."

The general sense is so delightfully vague that we understand the translator believes there is really nothing in it, you know. Mr. Day has so little sense of relativity that he quotes the "Song of Deborah" as "very characteristic of the innate cruelty of the early Semitic race," and glorifies an exceptionally base murder as "an act of heroism." A writer in the "Morning Post" of February 24 complains that the Government has not allowed dum-dum bullets to be served out to the British

troops in the Zakka Khel campaign. Sensible people always want to be rid of their enemies with as little cost and danger to themselves as possible.

No worse guide to Hindu Thought could have been chosen than Max Müller. What more ridiculous than his fiction that the Hindus were philosophers because life was so easy in a tropical land? This is the error of one who knows nothing of such life except from the train or hotel; yet Max Müller, reflecting on the ease of his academic position, might have wondered why he was no philosopher.

Mr. Day does not insist so strongly as he might on the necessity of abandoning all the claims that have been made for an Aryan race, Aryan thought, and the like. He claims for Cuno the suggestion that the Kelto-Teutonic peoples were of European, not Asiatic origin. It is strange how English writers dislike to father original ideas upon men of their own race. It was Dr. Latham who in 1851, twenty years before Cuno, maintained their European as against an Asiatic origin at that time regarded as beyond controversy. It was Latham also who showed that race was not co-extensive with language; a statement then ridiculed, now too readily accepted.

Too much space is devoted to Herbert Spencer; we suppose we must credit the amazing thought, because quite honest people have told us so, that he was once regarded as quite a philosopher. When Spencer defined evolution as a change from a less coherent to a more coherent form, there is little doubt that he meant that he could understand all about less coherent form. He believed it was simpler to understand amœba, which was therefore a less coherent form—of whom he knew nothing, than man, a more coherent form—of which he might hope to know something. But Spencer studied his fellow-men by plugging up his ears and shutting his eyes, whilst of contemplation he had not the most rudimentary notion.

We think that out of 462 pages Arabian philosophy is entitled to more than fourteen, whilst Islamic thought is not even mentioned; yet Professor Shaikh Mohd Iqbal, in his lectures on "Mysticism in Islam," repeats to us a lesson we should take to heart, that it was not by the sword alone that Mahomet conquered.

Schopenhauer is mentioned, but Nietzsche has not yet arrived. The French have seemingly made no contribution to thought beyond Des Cartes and Comte; we should surrender them both for the unfinished sketches of Guyau. It is a bulky work to be unprovided with an index.

The Causes of Present Discontents in India. By C. J. O'Donnell, M.P. (Fisher Unwin. 2s. 6d net.)

It may be counted a sign of the times that we have now in this country some of the ablest of ex-Anglo-Indian Civil Servants, who fearlessly expose the crimes of our administration of that territory. There have, of course, never been wanting a few Englishmen who have understood and sympathised with the aspirations of the various races that people the great peninsula. In these days, with an ignorant, blatant press that has simply to shout "sedition, babu" in a hundred of its organs, it is more difficult, we should imagine, than ever for our wisest administrators to get a hearing. Not that we may count even Mr. O'Donnell among our wisest. A large portion of this book is devoted to the Partition of Bengal. Armed with the documentary evidence and with the map Mr. O'Donnell supplies, we do not think that anyone can arrive at any other conclusion than the author's that this Curzon policy was an attempt, in the words of the Hon. Mr. Chaudhuri, "to drive the wedge between Hindu and Mahomedan." That Lord Curzon pretends not to have foreseen this result is almost justification for an impeachment. The policy was carried out in defiance of the advice of his ablest officials, in defiance of the opinion of Hindus and all responsible Mahomedans. The fateful policy is continued because in free England it seems Mr. Morley dare not go back on the chose jugée. "In all things Indian the Liberal Party is the executor of Lord Curzon's reactionary policy, and up to the present it is nothing more." In the last chapter but one the author, on

"Rack-renting in Rural India," just touches on the economic grievances of the Indian peasant. Mr. O'Donnell states: "We do know that the native system of assessment was the justest ever applied. It was of Mahomedan origin, and founded on the Koran. There is little of the teaching of the Bible in our treatment of the poorest peasantry under our dominion. Our assessment is made once for twenty or thirty years, which may be a period of luxuriant crops or of drought. The God-fearing Mahomedan assessed the Government share *annually* at harvest-time, and took each year the value of one-fourth part of the standing crop, whether good or bad . . . The Indian people would go mad with joy if they saw any hope of the British Government reviving this admirable native procedure." The normal land-tax amounts to a 50 per cent. income-tax; it is made up on gross receipts on a peasantry whose total annual income is estimated at £1 1s. 5d. per head. We have said Mr. O'Donnell is not among the wisest. In the face of the facts which he cites, he is content to write "that Mr. Morley is absolutely right on two points: first, that, although Indians must be allowed a greatly increased influence in Indian affairs, representative government as we understand it in England is at present impossible; and, secondly, that the British Government is bound . . . to use all the forces of the Crown to maintain order in that Empire." Could the "natives" have made a worse mess than we have? War is not the most terrible thing in the world. Witness Europe, which has never been free from war. What kind of order do we maintain? An order which allows the British to thrive, whilst the Indians die of starvation, of plague, to the tune of durbars and Royal visits.

West Ham. A Study in Social and Political Problems. Compiled by Edward G. Howarth, M.A., and Mona Wilson. (Dent. 6s. net.)

This book sets the reviewers a comparatively simple task; inasmuch as the proper treatment clearly resolves itself into a duty to beg readers to go to the book, the whole book, and no second-hand comments whatsoever. It is a profoundly interesting, a profoundly vivid study of an area which has seen fit to crowd together within its small space a great number of the most urgent problems of this age. West Ham, to put it briefly, is a social plague spot; it is a pungent summary of many of the worst evils of a social state which in many places has crossed the border line of the tolerable. If the problems of West Ham were solved, then it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the key had been made which would turn many other locks. It would be difficult to find another book which so tersely places before the reader the essential follies of our present system of industrial organisation, and all the appalling consequences which inevitably result therefrom. It is, in fact, a clinical demonstration; or perhaps it would be more precise to call it a dissecting-room examination of the social corpse: in view of the dramatic possibility of human suffering which vividly peers forth from every page of this book, it is not inadvisable to write of vivisection as the process which is most closely analogous to this remorseless carving and slicing of West Ham. To say that the writers have grouped their work under the four headings of Housing, Employment and Wages, Local Government, Public Institutions, Religious and Philanthropic Agencies, will give no idea of the wide scope of the information; still less will it convey any idea of the atmosphere of living interest with which they have flooded their scientific analysis. The description of the peculiar methods of finance under which the houses of West Ham are built has the qualities of the great literature of realism: it is a sordid tale of mortgages, second mortgages, and fraudulent foreclosures; a vivid picture of this vitally important public business of housing being turned into a trade of gambling. It reaches its climax when we are told that by "hawking an agreement, a builder will sometimes try to make money without building at all. He enters into a contract to put up a house of a certain value, for which he is to receive a present of £10. Having no money to open an account, and being therefore unable to get materials, he hands on the agreement to another builder, who gives him £5 down in view of receiving the present of £10 when the house is finished." And yet there are a few persons who lull themselves with the thought that the capitalist system of private enterprise is a triumphant success. It is a faith which is possible, in this case, until one has to live in the houses it builds.

It is impossible even to summarise the information which this book contains. It is, as we have said, a book to read and not to review. On every page we find penetrating light thrown on some problem which must be an everyday concern in the mind of any citizen who has regard for the social health of the community. And the information is given with an absence of sentiment and the presence of scientific calmness which intensify the effect. Take, for example, the following: "The families generally comprise more than one wage-earner, whereas fifteen or twenty years ago the householder alone was usually engaged." It puts into a terse sentence the infinite struggle for existence in the modern industrial state. Or this: "In the case of lower class property the increase of rent is steady and moves more evenly. This is probably due to the increase of casual labour and the growing demand for houses at a low rental." It is scarcely possible to imagine a more damning attack on the capitalist system than is contained in this measured sentence of an impartial sociologist. It means, neither more nor less, that the landlord can raise his rent in proportion as the poor become poorer. It is just a summarised statement of the Socialists' declaration that present wealth is raised on a foundation of misery. On the grounds both of scientific and of human interest, we can emphatically recommend this book; as a guide to the details of social reform, also as a most effective instrument of propaganda if passed on to the individualist with the question: Here is West Ham; what are you going to do with it? It cannot be allowed to exist in a civilised country.

Brummell. By Cosmo Hamilton. (John Long. 6s.)

Brummell is a character of Mr. Hamilton's creation, a man of the world who has suddenly taken to thinking, and jotting down his thoughts in "the correct incorrect English" on Society, Woman, which is the same thing, Marriage, same thing again, Automobiles, and everything that comes under the eye of a man about town, who lives in St. James' Street and has nothing to do. This Brummell of the twentieth century—a sort of echo of the celebrated beau of the eighteenth century—asserts that "if a man's going to live to a ripe old age, he must go through life seeing as little as possible," albeit Brummell sees a good deal, and has no hesitation in telling what he sees. For instance, he has discovered "that snobbishness is the secret of England's supremacy, and that 98 per cent. of us are snobs"; also that "Society is kept going by the people who are not in Society," to wit, the Smart Set. And what a Set it is! And what a life! Eating, drinking, sleeping, dressing, smoking, and dawdling over them all, for fear a vacant moment may catch them and shout in louder tones the vanity of it all. Brummell has no great opinion of what some would call Society proper, "the hopelessly respectable, fatuously

important, who belong to that almost effete class who are persuaded that they have a stake in the country . . . they go to church regularly, and are as honest as the day, never run into debt or gamble, either on the Turf or with "musical comicals," and lead strictly moral lives of portentous solemnity." Evidently, a life as debasing in its dulness as the other is in its "fastness."

No wonder Brummell remains a bachelor, for he regards Marriage as "the last resource of the unimaginative man," and "woman is always either a necessity or a nuisance." These epigrams, he informs us, cost him a good deal of brain work to achieve, and we honestly assure him they are worth the effort. Our friend Brummell, for we feel sufficiently intimate with him now to call him such, although he never regards himself as anything more than a decorative necessity; yet feels bound to drop scorn on "those poor dash devils, the Civil Servants in Government offices, the most weak-kneed, mild-faced, badly-dressed fellers that this country can produce, who for a bare living wage are not allowed to use any particle of brain they have got, as of course, it would naturally cause chaos in a stupendously unbrainy Institution, but to linger out methodical existences in order to qualify for a thing called pension."

We have quoted enough, we think, to indicate that the book is a more important one than perhaps it was intended to be.

John Glayde's Honour. A Play in Four Acts. By Alfred Sutro. (French. 2s. 6d. net.)

This is one of those mildly problematical plays which have the air of having been written with one eye on the ambitions of the actor-manager and the other on the box-office. At one time Mr. Alfred Sutro gave us plays like "Cave of Illusion" and two or three others, which were contributions to the more earnest side of modern drama; nowadays he gives us "The Walls of Jericho" and "John Glayde's Honour." These last are workmanlike and quite interesting, but at their best things of a day. In the volume under review the story is thin, and one is left in doubt as to whether it mattered whether John Glayde, the American iron king, neglected his wife or not. However, he does neglect her sentimentally, and after building up a vast fortune, he is suddenly brought to remember the existence of his wife, who has been in Paris for six months and to whom he has sent only four letters in that period, by a cabled hint of scandal. The play is the record of his descent upon Paris, his vain attempt to win back his wife, and the resigned and melodramatic acceptance of his frustrated endeavours as he hands that lady over to the care of her artist-lover, with whom she was on the point of eloping.

The Heir's Comedy. By Arthur Dillon. (Matthews. 3s. 6d. net.)

Mr. Arthur Dillon has written one or two other plays, and each has been marked by a distinctive and imaginative sense of words. We find that "The Heir's Comedy" is no exception to this rule. It is founded upon an amusing story, for which the author is indebted in part to Boccaccio as well as to our own Tom Hood. The story of the contest of the lovers with their guardians and other enemies is told with wit, and if the phraseology were not occasionally slightly cryptic, the reading of it would be a continuous delight. But here and there Mr. Dillon's use of words, although quite legitimate, tripped us up. This probably would not occur on our second reading, but in spite of this, we found the play intensely interesting.

PAMPHLETS.

THE Artists' Suffrage League, 259, King's Road, Chelsea, have enriched the art of the woman's movement by an admirable contribution. This is the highly entertaining rhyme book, "Beware! A Warning to Suffragists," by Miss Cicely Hamilton, the youthful author of "Diana of Dobson's." Miss Hamilton's gravely absurd jingles are racily illustrated by M. Lowndes, D. Meeson Coates, and C. Hedley Charlton. The first drawing, by Mr. Charlton, gives the interior of an honest working-man's kitchen, furnished with a wife, clothes-line, wet clothes, three energetic children of school age, twin crawlers, and an infant-in-basket. The accompanying rhyme is:—

This is the cosy
Little home
Whence no nice woman
Wants to roam.
She shuts the doors
And windows tight,
And never stirs
From morn to night.

Among other drawings are those of the really nice wife at her cooking, the depraved young person who *will* have a bike and a vote, the "suffragettes" as imagined by the Press, the same as seen by Mr. Coates, the little militant suffragist and the five big policemen who were not in the least afraid of her, the Liberal M.P. who was, and the untamed one in prison.

Now in a cell
She sits and pines,
And off thin skilly
Daily dines;
But still repeats,
As if by rote,
"I want—I want—
"I want a vote."

The rhyme-book costs sixpence, its cover is striking, and the drawings are detachable.

"The Parable of the Water Tank" (Twentieth Century Press, 1d.), is familiar to the readers of Bellamy's "Equality." It is here extracted, Walter Crane having made a little design for the cover. The parable tells of the wise men who paid one penny for every bucket of water brought to their tanks and charged twopence for every bucket drawn. Thus cunningly may you induce your friend to comprehend the salient points of capitalist production and wherein Socialism would differ. Before your victim is able to defend himself, he has grasped a common-sense argument.

The British Constitution Association continues to issue its screamingly funny productions. One of the latest is a reprint of the Presidential Address delivered on February 12th by the Right Hon. Lord Balfour of Burleigh, K.T.—i.e., Knight of the Thistle, such an appropriate order. Among the pearls of wisdom which fell from his lordship's lips may be noted the following: "Now there must and ought to be poor. . . . . If no one was allowed to become extremely poor, it is clear that many people will do no work at all." (It will be seen that the noble lord's literary graces and grammatical sense fall in no way short of his intellectual penetration.) Again: "Are the whole population, including the female sex, to be put into one cast-iron type of uniform? Are the wife of the Prime Minister and the wife of the collier to be dressed alike?" We hardly dare contemplate the painful condition of mind of the noble Knight of the Thistle when it has to be broken to him that one day the wife of a

Prime Minister and the wife of a collier may be identical. The noble knight's power of research does him great credit. He has discovered that the S.D.F. aims at the immediate abolition of the monarchy and the repudiation of the National Debt, whereas the I.L.P. seeks the socialisation of land and capital. All these and other X-rays from the Burleigh tube may be obtained for the modest sum of threepence.

"Jersey Reforms, Financial and Agricultural, including Short Studies in Social Problems," by an Economist (Ahier and Filleul, Jersey, 6d.), is intended rather to stimulate to reflection than to provide an actual working programme. The first reform is that "all candidates should possess the highest qualifications for efficient work, progressive ideas, and a scientific education."

All legislators are to be free from selfish commercial interests and to be prompted by the highest motives and ideals in legislating for the welfare and happiness of all. Laws are to be "based on Nature in order to protect the rights of all individuals." Among the means of achieving the desired reforms are the Single Tax, Municipal Enterprise, and "Prohibition (or Chemists' licenses)." The chief interest of this pamphlet is in reflecting the thoughts and feelings that are stirring Jersey reformers, and if there are only a few more with as much fine faith and honest enthusiasm as "An Economist" they will make things lively in their little island.

Miss Nelli Adler—the energetic daughter of the Chief Rabbi—continues her campaign for Probation Officers and Separate Courts of Justice for Children. On these questions her views have just been published (Women's Industrial Council, 2d.). In Birmingham, where separate courts have existed for two years, the number of young children sent to the local prison has fallen from 166 to 20. Among other such courts are those in Dublin and Glasgow. The juvenile court system has also been adopted in the United States, Canada and Australia. Interesting information is also given with regard to the probation system, already widely adopted in the United States and made possible here by the Probation Offenders Act, which came into operation this year.

The Saint George Press has reprinted Dr. Jane H. Walker's eloquent plea for co-education of the sexes. The booklet (price unstated) begins with an apt quotation from "Lord Ormont and his Aminta."

Among other pamphlets received are "Registry Offices and Public Control" (Women's Industrial Council, 1d.); "Moral Blindness," by the Rev. R. J. Campbell; "Art and Trade," a speech by Sir Swire Smith at the International Art Congress; "Flogging at Manchester Grammar School," by Bradley Hall, reprinted from the "Humane Review" (School Discipline Reform Society, Glasgow, 1d.); "An Appeal for the Children," by J. Hunter Watts (Twentieth Century Press, 1d. each); "Poverty: Its Cause and Cure," by A. E Peters and A. W. Kersey (Gregory and Son, Tiverton, 1d.). We also note that "Women's Employment" (organ of the Central Women's Employment Bureau) has been enlarged.

DRAMA.

Dr. Arthur Schnitzler's Comedies.

The day may come when writers will deal with moods as musicians with keys, when a man will deliberately set out to write a comedy in the mood of Schnitzler or in the mood of Shaw, and attune all his emotional vibrations within the compass of that mood.

The Schnitzler mood is something we have not got in modern English comedy at all; the satire, the irony, and the kind of satire and irony are all alien to our taste. We have not the emotional restraint necessary to the keenly delicious enjoyment of the Schnitzler psychological scene, we prefer to allow our emotions to think and palpitate. Emotion to us is something which expands in the breast, something which is earnest and purposeful, in a word sincere. We hardly like to laugh gaily as Schnitzler makes us laugh. Even our comedies have this sincerity, even Bernard Shaw cannot refrain from making us catch our breath in our laughter, never has he been severe enough to create a character without a justification and a possible redemption, for which we can "feel." As for the ruck of comedy dramatists their tepid drawing-room chit-chat (I speak with all respect) sinks, by comparison with Schnitzler, to the level of mere irrelevance.

The modern English comedy is written in the mood of simple faith in the permanence of afternoon tea and its jocund wit, and to this mood even the material of Schnitzler can only seem improper. For Dr. Schnitzler presents to us a delicate and subtle spectacle of a life we only get on the English stage in the Gaiety productions, or possibly (I judge by posters) in those plays of lurid life dealing with "A Girl's Cross Roads" and kindred moralities.

"The Farewell Supper" and "Literature," presented by the New Stage Club at the Bijou Theatre (and very competently acted throughout) produced almost a shock, requiring as they do such a re-orientation of our comedy ideas. In "Literature" the play is made up of the contrast between the literary and the commercial temperaments, the two bohemian writers and poets being mercilessly dissected before us. The essence of the piece is the ironic display of their peculiarities. One imagines the dramatist like a gigantic butterfly collector, watching his victims writhe on the stage where he has pinned them, with a grim smile. The Schnitzler mood hardly allows sympathy, it is hard, it is exhilarating, it is gay mockery, and without remorse.

The two poets and writers, man and woman, have lived a year in their poet's garret together, they have written, they have dreamed, and kept fair copies of all they have written and dreamed. So that when the woman (very well interpreted by Miss Louise Salom) leaves the man and is on the point of marrying out of her bohemian set altogether, into her Baron's set, she cannot refrain from publishing a novel as her adieu to the old life, and containing her story and her philosophy. This enrages the Baron, and he leaves her. While he is out the old lover enters on her perturbations, to present her his own latest novel. And it contains their story. Finally they discover that both novels contain their story and their letters, of which spontaneous effusions fair copies had been kept. Bang goes the dream of respectable bliss with the Baron unless the catastrophe of publication can be averted. They decide to fly together, they decide to stay, finally the Baron comes back, and they wait in trepidation.

He has secured a promise from the publisher to destroy the whole edition of his fiancée's novel if she sends her consent. Relieved the poet makes his adieux, presents his novel, and the Baron produces then the one copy of his fiancée's novel saved from destruction, which he promises her they can read together. But the novel is snatched from his hand, the woman burns it in the fire and falls on his neck asking if this greatest sacrifice, to utterly destroy, does not show she loves him. And the poet muses, "What an ending this would have made for my novel." On which the curtain.

Not once in the play, not even when the woman is suffering agonies of apprehension, do we get a tinge of sympathy. Or if we do it is of the remote kind one feels sometimes for the people, seen tiny and afar off, of Wells's gigantic glass-roofed cities of the "Days to Come." One may have for these people the sympathy of a physician or a statesman, not of a moralist; they do not touch us, they are matters of ironic apperception. But they add to our life; the key of Schnitzler opens to us a domain of deliberate enjoyment and of brilliant illumination. Particularly is this the case with "The Farewell Supper."

The rich young man who keeps a mistress of the ballet, the restaurant supper, the quizzical friend, the obsequious waiter, these all exist for us, and in a milieu of which we are heartily bored. Every musical comedy takes its tone from this world of luxurious emotional indulgence. And the gigantic butterfly collector, Schnitzler, puts his finger into all this world, pins his figures on to the stage to writhe, and we are at once in another atmosphere. We are shown, not the emotional orgie (the music of the "musical comedy" is, of course, its proper emotional expression), but the turns and twistings of the minds of the puppets, the pride and anger, the individuality. We laugh, we enjoy, we mock, but we do not "feel."

The hero of "The Farewell Supper" has invited his mistress to a last supper to tell her all is over and that they must separate. He invites his friend to be there also, as he has had a last supper every night for the past week and cannot get it out. In fact, he has

had two suppers every night for the past week, because he is on with the new love, a demure lady who only drinks tenpenny claret, at 10 p.m. and is trying to be off with the old after the ballet is finished at 12 p.m. At the supper it appears that the two lovers have sworn to tell each other the first moment when any cloud comes over the horizon of their perfect happiness and when one ceases to care. And the woman has come to tell. At once the man's proprietary passions are enraged, more and more he chafes against the possibility of anyone else occupying his place, until, losing control, he lies and says he has been deceiving his mistress. He "confesses" that he has flouted, outraged, and insulted her. To which the woman replies that if he had said nothing "she would never have told him" how far her own love affair had gone. She goes out. The lover is left gasping furious. The friend lights a cigarette, congratulates him on having got rid of her, and says, "Oh, so it went off swimmingly." And that is the end.

Both plays are cruel. But then they are only one-act plays. How the Schnitzler mood would affect us in a three or four act drama is another question. Probably we would demand something more of sympathy, even for the emotion-tossed hero and heroine of "Literature." Remorseless gaiety and vivisection in one act we can stand; perhaps three or four acts would revolt us.

Beyond this the question suggests itself as to how far these plays are producible in England. As one-act plays there would seem to be a distinct opening. The level of English "curtain-raisers" or finishing plays wants seriously raising. The unreserved parts of the theatre have got to hear the curtain-raiser anyhow. Dr. Schnitzler might bring the stalls and circle in time, and would contrast effectively with any play at present within sight.

Not to have produced these plays before seems almost an unaccountable oversight, were not the theatrical world full of such oversights. Yet one needs to be rather vividly intellectually alive not to require to feel too deeply to respond to subtle vibrations. Mayhap the inflections of Dr. Schnitzler would not appeal to the average playgoer. But they would certainly interest and bewilder and amuse enough critics to entitle them to respectful hearing. On the whole, Schnitzler front-plays might be just the thing.

L. HADEN GUEST.

CORRESPONDENCE.

For the opinions expressed by correspondents, the Editor does not hold himself responsible.

Correspondence intended for publication should be addressed to the Editor and written on one side of the paper only.

THE FOLLY OF THE FOLLIES.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

If you will refer to my first letter you will see that I wrote not from The Playgoers' Club, but the "O P." Club, which is, as Sir W. S Gilbert would say, quite another different kind of matter altogether

As regards the matter in dispute between "E. Nesbit" and myself, since it resolves itself into a question of *fact*, it is quite easily settled. I enclose herewith (for your inspection, Mr. Editor) an old programme of "The Follies'" first entertainment at The Royalty Theatre. In that programme, as you will see, both the "Smoke" humming sextette and The Music Hall Burlesque, which included the "Kissing-Cup" recitation, are set down. That, since the Terry's Theatre season was subsequent, settles the matter.

The fact is that "E. Nesbit" built up an ingenious theory on an erroneous apprehension of the facts. When this is pointed out she endeavours to bolster up the bogus facts instead of withdrawing the theory Surely this is not the way Oswald Bastable or any of "The Would-be-Goods" would play the game.

F W SAUNDERSON

* * *

THE LICENSING BILL.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

I used to think as you do when you say. "The idea that a reduction in the number of public-houses in a given area will cause a reduction in the number of drunkards in that area is on the face of it the most absurd of delusions," until a working-woman said to me: "I go to meet my husband at his work; I can coax him past three or four public-houses, but not *fifteen*."

ANNIE J GREGORY NICHOLSON.

* * *

ANTI-FEMINISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

The "Note" on the Female Suffrage question in your issue of the 7th inst. I venture to regard as a striking illustration of how the most cultured minds may be warped by feminist prejudice. I am not a habitual reader, still less an admirer, of the "leading" English journal, but if the "Times" suggests that—all law resting ultimately on a basis of physical force—laws passed by means of female suffrage which are disapproved of by the majority of men might stand the chance of remaining a dead letter, it is surely doing nothing worse than propounding an obvious proposition.

Your reference to the "physical efficiency of legislators" or to Mr. Balfour's height are surely beside the point, and are based on one of the common fallacies of feminist argument, to wit, the failure to distinguish between (1) the individual of a class as against the class itself as class, and (2) one class as against another class, as such. Now women form a sex-class over against men as a sex-class, and the sex-class men admittedly have the physical strength necessary to give effect to law, on their side. The question of strength is, it may here be remarked, obviously concerned with the mass of the electorate *behind* the legislator, and in no way, as you would seem to imply, with the legislator personally considered.

You further pour scorn on the idea that women are ever likely to promote anti-man legislation, or to endeavour to extend the overwhelming privileges of their sex at present obtaining, alike in the civil and criminal law, and still more in the administration of the law. The probability of this happening is, however, by no means very remote. As a prominent member of the present Ministry said to me some years ago, "all that these women want in clamouring for the suffrage is to pass rascally laws against men"! The fact that this gentleman recently voted for the second reading of the Suffrage Bill does not alter the truth of his one-time remark.

You appear to entirely ignore the sense of sex-solidarity present in women and absent in men. Who is it that clamours loudest for the exemption from punishment of the murderers of lovers and husbands but the female crew, whose motto is "Our sisters, right or wrong"?

Reckoning on the absence of sex-solidarity in men you may be right in thinking that as long as this continues men may consent to be made the lackey-administrators of anti-man

women-made laws. But will the present state of things necessarily last? Is it quite impossible that on the female vote swamping the register for a sufficient length of time the existing wave of feminist sentiment may die down, and men may acquire a sense of sex-solidarity even sufficiently strong to lead them (for example) to refuse to be the instruments in punishing their "brothers" for offences committed against women? How about the question of physical strength then?

"A la guerre, comme à la guerre." E. BELFORT BAX.

[In his terror Mr. Bax has missed one point, which was that it is inconceivable that "if women had the vote they would all belong to one great anti-man party and would seek to form a government composed of their own sex alone." The sense of sex-solidarity may be more present in women than in men, but does Mr. Bax seriously suggest that it is great enough to set every wife in political opposition to her husband? And yet unless this happens almost universally, his fears amount to nothing more than a nightmare. But, even if Mr. Bax were right in his forecast, his would hardly be a very worthy reason for refusing women the vote. What sort of a democracy is it in which half the people are disfranchised because the other half are afraid of them?—THE WRITER OF THE NOTES.]

* * *

THE ASIATICS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

The Asiatic problem in South Africa is scarcely apprehended in Great Britain except as a logical deduction from the principle that every British subject has equal rights in every British Colony.

In your articles you are inclined to be unfair to the Boers in implying that it is their policy which is chiefly responsible for the Asiatic Exclusion Act; on the contrary, it is the British section which gives the most strenuous support to such exclusion, and which is prepared to go to even greater lengths.

It is, however, not so much a race as an economic question. The first large importation of Asiatics took place in Natal and was brought about by a section of white capitalists who for the sake of economic gain sacrificed the interests of Natal and have imperilled the future of South Africa because they found coolies the most effective instruments in the process of the exploitation of the resources of the country. By the necessity of the case, the vast majority belong to the coolie class, although in their wake have followed Indian and other Asiatic traders.

Let it be remembered that when the Constitution was granted to Natal by the Salisbury Government, it was deliberately designed to place the destinies of the Colony in the hands of the sugar and tea planters, and that there is still this curious anomaly in Natal, that less than half the white population return 33 out of 41 members to the Legislative Assembly; and the Council is still a nominated affair. Year by year the Asiatic population is increasing, and already largely outnumbers the decreasing white population, and the only future for the next generation of Natalians will be to act as police to guard the Asiatics against the natives.

With this melancholy example before us, we, in the Transvaal, cannot contemplate the filling up of the country with Eastern peoples, drawn mostly from the lowest sections, who bring with them their bubonic plagues and their low standard of living, and by reason of their being able to carry on the economic struggle on a more purely animal basis, threaten the very existence of the white population.

Remember, these Asiatics are not here by their own strength, but rather, like parasites, have followed white dominion, and if left to themselves would be remorselessly swept away by the natives. Furthermore, their presence presses upon and demoralises the natives, who have a claim upon the consideration of the whites. The natives reason upon very primitive lines; they accept the rule of the white race who have beaten them again and again in battle: they detest the people whom they consider much inferior to themselves and who are accorded a superior position. There is room in South Africa for two races, but not for three distinct types of civilisation. Would Mr. Cox, and others who think with him, seriously ask the large majority of the white population to efface themselves in the interests of a small number of white and Asiatic capitalists, for this is what their claim amounts to? Socialists can answer the question in a different way, but unfortunately their time is not yet, and unless we can hold the present there is no future for us.

Imagine a couple of millions of low class Asiatics turned into England, who are able to live on a tenth of the minimum wage for a white worker, and then ask yourselves the question if it would not rather retard than hasten Socialism.

Justice must cry with a loud voice in the din of the economic struggle. Misery must show itself in high places. With the added Asiatic competition the riddle must be quickly unravelled in South Africa, or either we perish or we must resort to primitive means.

Pretoria. T. F. R.

ECONOMICS AND WOMEN.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Mr. Hubert Bland agrees that mothers earn their livings; he will not, I imagine, deny that women-workers do so. His economically dependent women must, therefore, be of the remainder; that is to say, they must be either immature, or unable or unwilling to work (as mothers or otherwise).

If Mr. Bland would tell us why the young, or incapable, or lazy woman is to be differentiated from the young, or incapable, or lazy man we might possibly discover further points of agreement. J. H. S.

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