NOTES OF THE WEEK.
A few weeks ago the electors of Peckham held the fate of the British Empire in their hands. At least so said the Yellow Press, and the Yellow Press ought to know. But if the attention of the world was rivetted upon Peckham what is to be said of North-West Manchester? Mr. Gaunt was a more doubtful supporter of the Liberal Government, and a somewhat strong supporter at that; on the details of the party programme and particularly on the “confiscatory” clauses of the Licensing Bill he was fully prepared to hedge. Mr. Churchill, on the other hand, is a prominent member of the Government, if not the Government itself, and whatever we may think of the I-will-not-be-bullied tone of his election address, his greatest detractors cannot deny that he is sticking to the Liberal pop-guns. Here there is a real chance for the Brewers to show their strength.

However, we do not expect to hear much about this election being a test of the nation’s feeling on the Licensing Bill. Not because Mr. Churchill is a stronger candidate than Mr. Gaunt, nor because he is determined to fight on the fiscal issue, but because the Trade, scared by its own vehemence, has decided to work by less ostentatious and more devious methods than the frank spending which characterised their campaign in South London. It seems that they have come to the conclusion that such victories as that gained in Peckham are not worth what they cost; that any temporary advantages are more outweighed by the general ill repute into which their cause is brought by such a public advertisement of private interests.

This is a hopeful sign for democracy. We confess that after Peckham we had some gloomy forebodings. However, we do not expect to hear much about this election being a test of the nation’s feeling on the Licensing Bill.
use of this Election taking place at all? Whatever be the result, nothing will be affected. If Mr. Churchill is turned out it will merely be said that the strength of the opposition has not been sufficient to turn out the incumbent of the Ministry which it has been the object of the Government to maintain. In either case the Government will go on as before, and the date of dissolution will not be brought a day nearer. On a point of procedure, however, it may be necessary while the Labour Party is comparatively small and diffident that it should remain on negotiating terms with the Liberal Government, but this looks like surrender. We can only say that in our opinion, until a comprehensive and satisfactory Unemployment Bill is introduced as a Government measure, it is the business of Socialists, if not of Labour men, to see that a Right-to-Work candidate is in the field at every contested by-election.

It is very difficult for anyone in this country to pronounce upon the merits of the strike of telegraph operators in India. Our sympathies are naturally with the strikers, but the odds are against them. The autocratic Government of India is an overwhelming powerful employer to struggle with, and it speaks volumes for the growing solidarity of Indian workers that they have ventured to stand at a strike. The "Times" recently declared its feeling that "the increasing prevalence of strikes in India is not an encouraging symptom. We, on the contrary, regard it as quite the most encouraging symptom of Indian unrest. It was plain before that the Indian was in general a docile worker, and adapted himself readily to the labors requirements of British capitalists, but it was not so plain that he was capable of emulating the independence as well as the industrial habits of the English worker. One might well have supposed that if he was to be protected from industrial slavery it would have to be done from above. But this strike of telegraph signalers following so closely upon the big railway strike shows conclusively that the Indian workers are fast learning the value of combination and becoming capable of looking after themselves. In its way the growth of trade unionism is a step towards self-government.

Another illustration of the awakening of the East is provided by a Reuter's telegram from St. Petersburg last week. A number of Mohammedan women, subjects of Russia, have sent an address to some of the members of the Duma demanding to be released from sex-tyranny. "We are oppressed," they say, "by our ignorant despots of husbands and brothers, we are compelled to submit to their caprices... You must obtain laws which will safeguard us from the arbitrariness of our husband-despots... the education and progress of the people lie in our hands." Only for a comparatively few years have the women of England been agitating for social and political freedom, and already the inmates of Eastern harems have taken up the cry. The incident, on the face of it, is a most notable sign of the times.

The debate is the Belgian Chamber on the Congo Annexation Treaty has served to present the general problem in a light that is doubtless new to many people in this country. Hitherto public opinion in England, shocked by the stories of outrage that have reached us from many sources, has been almost unanimously in favor of the annexation of the Congo territory by the Belgian nation. The problem has appeared to be the comparatively simple one of recognizing the tyranny of King Leopold by the democratic and enlightened rule that is to be expected from the Belgian Parliament.

But now we are hearing more of the case of the anti-annexationists, and it must be admitted that it is a
strong one. The Belgians have never possessed a colony; as a people they have no imperial ambitions; throughout their history they have desired and fought for nothing but to be left alone. And now they are asked to make no exception to the fifty of governing a large tract of Africa under the closely critical if friendly eye of Europe. European opinion will peremptorily force them to carry out extensive and very costly reforms and the stringent financial clauses in the annexation treaty preclude any reasonable probability of their being able to recoup themselves for their monetary loss. Can it be wondered then, that those who are the Colonial difficulties by which England with all her experience is constantly distracted, should shrink from undertaking such an enterprise in the cause of humanity? If Belgium goes through with the project it will be a genuine example, perhaps the first in history, of a European nation "taking up the white man's burden." But we confess that if we were Belgians we should strongly object to taking up anything of the sort. It will certainly be a great pity if a country which socially and politically is perhaps the least advanced in Europe, should have its internal development hindered or arrested by the complicated external interest in the question, and there is a good opportunity for legislation.

As we have said in our earliest announcement, as well as of the prestige THE NEW AGE stands as the organ of intelligent discussion of social problems in the very forefront of modern journalism. Within the last six months its circulation has increased by leaps and bounds. Wherever Socialism is discussed seriously, whether at home, on the Continent, in our Colonies, or in the remote corners of the world, there, as our correspondence plainly proves, THE NEW AGE is read assiduously and with respect.

The experiment of running a penny Socialist review which both Socialists and the better sort of non-Socialists alike desire to see is to be brought about peacefully by the persuasion of the intellectual honesty above all things, and, secondly, to the long list of brilliant writers who have contributed to our pages.

The mere mention of the names of our recent contributors affords a guarantee of the impartiality and catholicity of our columns, as well as of the prestige THE NEW AGE has acquired among thinking men.


But we would add to these, if we might, the names of many not less distinguished who, in our review columns and in "Notes of the Week," have contributed anonymously articles and suggestions of the highest value. To these contributors, named and unnamed, THE NEW AGE owes sincere thanks.

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A New Leaf.

WHETHER the recent changes that have taken place in the personnel of the Government are for good or for ill at least a new leaf has been turned, and we are not disposed at the moment to anticipate our grievances by writing upon it the slurs which we expect the new Cabinet will earn, and all expend a good deal of time in deploring our system of party politics, especially when our own pet projects are under discussion. The Army, the Navy, the fiscal system, education, the Budget, even the franchise and "social reform"—of all these things it has been said at one time or another that they should be treated in a judicial spirit on non-party lines, and no one has ever objected. In short, we are wonderfully agreed that all legislative business should be conducted in a non-party spirit. Very rarely, however, do we really attempt to achieve the lofty independence which we praise; perhaps because of our incorrigible habit of thinking our own the non-party view. At all events, let us make the attempt now, and seize the opportunity which the suspension of Parliamentary activity affords us, of discussing the merits and the possibilities of the new Ministry in a more dispassionate fashion than is usually possible. Let us forget that they are Liberals, and therefore damned; and regarding them as the trustees whom the nation has appointed to look after its interest, let us consider how they are likely to acquit themselves of their responsibilities.

The new Premier comes first in importance, not because he is Premier, but because his strong character is sure to find far more expression in the policy of his Government than did that of his predecessor. He may move open to receive suggestions, but he will certainly insist upon setting the pace, and that pace, we fear, is likely to be slow. For that reason we have resolutely opposed his accession to the leadership ever since the rumour of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's retirement first arose. But now the thing is an accomplished fact, we are prepared to accept Mr. Asquith with all the hope we can muster, and refrain from fresh criticism until he gives us fresh cause.

What is his record? We will not recall Featherstone, for that is ancient history, and, besides, it is more than doubtful whether full responsibility for that outrage can safely be laid at his door. His worst actions during the present Parliament have been in relation to the Trades Disputes Bill, Women's Suffrage, and the Right to Work. His hostile attitude in regard to the first may be accounted for largely by the fact that he is a lawyer, and as such resented the revolutionary change in the ancient common law of England which this particular measure involved. The second also can hardly be treated as a test question by which to judge a man's whole attitude towards reform. His old-fashioned prejudice in the matter is a thing peculiar rather to a type of man than to a type of politician. There are instances of anti-feminists who profess far more advanced views than Mr. Asquith does. The third is an accomplished fact, and we are prepared to accept Mr. Asquith with all the hope we can muster, and refrain from fresh criticism until he gives us fresh cause.

On the other hand, Mr. Asquith has made himself responsible for some valuable changes. He has introduced the principle of differentiation between earned and unearned income, and has deliberately created a precedent the importance of which it would be hard to over-estimate. He has led an attack upon monopoly in the shape of the Brewers. Since the first session he has been associated with the Right to Work, it is a really crucial matter, but we will refer to that later.

On the whole, by stretching a point or two, we might pass a fairly favourable verdict upon the new Premier were it not for the awkward fact that the more democratic section of his own party has been identified with a notable lack of enthusiasm. This is too serious an omen to be disregarded. If Liberals distrust Mr. Asquith, what can Socialists say? No; in spite of our attempts to be optimistic, we cannot pretend to expect much from a leader so received.

From Mr. Asquith we turn to the most striking of the new figures—Mr. Lloyd George. His record at the Board of Trade is extraordinarily good, almost too good. One is instinctively disposed to forget about a man who is so universally popular; and, on the whole, it is a sound instinct. He has everything to lose and little to gain, and may well be tempted to introduce a popular rather than a democratic Budget—for the two things are by no means the same. Besides, it is impossible to judge the quality of a Minister until he has brought in a really big measure on his own responsibility, and has fought with his hares to the wall against strenuous and determined opposition. We know well Mr. Lloyd George's capacity for attack, but we have yet to learn whether he has the same capacity for defence. In spite of the doubts, he remains the most promising of the Liberal leaders.

Of the rest there is little to be said. Mr. Churchill has something of a reputation as an advocate of bold and radical reform, and if we suspect that he is more of a party politician than anything else we must admit that he is an excellent fighter, and that he will do yeoman service for the right side as long as it seems to him to be good tactics.

Mr. McKenna and Mr. Runciman are comparatively unknown quantities. Mr. Herbert Gladstone we know too well, and the only possible explanation of his retention in the Cabinet is that even Mr. Asquith has his sentimental side. We should like to be hopeful about Mr. Burns, but his contempt—"he does not hesitate to show—for those who have not yet risen by means of self-help to his own exalted position augurs ill for his treatment of the unemployed when at last the time comes. It is in his favour, however, that he has accepted as his junior Mr. Masterman, who, it will be remembered, was one of that stalwart band of disloyal Liberals who voted for the Right to Work.

This brings us back to what we have said is the crucial question of the day. We know that it is an important question, that it is a question of the most extreme urgency, and we have every reason to believe that if the present Ministry do not succeed to the realisation of their intentions at present, but we know this: that they are pledged to deal with the matter in a comprehensive fashion next session. We also know that they have refused to accept, even in the abstract, the principle of the Right to Work. How the refusal can be reconciled with the pledge it is impossible to see. However, the party organs are always reminding us of the colossal brain power that is represented on the Treasury Bench, and perhaps they may find another way out. Mr. Asquith, when foreshadowing the great measure that is as yet hardly in the germ, stated explicitly that it was his to be a preventive. To those who have attempted to study the elements of the problem this may seem to imply a threat against the whole competitive system of industry, but the Premier has as explicitly denied that solution. There seems no escape from the dilemma, but for the moment we must be content to wait. The point to be remembered is that Liberalism has set itself this noble task. If it succeeds it will have earned the applause of all who would live a decent and a new issue of Life. If it fails, it can never again raise its head to deceive the people; and one of the greatest obstacles to a straight issue between Labour and Monopoly will have been swept away.

FROM the Cosmic (or John Bull) outlook the world is properly regarded as peopled by three distinct races—Anglo-Saxons, Foreigners, and Natives. We shall not stay to inquire where the Anglo-Saxons are not to be especially sought, or how many aborigines, do mention, on the Continent of Europe; they can be seen on almost any day of the week in quite considerable quantities in France, Germany, or Italy, where in some of the smaller towns, at any rate, they are often rather a source of amusement than any real annoyance to the Anglo-Saxon settlers. Classifications are so frequently arbitrary that it becomes difficult to assign their due position to the inhabitants of certain lands. For instance, are the Spaniards foreigners or natives? In Barcelona and other commercially active towns one is almost inclined to place them on a level with the people of France; but then reflecting on their absurd court ships in the South, on the peculiarity of their native dress—well, there you have it. Besides, the King was lately assassinated in Lisbon. Certainly the Spaniards are natives.

Knowing by intuition who are Anglo-Saxons, and consulting with some little care at an understanding of the term foreigners, we arrive by a process of exclusion at the meaning of Natives. It would be a gross error to suppose Anglo-Saxons in the British Isles; we need but instance the Irish. The Welsh, although we grant they have a Chancellor of the Exchequer in an Anglo-Saxon Cabinet, hold a doubtful position. Fancy boggles at regarding quite seriously a people whose bard could sing

"Morudd meirdraw ei ddefawd."

For a poet to speak disrespectfully of a sea that laves our Anglo-Saxon shores discloses a narrowness of vision, a spirit somewhat mean that half inclines us—to quote the wise words of a recent Blue-book—"must be entrusted to highly skilled and carefully selected officers, possessing the attributes of born rulers, imbued with an everpresent sense of their responsibilities, and with an intense desire for the welfare of the people."

We find just such a body of heavenborn rulers in the present London County Council; their responsibilities towards the natives of London apparently cause them sleepless nights and inky days. The most recent instance of the zeal with which they pursue the welfare of the people is before us in a circular addressed "To the Parent or Guardian of every necessitous child attending school." It will be in the recollection of our readers that from a lofty sense of its duty towards the least common measure possible to stave off rebellious feelings among the natives of London.

The members of the London County Council have, as Bacon said of Kings, "to deal with their Neighbours; their wives; their children; their Prelates or Clergie; their Nobles; their Second-Nobles or Gentlemen; their Merchants; their commones; and their Men of Warre [for instance, Lord Rothschild and Lord Rosebery]; And from all these arise Dangers, if Care and Circumspection be not used."

Care and circumspection. So, although the County Council has refused to pay for the meals which it does not provide, it has sent a letter warning the parents that they are liable for the payment of these meals. The printed circular reads:

"Sir (or Madam),—I have to inform you that, on the recommendation of the Children's Care Committee (breakfasts or dinners) are being supplied to your children at the school."

"The Act of Parliament says that parents shall be charged with the cost of the meals. The Council has fixed a uniform rate of 1d. as the cost of each breakfast and 1½d. as the cost of each dinner. The Council does not wish to take any action to recover the cost of food except in cases where parents are able to provide sufficient food for their children, but negleges to do so."

"These facts are told you in order that you may pay if you can.—I am, Sir (or Madam), your obedient servant, K. BLAIR, Executive Officer."

The circular is issued from the Education Department. Attention is directed to the section "from Mr. Warren, for the possibility of recovering the payment from the parent, but not to the section which empowers the Council to take steps for the feeding of children at a cost to be borne by the local authority. Does not this circular convince anyone that the members of the Education Department possess indeed many of the attributes of born rulers? The circular is worded with the circumspection. They know their Natives."

It is not only in London that natives are to be found. You shall see them in many of the pleasant picturesque villages in the South and West of England; very typical specimens may be caught in Dorsetshire dwellings in cobb cottages. These unhewn and weathered mud cottages are no doubt perfect habitations for the starved-looking labourers. To them ear-rum—that is mutton killed just ere natural death would end the sheep's miseries—makes a glorious change in a diet of bread and "choke." In this country these hinds are paid the wages they deserve—from 9s. to 11s. a week, with something extra in harvest time.

It is not generally known that the male natives of England are entitled to vote for the election of representatives to a national assembly called the House of Commons. It is doubtful whether the Natives are generally aware of their happy privilege, if we may judge from a visit we paid to the House when some measure was introduced that was to benefit the natives. Having forgotten the nature of the proposed measure, we questioned to-day a rather intelligent specimen, who was alive to the power he possessed as a voter, but he was much too excited about Mr. Churchill to bestow any thought upon some trumpery affair that sought to deal with Unemployed Natives, of whom it may be said in Dorsetshire, they are not so.
Should we Hang Women?

By Dr. Josiah Oldfield.

DEAR old Blackstone, in his quaint way, was very loyal to the English law.

It is not always easy to uphold cruel and repulsive practices, but none the less, it can be done by those whose sense of humour is either greater or less than that of their contemporaries. The atrocious method of putting women to death was approved by Blackstone on the score of pithiness to their sex. Such tenderness, he says, has the law of England towards its women that it will not allow them to be hanged, for that would be unseemly, but in its gentle regard for their sex allows them to be burned to death or to be boiled alive!

I never step warily into my hot bath, and, inch by inch, as I become accustomed to the heat, sink back to lie down in its almost painful embrace, but I remember with a sense of horror the agonies that many a poor woman has endured while she was being slowly boiled in some improvised boiler in a public place, surrounded by a brutal crowd of men jeering and lewdly joking and scoffing.

I have again and again tried to put myself in the place of one of these poor wretches, and the thought of being pushed down again into the water as one shrieked and struggled to get out, the thought of the increasing agony as the water got hotter and hotter, the thought of the utter helplessness in the hands of strong and heartless men, and then the thought of the dreadful loneliness and of the horrible dying make one's heart sad to think that such things can ever have been done in the name of religion and of law.

In spite of Blackstone and his admiration for the tenderness of the law toward women, there have been crimes for which women have long been hanged, and I remember one in particular at Oxford—the seat of the Humanities—where it is recorded that in hanging a poor young woman for stealing, the rope broke, and she fell to the ground, but, nothing daunted, they hung her again till they thought she was dead, but after they had cut her down and she was going to be used for anatomical purposes, she was found to be alive and was taken to the gallows.

So they brought her round again, and cared for her that night, and the next day, in spite of all her piteous entreaties, they took and hanged her again!

People may say that this is horrible, and that nowadays such grim ghastliness is utterly impossible.

I do not think, however, that there is very much to choose in our practical attitude towards the condemned criminal then and now.

What a mockery of the pious foundation of Rahere was it, when St. Bartholomew’s charitable monies and St. Bartholomew’s doctors and nurses, instead of being devoted to the restoration of the sick poor to their homes and their families, were utilized to win that poor young Chipperfield back to life, merely in order to give him as a bridegroom to the gallows over the way at Newgate.

Day and night they tended him, and taught him what a sweet and beautiful thing life is, while the gash he had made in his throat was slowly healing, and then when they had won him back from death and made him just strong enough to get out of his bed they took him over the road to Newgate and hanged him and the stitches gave way, and the gash in his neck was rent open again as he died.

And this was done but lately—in a century which professes to regard all cruelty with horror—in a country which sets itself up as a pattern of Christian missionary enterprise—under the very nose of the Bishop of London and all the residential Canons of St. Paul’s—in the life time and during the mature manhood and womanhood of all of us who talk so smugly of our Culture and of our Progress and of our Evolution.

But to turn to women in particular. What argument can any reasoning man have for perpetuating upon our statute-book the crime of woman-hanging?

If women made the laws it might be comprehensible, but if old Blackstone is right and women cannot develop any real chivalry towards women they ought to protect them and shield them from the horrible death of dropping them by the neck into a pit in a prison back-yard.

Practically in nine hundred and ninety cases out of a thousand a woman commits murder either through love or through jealousy, or through shame, or through madness, and whoever imagines that the fear of instant doubtful death has any deterrent effect in the presence of either one of these passions has but little knowledge of human nature.

A Love which can kill, can brave a hundred deaths.

A Jealousy that can kill is never deterred by the direst threat of pain.

A Shame that can stifle the unplanted instinct of a motherhood’s fond love, and can teach the poor broken-hearted mother to kill the babe of her own breast, is rather an object for reverent pity and pathetic su欀ue than for the chill rope of death in an early dawnless morning.

Suffragettes may demand the rights of women, but there are no rights of women to be hanged, even while the death penalty remains for men.

The passions that sway women to murder are such as make them wholly irresponsible for their actions. To hang an irresponsible woman neither benefits the poor woman herself nor the victim of her madness, nor deters other women in their periods of temporary insanity from committing the like acts.

A woman too gives long warning of the criminal mania which is beginning to possess her.

It is unnatural for a woman to resort to violence, and she tries all the other arts of her sex in vain before the growing passion within her finds its vent in murder.

Green-eyed Jealousy begins with tears and tempers, with threats and cajolery, with tongue of malice and toying with the image of killing before the deed is done.

The sad-miened shame develops all the lonely months, when the poor girl finds herself betrayed and forsaken, or when the cruel passion is borne in like an icy tide upon her hopeless soul.

For those who have eyes to see and ears to hear there is a change come upon the girl, and the shadow of a blighted motherhood broods over her dead life, and the moan of a murder she is driven to commit has a long plaintive premonitory wait for months before.

When either of these states begin to infect a woman’s sanity she needs care, not neglect. There is a warning to the State that one of its members is failing, and it is as foolish for the State to neglect the warning and then to punish the poor murder-impelled victim by hanging as it would be for the parish council to watch for weeks the arch of the church door giving direst threat of pain.

There is no other form of punishment that would be unseemly, but in its gentle regard for women that it will not allow them to be hanged, for that would be unseemly. It will not allow them to be burned to death or to be boiled alive.

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We want legalized murder done away with in its entirety, but we urgently demand that the killing of women by law should be abolished at once, and that men should find a gentler and humaner way of dealing with the weaker sex than by chopping them to death for abnormal developments of the very virtues of womanhood.

[Dr. Oldfield will be very glad to welcome the names of all who will help the Society for the Abolition of Capital Punishment, of which he is a member, and of all those who will canvass for his Bill for the gradua-

tion of the crime of murder.]
In Brief.

The Dockers’ Union have appealed for a representative on the proposed new Port of London Board. There are now 18,952 motor-cars in the L.C.C. district. A total of 3,900 miles of privately owned canals, which are generally worked by canal companies. The value of these waterways was emphasised in the interests of commerce and are found invaluable in many cases. The last century had seen the Samoyeds inhabiting the Petchora basin of Siberia, the former being now extinct.

Mrs. Pankhurst says there is no hope for a movement of quiet persuasion now that Mr. Asquith is Premier. But was there ever?

Mr. Grayson announced to a “Daily Dispatch” interviewer that Mr. G. Bernard Shaw and Mr. C. Cunningham Graham would be candidates at the next General Election.

The scope of the Royal Commission on Envelope of the Coast, appointed July, 1906, is to be enlarged “for the purpose of determining whether in connection with reclaimed lands or otherwise it is desirable to make an experiment in afforestation on the waste lands or areas of improved or abandoned agricultural lands in the labour market and, if so, by what authority such experiment should be conducted.”

Mr. W. Oldham writes that the neglect of the question of Tariffs from by Socialists may in the event of the return of a Protectionist majority at the next election, “completely wreck the Labour party and so stultify the work of years.”

Mr. Sidney Webb will deliver his Presidential Address to the Social and Political Education League on “The Necessary Basis of Society,” at University College, on Thursday, 14th May, at 8 p.m. The Rt. Hon. Sir Alfred Lyall, K.C.G., will preside.

All the way from New Zealand Mr. Gibens writes to say that Dr. M. D. Eder should be hanged on a lamp-post for suggesting that the Zulus should be exterminated by introducing amongst them plague and sleeping sickness.

Dr. H. M. Bernard writes: “Inasmuch as the ‘super-monkey’ managed to grow into man, there is no need to despair of the ‘superman.’ He will become due; he is inevitable, we only doubt it because our conceptions of evolution are too materialistic.”

The Rev. R. H. Bloor, “The New Age to suffer the Shakespeare Commemoration.” He is a comparatively harmless person; only one Shakespeare commentator has been hanged in the Abbey. They have revered Shakespeare as that regiment served Falstaff, bringing into relief the full glory of his fatness.

Mr. E. D. Morel, hon. secretary of the Congo Reform Association, speaking at Liverpool on April 13, said that if Belgium had not annexed the Congo by June, and on terms which England could accept, the British Government was determined, in co-operation with the Government of the United States of America, to take measures which would compel the Congo Government to observe treaty rights, openly and persistently violated.

The Rev. Conrad Noel will reply to recent criticisms on the first two Thursdays of May at 8 p.m. Sion College, Thame Embankment (near Blackfriars Metropolitan Station). May 7, “Socialism Binding upon Churchmen.” Chairman, the Rev. R. J. Campbell (City Temple). May 14, “Socialism immediately Practicable.” Chairman, Mr. G. K. Chesterton. Tickets (single lecture), 5s. 6d. and 10s.; (two lectures), 4s. 6d. and 8s. Apply Miss Baldwin, 44, Marylands Road, Maidstone Vale, W.; Miss Noel, 40, Beaufort Mansions, Cheltenham; or at doors.

In France the canals are nationalised. They are worked by the Government and are found invaluable in keeping down railway freight charges. The canals of Germany, Austria, Belgium, Holland, and Russia are partially under State control and in England there are 3,900 miles of privately owned canals, which are generally falling into decay and in many cases have actually become derelict. As a result the deliberate intervention of the railway companies is necessary.

The value of these waterways was emphasised in 1904, when 60 Chambers of Commerce urged the Government to nationalise the canals.

The ravages of capitalism are given prominence in reports from Northern Russia, where the Polar tribe known as the Samoyedes is gradually being exterminated by rapacious traders, often of their own race. The Russian Government looks on with callous indifference. Slavery, supposed to have been abolished in Russia, is rampant. The tribesmen have been brought to ruin by the successful operations of the criminal clergy of the trade. They comfort themselves with the idea that they cheat, steal, oppress, and torture in perfect freedom. The chief object of wealth is the reindeer, and in past years it is estimated that the tribesmen have annually received more than two millions and a half of these animals. Nowadays less than half this number is owned by them, and of these probably not more than 200,000 belonging to the Samoyedes survived last year’s epidemic. During the last century the Samoyedes inhabiting the Petchora basin has fallen 75 per cent.

Written as long ago as 1897, the following passage from a letter to the “Daily Chronicle” from Mr. Bernard Shaw is still topical, so rapid is the progress of Liberalism:

For example, we have in England a great evil, the evil of drink. What is the first plan of dealing with it that might be expected to come into the head of a very raw revolutionist? Clearly the extermination of the drink traffic, without consideration for the individuals engaged in it, by the brute force of the majority. And do you find this rash proposal put forward by the Socialists and combated by the calm reason and political sagacity of the Liberal party? Not at all. It is the Liberal party which has gone to the country with it in spite of the remonstrances of the Socialists. The drink traffic brings in on the one hand large profits on the sale of drink and on the other hand it brings in the sinful losses by incurring disease and crime. As long as you have the private speculator taking the profits, and the public ratepayer paying for the police and hospital rates, so long will it be the interest of the publican to persist in the daily breach of the law which forbids him to sell more drink to men who have already had more than is good for them, and so long will you have the ratepayer paying the expenses of drunkenness without knowing what he is paying for. But if the public-houses were kept, not by the private speculator, but by the ratepayer—other words, by the municipality—then the expenses and the profits would appear on the same balance-sheet, and the sober man would know much how much a good bar customer costs him. We should then have at least the respect which, as we want, but not public-houses in which a man who is drunk is made mad drunk or blind drunk without regard to subsequent police, surgical, and criminal law expenses. That is a possible and reasonable state of things, and had Sir William Harcourt proposed to bring it about with proper consideration for all the persons who might be injured by the change, the whole country, Liberal as well as Conservative, would not now have been chuckling over his wholesome and richly deserved defeat at Derby. Local Veto without consideration for the persons concerned in the liquor trade is a piece of obsolete catastrophic impossibility—exactly the sort of thing which the Fabian Society, after ten years of incessant argument and persuasion, has been making the Revolutionary Socialist societies ashamed of, only to find now that the Liberals have much less common sense than the Social Democratic Federation.

Pictures.

The wild-rose of the Dawn, the hyacinth Of Noon, the flaming tulip of the Eve, And the jet gold-streaked pansey of the Night— White rains that fall upon a moonlit mere Prickling with silver daggers beads of light That float and break and die in mystic song— An April shower that runs with lightning feet On silver tiptoe through the glimmering fields— A distant village sleeping in a rainbow— Reed by the river tossed in Autumn storm Like armes charging, swaying, and repulsed—

The waking life of cities through the mist Where moving shadows shape to domes and towers, Where darkening ships on deepening streams of gold Float, and rich palaces look down beside,

Stately and old and brightening out of dream.

WILL FOSTER.
New Wells for Old.

By Wordsworth Donisthorpe.

Spare me a little space in your ring for a rough-and-tumble with Mr. H. G. Wells. But first let me shake him by the hand in the usual orthodox manner, and take this opportunity of thanking him cordially for the many happy hours for which I am indebted to him. Mr. Wells has assumed the leadership of the Fabians, a little Society consisting, so we are now told, of "at most four or five personalities," and "of this group the dominant intelligence was Mr. Webb." Mr. Wells is now to take command, and his is to be the dominant intelligence, so to speak. It must be nearly a quarter of a century since I left Mr. Webb in tears over the Disintegration of the Old Synthesis, and ever since, I hear, he has been incubating seven solemn tomes proving that a labourer worth 9d. an hour is "really" worth 10d. Only one of these volumes, Mr. Wells tells us, has as yet attained incarnation, the remaining six being still entombed in the teeming head of the author. I don't complain: I can afford to wait—provided Administrative Socialism does not make their reading compulsory. Meantime Mr. Webb has been employing his leisure hours in churning out a swarm of tracts, a penny each, three for twopence, which must "well repay perusal." One of them is entitled "Facts for a Christian." Everyone of this kind there should be a good demand in, say, Western China.

The first time I met Mr. George Bernard Shaw (hereinafter referred to as G.B.S.) he exploded a bomb in my face. Mrs. Besant—this was before she became an Astral body—had just delivered herself of a soul-stirring denunciation of her then pet aversion, the Labour, when a young man in a gillet sauntered on to the platform as though it belonged to him and thus introduced himself to the audience, "Mr. Chairman, I am a loafer." Mrs. Besant fainted, or nearly so: many of the audience fell off their chairs, or nearly so: and I said to myself, "That young man will get on: he understands. I do not believe he has ever read Marx's end of his string of stuffed and dusty figures he attaches to the platform as though it belonged to him and thus introduced himself to the audience, "Mr. Chairman, I am a loafer." Mrs. Besant fainted, or nearly so: many of the audience fell off their chairs, or nearly so: and I said to myself, "That young man will get on: he knows how to shock." The ordinary Britisher requires a shock, sometimes several shocks, before you can get an idea current through him. After that, whenever I met G.B.S., I expected to hear him declare himself a Buddhist: and one day at a meeting of Individualists, he did get up, and in dulcet tones proclaim, "Gentlemen, I am a Socialist." You could have knocked me down with a feather. Of course, he was as much a Socialist as he was a Buddhist or a loafer. But it did the trick, and we all listened to him. Naturally he was not going to give himself away at that early stage of the entertainment, but now he can afford to lay his cards upon the table and say: "I have never pretended that G.B.S. was real: I have over and over again taken him by the hand in the usual orthodox manner, and take this opportunity of thanking him cordially for the many happy hours for which I am indebted to him. Mr. Wells has assumed the leadership of the Fabians, a little Society consisting, so we are now told, of "at most four or five personalities," and "of this group the dominant intelligence was Mr. Webb," Mr. Wells is now to take command, and his is to be the dominant intelligence, so to speak. It must be nearly a quarter of a century since I left Mr. Webb in tears over the Disintegration of the Old Synthesis, and ever since, I hear, he has been incubating seven solemn tomes proving that a labourer worth 9d. an hour is "really" worth 10d. Only one of these volumes, Mr. Wells tells us, has as yet attained incarnation, the remaining six being still entombed in the teeming head of the author. I don't complain: I can afford to wait—provided Administrative Socialism does not make their reading compulsory. Meantime Mr. Webb has been employing his leisure hours in churning out a swarm of tracts, a penny each, three for twopence, which must "well repay perusal." One of them is entitled "Facts for a Christian." Everyone of this kind there should be a good demand in, say, Western China.

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thing was done or it was not done. Mr. Wells storks a middle course. He says: "You fellows are so absurdly logical; how do you know that the water was not turned into raspberry vinegar?" We hang our heads, and our teacher continues: "To any person with a philosophical education this is a ridiculous mental process, but it is extremely rational to an untrained mind—and that is the usual case with the Anti-Socialist."

Mr. Mallock and I are both Anti-Socialists, but we do not trouble to label ourselves Anti-Socialists. Of course we are. What I enjoy is the little dig at the end—and that is the usual case with the anti-Socialist."

I like it because it furnishes a clue to what was obviously vague and illusory, namely, the precise chemical composition of Mr. Wells’s new patent Good Will. It turns out to be all of a piece with that sturdy O.T. Good Will with which Samuel of blessed memory hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord. The spirit of Good Will pops up again in a passage in which the writer is trying to explain why all the old Socialist communities crumbled away. In some cases it seems they were wrecked by the "sudden lapse of the treasurer into an extreme individualism." This would be rather funny if it were not the oldest joke in the Socialist armoury. Besides, it comes ill from the mouth of one who writes, "Socialism will certainly destroy all private property in land and in natural material and accumulated industrial resources." I must make a new inventory, before the red-tape-worms crawl into my old Greek mathematician and admit manfully that the three interior angles of a triangle are or are not exactly equal to two right angles: they have come to sleep there. . . . The wind had a keen edge that night even for us who had dined and were rather funny if it were not the oldest joke in the Socialist armoury. Besides, it comes ill from the mouth of one who writes, "Socialism will certainly destroy all private property in land and in natural material and accumulated industrial resources." I must make a new inventory, before the red-tape-worms crawl into my old Greek mathematician and admit manfully that the three interior angles of a triangle are or are not exactly equal to two right angles: they have come to sleep there. . . . The wind had a keen edge that night even for us who had dined and were rather funny if it were not the oldest joke in the Socialist armoury. Besides, it comes ill from the mouth of one who writes, "Socialism will certainly destroy all private property in land and in natural material and accumulated industrial resources." I must make a new inventory, before the red-tape-worms crawl into my old Greek mathematician and admit manfully that the three interior angles of a triangle are or are not exactly equal to two right angles: they have come to sleep there. . . . The wind had a keen edge that night even for us who had dined and were rather funny if it were not the oldest joke in the Socialist armoury. Besides, it comes ill from the mouth of one who writes, "Socialism will certainly destroy all private property in land and in natural material and accumulated industrial resources." I must make a new inventory, before the red-tape-worms crawl into my old Greek mathematician and admit manfully that the three interior angles of a triangle are or are not exactly equal to two right angles: they have come to sleep there. . . . The wind had a keen edge that night even for us who had dined and were rather funny if it were not the oldest joke in the Socialist armoury. Besides, it comes ill from the mouth of one who writes, "Socialism will certainly destroy all private property in land and in natural material and accumulated industrial resources." I must make a new inventory, before the red-tape-worms crawl into my old Greek mathematician and admit manfully that the three interior angles of a triangle are or are not exactly equal to two right angles: they have come to sleep there. . . . The wind had a keen edge that night even for us who had dined and were rather funny if it were not the oldest joke in the Socialist armoury. Besides, it comes ill from the mouth of one who writes, "Socialism will certainly destroy all private property in land and in natural material and accumulated industrial resources." I must make a new inventory, before the red-tape-worms crawl into my old Greek mathematician and admit manfully that the three interior angles of a triangle are or are not exactly equal to two right angles: they have come to sleep there. . . . The wind had a keen edge that night even for us who had dined and were rather funny if it were not the oldest joke in the Socialist armoury. Besides, it comes ill from the mouth of one who writes, "Socialism will certainly destroy all private property in land and in natural material and accumulated industrial resources." I must make a new inventory, before the red-tape-worms crawl into my old Greek mathematician and admit manfully that the three interior angles of a triangle are or are not exactly equal to two right angles: they have come to sleep there. . . . The wind had a keen edge that night even for us who had dined and were
Mr. Wells’s old self come back as a giant refreshed and give us some more of his delightful Stories and Romances. He might find a ready sale for his "Sociological Essays" among the Moon-calves, and—leave them there, as it were.

There is, it seems, one exception to Mr. Wells’s Rule of A": the Middle Class in the near future have two crises to cope with: the first is no third course, but a "Will it become intelligent and decisive between these millstones of the organised property and the organising State, between Plutocracy and Socialism?" That is what he wants to hear from us, personally I find myself about to be ground to powder between the upper and the nether millstones, destined to be crushed by the rising of the nether or the falling of the upper, I should prefer to remain as "unintelligent" as possible. Poor Middle Class: which do you prefer? to be flattened against the ceiling by Socialism or flattened against the floor by Plutocracy? Will you be squeezed to death by the rising rates below, or by the superincumbent rents above? This is not a choice between A and Not-A, but between A and B: and Mr. Wells must prove the non-existence of C, D, etc. Now Cerberus was a dog with many heads, although Mr. Wells can only see two. Most of us know something of Autocracy, Aristocracy, Theocracy, as well as of Socialism and Democracy. Some few of us can also discern the far-off shadowy figure of the giant Liberty, who, in the fulness of time, will smite off these snake-heads, one and all, and pitch them into Acheron.

Plutocracy is the system of government based on the concentration of all power to bully the poor, and that power will not be conferred upon them by Individualism. It is wise and just to take from the rich the privilege of bullying the poor. It is wise and just to withdraw from the poor (good and had) the privilege of robbing and bullying the rich. Modern Socialism is just what all Cracies have ever been, the ruling and "besting" of the weak by the strong: whether the strong are the barons and the weak the serfs, or the strong are the rich and the weak the prosperous few. Autocracy, Democracy, Plutocracy, are all species of the same genus, the system of plunder by those who can plunder, and of submission by those who will submit. And of all forms of "government" the Rule of the Red-tape-worm is the vilest. Let us hope that the epitaph on Old England’s tomb will not be "Skolekolobrote." By the way, an Oxford undergrad, now I believe a Cabinet Minister, once rendered this passage: "And Herod became a skolekolobrote, and died in the enjoyment of his wealth." skolekolobrote: may it presently die in the enjoyment of that office.

And now let us take a peep at Mr. Wells at work with his "good will" in the little High Street of Sandgate, who has a hinge christened after Mr. Webb’s broken cricket-bat. He examines the little retail shops and finds a quarter of them, perhaps a third, in a ruinous condition, eaten-up by the rising rates, simply, as he says, "downward channels from decency to despair." He watches the decline and fall of a newly-fitted-up one. "I go furtively and examine the goods in the window. Presently the stock in the window begins to deteriorate in quantity and quality, and then I know that credit is tightening. The proprietor no longer comes to the door; he regards me through the darkling panes with a look that amazes the tongue even when he has got some savings the savings are gone, and the shop waits for a new victim.”

Now is the time for sympathy and the application of the new patent "good will." Mr. Wells seeks out the broken window and threshes him up with "Ah! It is the rates: I’m just stony broke." "The rates! my dear old broken window, can’t you see what the rates are doing for you? Why, you are better off than ever you were. Look at the Thames Embankment where you can sleep gratis all night. Look at the Public Library where you can read "Racy Snippets" and "Rumple Rarefied" and ahost! "Anticipations," and all these are free. Look here, Sir, I may be an old bat, but what’s the good of all these things to a bat without a shot in his battery?" “O, you forget: if the worst comes to the worst, look at the Workhouse, where you can—why do you stare like that? yes, yes, I admit it is a dull place at present: but wait till our Ham and Hammersmith friends have been at it for a month or two, and you will be surprised: the new billiard table, for example, and the velvet sofas and free tobacco and all that I buck up, old man, you have a future before you.” "Alack! I have and the nebulous wreath went away sorrowful, for he had a weeping wife and hollow-eyed children, and he could not wait for the rate-supported millennium, not he. And Mr. Wells never published this conversation, no.

And now, as an old hand, I will give Mr. Wells a couple of suggestions. One relates to his Waxwork Pantheon, and the other to Songs.

I am not sure that you are wrong in adding to your Pantheon. As you truly observe, “Paul and Christ turn again and again to the ideal of a world of just men made perfect,” but remember, if you thus enrich your collection, you will lose your G.B.S. You will have to chew over this problem and, painful as the process is, make up your mind which straw you mean to sit on: because neither Paul nor Shaw will consent to stand in the draughty doorway while you are formulating your A", as it were. One of them gives us good circuses, and the other promises excellent panem. In the words of Mr. Headlam, “Seek the Kingdom of God and then you will be clothed as beautifully as the Eastern lily and fed as surely as the birds.” Personally, I prefer more regular meals.

Now for the songs. You must have some good rousing choruses, or you will never get at the jolly proletariat. You know. “For the Dawn and the Day is coming, and forth the banners go,” and all that sort of thing. Webbism is not rollicking, and that is why Socialism got green-moulded under his lachrymose sway. Why not get “Adrian Ross” to write you something explaining that Socialism presents the most inspiring creative scheme that ever came into the chaos of human affairs,” but that “the proper method and proper expedients have still to be established,” as you very properly point out. How would this do?—

"O Thou — !"

(From an Address at Oxford on Women’s Suffrage.)

By Israel Zangwill.

For the last half-century women have been demanding the suffrage, and during all these years we have all had a vivid picture of the kind of creature who could demand such a thing. In appearance this creature was ugly, elderly, masculine, and eye-glassed. Within the last year or two, however, we have been compelled to rub our eyes and ask ourselves if we were dreaming. suffragettes appeared who did not wear eye-glasses, who were not ugly, nor elderly, nor masculine. Indeed, many of the leaders of the movement are pretty girls, and even when they have taken their degrees in law or medicine, no obscuring glasses veil their vivacious eyes. Were we then to believe that our old picture of the Suffragette had been a hideous delusion? To part with something of Autocracy, Aristocracy, as well as of Plutocracy and Democracy. Some few of us can also discern the far-off shadowy figure of the giant Liberty, who, in the fulness of time, will smite off these snake-heads, one and all, and pitch them into Acheron. And of all forms of "government" the Rule of the Red-tape-worm is the vilest. Let us hope that the epitaph on Old England’s tomb will not be "Skolekolobrote." By the way, an Oxford undergrad, now I believe a Cabinet Minister, once rendered this passage: “And Herod became a skolekolobrote, and died in the enjoyment of his wealth.” skolekolobrote: may it presently die in the enjoyment of that office.

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being unable to get married, have to find something else to fill up their time. I am not even an old bachelor, and it is just my marriage that has brought home to me more convincingly than ever the injustice of the present system. I am not even an old bachelor, and it is just my marriage that has brought home to me the way in which the system under which I live is not good for me. Now I am quite willing to say that my superiority goes so far that I should have four and she none. Nay, I cannot even feel that my superiority goes so far that I should have one, if she has none at all.

Yet this idea of male superiority is the only one that underlies the objection to female sufrage. It is expressed with engaging frankness by Dickens' Mr. Sapsea, the auctioneer in "Edwin Drood." Mrs. Sapsea, according to the Rev. Mind, as of course embodied in Mr. Sapsea. "When I made my proposal," says Mr. Sapsea, "she did me the honour to be so overshadowed with a species of Awe as to be able to articulate only the two words 'O Thou,' meaning myself." After years of admiration, Mr. Sapsea tells us, his wife died of feeble action of the liver, still addressing him in the same "unfinished terms," and after her death it occurred to her husband that perhaps his superiority was what she had died of. "There have been times," he says, "when I have asked myself what if her husband had been nearer on a level with her? If she had not had to look up in quite so high, what might the stimulating action have been upon the liver?" And you will perhaps remember the epitaph he had carved over her grave:

FETHELINDA,
Reverential wife of
MR. THOMAS SAPSEA,
AUCTIONEER, VALUER, ESTATE AGENT, &c.,
Whose knowledge of the World,
Though somewhat extensive,
Never brought him acquainted with
A Spartan
More capable of
Looking up to Him.

Of course, it is very pleasant to be addressed by one's wife as "O Thou," but like so many pleasant things, it is not good for one. It was not good for Mr. Sapsea to imagine himself so superlatively sage; in fact, it only increased his natural silliness. The House of Commons is full of Mr. Sapsea thinking they are all supremely competent to make laws for their women and that all their women have to do is to look up reverentially and enunciate thus: "O Thou!" Think of the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill! Whatever your view of it, was there ever a measure more affecting the interests of women, was there ever one about which it was more necessary to consult the opinions of women? If women's sphere is the home, should have kept her there. Too late to turn the key on her now—she is Florence Nightingale's opinion of the candidate for the claim of women rests not upon their petticoats but upon their purses, not upon their being their being our comrades, and you will escape tangling yourself in a whole network of fallacies.

But we tell our readers that the claim of women rests not upon their petticoats but upon their purses, not upon their being our comrades, and you will escape tangling yourself in a whole network of fallacies.
When he rose every morning, the first thing he would do was to fall on his knees beside his bed. His figure in its white garment—for he wore a nightshirt—was rather long and lean, and looked its longest thus bent together with a glimpse of sanguine neck and face suffused with blood. When he did pray, he hardly knew himself for what he prayed, unless it were to be trusted to behave, freed from the still, cold hands of another man, was but his temperament exaggerated and face. She had marked him down as quite a tiny boy, and piling him in layers, one on another, till she should all know what they were doing at. She had seen him take his dog, and, squatting on the floor, hold it close to the biscuit that it did not want to eat; and she had marked the expression in his grey-blue eyes, fixed on that little white fox-terrier, trying so hard to back out through her collar.

For, after all, this deity of his, like the deity of every other man, was but his temperament exaggerated beyond life size, and put in perfect order—it was but the concretion of his constant feeling that nothing could be trusted to behave, freed from the still, cold hands of Power. He had never trusted himself to act—save unconsciously, this deity of his peculiar deity—much less, then, could he feel that others could be trusted. This want of trust—which was only, perhaps, a natural desire for putting everything and everybody in their proper places—had made him from a child eligible for almost any post of trust. And Nature, recognising this, had used him a hundred thousand times, weeding him out from among his more irregular and trustful fellows, and piling him in layers, one on another, till she had built him out of him in every division of the State, temples of Power. Two qualifications alone had she exacted; that he should not be trustful, and that he should be content to lie beneath the layer above him, until he should come in time to be that upper layer himself. She had marked him down as quite a tiny boy, walking with his governess, chomping the heads off thistles with his stick, and ordering his brothers' games precisely, so that they should all know what they were playing at. She had seen him take his dog, and, squatting on the floor, hold it close to the biscuit that it did not want to eat; and she had marked the expression in his grey-blue eyes, fixed on that little white fox-terrier, trying so hard to back out through her collar.

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that expression. You make the fundamental error of over-trusting human nature. Believe me, if you lived here, and saw the machinery of things as closely as I see it, and worked, as I do, in this powerful atmosphere, and knew the worry and the difficulty of changing anything, and the thanklessness of the public that one works for, you would not get a very different notion of the necessity of what you call reform. You must bear in mind the fact that the State has carefully considered what is best for all, and that I am only an official. The object was to give me three hours and least before I can get away, of important details (which you, no doubt, despise), connected with the business of the State, and which it is my duty and my pride to transact efficiently; so that you will forgive me if I drop a subject, on which, of course, I am still open to conviction. Progress, we must all admit, is necessary, but, I assure you, in this case you are making a mistake.

The little smile died off his lips, and preceding the intruder to the door, he politely opened it. Then, in the marble corridor, he raised his eyes above his visitor's retiring back. There, with its great red hands on the knees parted beneath a white and flowing robe, sat Power—his deity; and a silent prayer, far too instinctive and inevitable to be expressed in words, rose through the stagnant, dusty atmosphere:

"O great Image that put me here, knowing as thou dost the failings of fellow-beings, give me power to see that they do right; let me provide for them the moral and the social diet they require. For, since I have been here, I have daily, hourly, humbly felt more certain of what it is they really want; more assured that, through thy help, I am the person who can give it them. O great Image, before thou didst put me here I was not quite certain about anything, but now, thanks be to thee, everything is daily clearer and more definite, till my spirit is utterly at rest, and I have only one reason for feeling a little anxious that, through thy help, I am the person who can give it them.

O great Image, before thou didst put me here I was not quite certain about anything, but now, thanks be to thee, everything is daily clearer and more definite, till my spirit is utterly at rest, and I am cold and still and changeless as this marble corridor."

Books and Persons.

(AN OCCASIONAL CAUSERIE,)

The Editor of the "St. George's Review" has a very good title and some very powerful friends. Let the solemn words be spoken solemnly—W. H. Smith and Son are "behind" it. I do not say that W. H. Smith and Son are the only people behind it, but they seem important. Not a few months ago, I would say, in the course of a periodical that does not contain a humorous serial by W. W. Jacobs, W. H. Smith and Son were "behind" it. Now, unless the individuals who invented "National Defence" as a title have either withdrawn or been translated, they must still be bringing to the direction of the "St. George's" destiny, and I fancy, to journalism. Captain Battine is already beloved in quires and places where they write.

I have only one reason for feeling a little anxious about the "St. George's Review." The creators of it originally intended to call it "National Defence," as their object was to interest the public in the machine that conquered Napoleon and Mr. Brudnick. Now the mentality of persons who could seriously think of calling a monthly review "National Defence" must at least be unusual, and conceivably moves on a plane rather high above actuality. Any common Fleet Street soul could foretell exactly the circulation of a review that entitled itself "National Defence." It would have four subscribers—Sir Charles Dilke, the German Emperor, and Presidents Roosevelt and Castro; Mr. Steed would get his copy free. Now, unless the individuals who invented "National Defence" as a title have either withdrawn or been translated, they must still be bringing to the direction of the "St. George's" destiny, and I fancy, to journalism. Captain Battine is already beloved in quires and places where they write.

It doesn't want ideas once a month. It has definitely decided (at any rate editors say so) that it will not have ideas once a month. I have no hesitation in saying that our monthly periodicals are, as a whole, the most stupid and infantile of any "world-Power," the United States excepted. The British Public reads the "Fortnightly" because the "Fortnightly" is a good, not inherited from an earlier age; it keeps the "Nineteenth Century and After" on its drawing-room table, because the list of contributors is ornamental. And then what? It killed the "New Review." It killed the "Monthly Review." I don't know what it is doing to do the recent ventures, such as "The Albany." Don't tell me that I have forgotten the "Cornhill." In my view, the "Cornhill" stands for all that is worst in the British temperament. It has the smoothness and the vacuity of a minor official retired from the F.O. Look through a number; in the whole of it there is not a split infinitive nor an idea. It is a sponge-cake of well-bred recollections, essays on gardens and Shakespeare, and the introspection of anemic and tailorish persons who have withdrawn from a rough world. As for its serials: Mrs. Humphry Ward, Mr. and Mrs. Egerton Castle, Mr. A. E. W. Mason; Mr. A. E. W. Mason, Mr. and Mrs. Egerton Castle, Mrs. Humphry Ward! Why not Mr. William Le Queux for a change? Save possibly "Harpers," the "Cornhill" is the most desolating magazine that I have ever discovered abandoned in a first-class compartment.

It is notorious, of course, that from all the unpreading magazines ideas less than fifty years old are utterly barred. If an illustrious magazine does not incidentally buy a story by Mr. H. G. Wells you may trust the editor to advertise it as though it were a melodrama by Mr. Max Pemberton, and to gild the pill with such articles as "London at Prayer," or "The Romance of Crossing Sweepers." The cheap magazines, strange to this, has definitely decided (at any rate editors say so) that it will not have ideas once a month. I have no hesitation in saying that our monthly periodicals are, as a whole, the most stupid and infantile of any "world-Power," the United States excepted. The British Public reads the "Fortnightly" because the "Fortnightly" is a good, not inherited from an earlier age; it keeps the "Nineteenth Century and After" on its drawing-room table, because the list of contributors is ornamental. And then what? It killed the "New Review." It killed the "Monthly Review." I don't know what it is doing to do the recent ventures, such as "The Albany." Don't tell me that I have forgotten the "Cornhill." In my view, the "Cornhill" stands for all that is worst in the British temperament. It has the smoothness and the vacuity of a minor official retired from the F.O. Look through a number; in the whole of it there is not a split infinitive nor an idea. It is a sponge-cake of well-bred recollections, essays on gardens and Shakespeare, and the introspection of anemic and tailorish persons who have withdrawn from a rough world. As for its serials: Mrs. Humphry Ward, Mr. and Mrs. Egerton Castle, Mr. A. E. W. Mason; Mr. A. E. W. Mason, Mr. and Mrs. Egerton Castle, Mrs. Humphry Ward! Why not Mr. William Le Queux for a change? Save possibly "Harpers," the "Cornhill" is the most desolating magazine that I have ever discovered abandoned in a first-class compartment.

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BOOK OF THE WEEK.

Mr. Balfour on Decadence.✴

Way Mr. Balfour should have chosen the subject of national decadence for his address to the women of Newnham College is not clear, but since it is now published for the benefit of the world at large, the question is not worth investigating.

The matter and the manner of the address, its philosophic phrasing, its doubtful purport are just what were to be expected from the author of the "Defence of Pufendorf." No definite conclusions are reached or even attempted, but thePossum of the problem is admirably stated. In his earlier days, and notably in his Rectorial Address on "Progress," delivered to the University of Glasgow in 1871, Mr. Balfour was determinedly pessimistic, notwithstanding his explicit disavowals. But here he is neither pessimist nor optimist. He seems with advancing years to have taken refuge in a lofty and genuine scepticism.

It does not even assert that there is such a phenomenon as the Decadence which is commonly said to be the inevitable fate of all Empires and civilisations. Nor does he attempt to define the term itself—which is just as well, since a definition would be an explanation that means the fact that to the unknown a name amounts at least to a recognition that there is an unknown, and that the causes which lead to the decay of civilisations are as yet unexplained.

The problem of the decline of the Roman Empire is dealt with at some considerable length, and most, if not all, of the theories which have hitherto been put forward to account for it are summarily dismissed. The treatment is entirely negative, and no new light is thrown on the questions, but at the present juncture it is interesting to note that the "paeon et circenses" theory is discarded along with the rest. The demoralisation of the people by the public distribution of corn cannot, Mr. Balfour tells us, even if it were a fact, be seriously regarded as an important element in the problem.

But if Mr. Balfour advances no definite theories, he suggests many things. He questions whether progress is not the exceptional rather than the normal condition. Throughout the East, he points out, there prevails a simple, sensuous, and simple, it gives us now the sunlight in which these essays are steeped, with the more than hint of luxurious leisure, conveyed in the many happy hours. They will be further indented by the inclusion in this volume of her beautiful play, "Ariadne in Mantua." Written some years ago, and published, as we well remember, in a delightful cover of Italian binding, it struck us then as one of the most disinterested, sensuous, and simple, it gives us now the thrills of years ago.

"Decadence" (Sidgwick Memorial Lecture) By the Right Hon. Arthur James Balfour M.P. (Cambridge University Press. 18 ed.)

LIMBO AND OTHER ESSAYS; to which is now added "Ariadne in Mantua." By Vernon Lee. (Lane. 3s. 6d.)

"Vernon Lee," almost alone among living writers, carries on the tradition of the "Aesthetic Movement with its motto: Art for art's sake, of which the proper corollary is "Devil take Preaching." In this reprint of one of her earliest volumes of essays there is not a trace of any propaganda except the propaganda of beauty. We reread the old familiar sentences with renewed pleasure, feeling ourselves among her pages much as we feel in Italy after a year in London. What a relief to the mind it is to recover that intense sunlight in which these essays are steeped, with the more than hint of luxurious leisure conveyed in the very cadence of the sentences. All lovers of pure literature are already indebted to the propaganda of beauty. They will be further indented by the inclusion in this volume of her beautiful play, "Ariadne in Mantua." Written some years ago, and published, as we well remember, in a delightful cover of Italian binding, it struck us then as one of the most disinterested, sensuous, and simple, it gives us now the thrills of years ago.

Clifford Sharp.
History of Mediaeval Civilisation. By Charles Seignobos. (Unwin. 5s.)

There are two methods of writing a history of civilisation. Here we have to do with the one which has not yet appeared, would otherwise be either too big or too little. This is the sort of thing that makes the minister angry; and anger becomes the fury before he has polished reading the volume. The history of mediaeval civilisation is a history of the relations of Empire and Papacy, and of the eventual break-up of the former and the rise of the latter. The Empire, however, is scarcely mentioned, and the Papacy is by no means adequately handled. There is much too much about England and France, which do not bear the leading events of civilisation until the close of the mediaeval period. In fact, there is no perspective in the first half of the volume. The second half is better. It opens with a sketch of inventions and discoveries; and of these the third is ungrammatical and the fourth exaggerated. The book teems with misprints and errors; beginning on the title-page. There is no such word as "Walküries" (p. 17); and it is no more a model in others, that we shall best learn—how to do it. It appears that the best Poor Law in Europe is to be found in Austria-Hungary, and the author is particularly struck with the cleanliness of the latter half of the monarchy. It is clear, too, from the chapter on Poor Relief in the latter half of the monarchy. It is clear, too, from the statement that "the year of the birth of Christ is the first year of the Christian era" (p. 41) is false; the accepted date of Christ's birth is B.C. 4. The statement that there were 60,000 Knights in England in the eleventh century (p. 75) is absurd; and so is the charge of a mediaeval chronicler—long has been expelled from our text-books; and though it is true that the Cabinet is a committee of the Privy Council, the inference that the Prime Minister is named President of the Council of the King (p. 401) is simply ludicrous. The following (p. 119) may amuse those who delight in verbal puzzles: "A sick man was sent for and made to touch the three rings; he was cured. In touching the true one the mystic spirit, not the sham thing of our day, ran in his veins, and allowed him to paint visions that had long been realities to him."

The selection of photographs from his pictures given at the end of the book gives naturally but a feeble inkling of El Greco's wondrous enchantment. The 50 illustrations—photographs of all that is most interesting in Toledo—add to the interest of this book, but make it at the same time inconveniently bulky and uneasily to handle. We should prefer to see the photographs separated altogether from the bound volume, and sold in album form.

Foreign Solutions of Poor Law Problems. By Edith Sellers. (Marshall. 2s. 6d.)

This is a most valuable little book. The author has had a wide experience, ranging over ten countries, and writes with insight and sympathy. Her main business is to describe what she has seen, and to leave the reader to draw the moral; but we gather that she is amazed at the haphazard extravagance of our present system. It is impossible not to feel some satisfaction at learning that the German system is not perfect. "If we wish to mend our own Poor Law administration here, in London, it is there (in Berlin), by using the system: in France, as a warning in some respects, and as a model in others, that we shall best learn how to do it." It appears that the best Poor Law in Europe is to be found in Austria-Hungary, and the author is particularly struck with the cleanliness of the former and the system of child maintenance in the latter half of the monarchy. It is clear, too, from the book that the success of any system depends largely on the psychology of the workhouse inmates. "If we are to have a penitent in the State almshouses as they do in Denmark; still longer before our poor will follow the example of the Germans. "The chapter on Poor Relief in the Balkans, from which these words are taken, is perhaps the most valuable chapter is that by Mr. Calvert and Mrs. C. Gasquoine Hartley on El Greco, the great Cretan painter, who established himself at Toledo, and there developed his wonderful art. "El Greco," says the author, "goes back to first moments, and speaks in symbols, with which we are not familiar. . . . This painter's method is a real enigma, that he essays surprising effects by separating colour into its original values; be used light as a means of emotional appeal, giving us sometimes most delicate harmonies, sometimes discordant contrasts."

Edith Sellers, besides being a strangely original colourist, was gifted with a singularly vivid imagination; the mystic spirit, not the sham thing of our day, ran in his veins, and allowed him to paint visions that had been realities to him.

The selection of photographs from his pictures given at the end of the book gives naturally but a feeble inkling of El Greco's wondrous enchantment. The 50 illustrations—photographs of all that is most interesting in Toledo—add to the interest of this book, but make it at the same time inconveniently bulky and uneasily to handle. We should prefer to see the photographs separated altogether from the bound volume, and sold in album form.

A Wrinkle about Clothes.

Always have them washed with Hudson's Soap, and then you can be sure they are as well washed as they possibly can be, and it is a washing that doesn't wear them. All the wear is left for yourself.
hopes the most interesting, as it is certainly the most surprising, in the volume. The efficiency of the system of charitable relief administered entirely by women which prevails in Bucharest is a remarkable tribute to the enthusiasm and organizing capacity of the talented lady whom Roumania is fortunate enough to possess as its Queen. Beyond a few words on the Belgian penal colonies, we learn nothing of the systems prevailing in Latin countries. We note this fact with some pleasure, as it leads us to expect a further volume from the same pen.


A book which is in its third (revised and enlarged) edition has successfully run the gauntlet of criticism; it does not much matter what the professional critic writes, so long as the unprofessional reader insists on buying. As a matter of fact, this work has clearly sold on its merits; for it is a particularly vivid exposition of a subject which might easily have been sordid and dull. It comes at a opportune time—as a matter of fact, the subject of housing reform has been opportune since Queen Anne died—for a revision of the legislation on this subject is now being considered in the House of Commons. Mr. Crotch's book is a valuable guide to those who attempt to put a satisfactory plan on the statute-book. The author tells us that he was sorely disappointed by the amending Act of 1900, and yet there is something that he does without delay; and, writing of this Act of 1900, he says: "I can only reiterate alike my amazement and regret that admitted blunders should have been specifically rectified." He closes his book with the question, "Will Mr. John Burns rise to the height of his opportunity and responsibility, and embody all these proposals in his coming Bill?" We can assure Mr. Crotch that whatever the laws may be we shall get no real reform until we have new men on both the Local Government Board and the local councils. We have no confidence in either Liberal or Tory; we have been disillusioned so often. To those who seek in- 

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eminently interesting, and to the average intelligence
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recreation than of study. There is but one passage
that we wish Mr. Newland, since he is addressing the
young, could have expressed differently. Speaking of
justice, he says, “Punishment is good for people who
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not, unfortunately, attempt to cast any light on the
influence of Sir Charles’s medical training on his stage
life. Was the good bedside manner metamorphosed
into the celebrated way in which the actor chides and
comforts pretty women in distress? Has Sir Charles
made Sir Charles the actor any tips on diet and hygiene that he keeps so well and so nimble of
limb? These and kindred topics might have been dealt
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The Traitor's Wife. By W. H. Williamson. (T. Fisher Unwin. 6s.)

"A sensational story of Revolutionary Russia" is the sub-title of this book, and very fairly describes its contents. The plot is somewhat commonplace, and the dialogue is amateurish and inept, but there are plenty of dark adventures and hairbreadth escapes. Was it a mere chance meeting, and the comment of Mendel Reussner, excellently disguised, to journey out of Russia by the same train that carried Paul Drumetz? It is all like this, melodrama of a not very high order.

DRAMA.

The Little Theatre.

The discussion on the One Act Theatre initiated at the Dramatic Debaters' by Mr. Bone may very probably bring the question to a head. For a long time ideas, theories, and extravaganzas were on the subject of such a theatre's establishment, but we are not now far from the operation a great deal of latitude might be easily

But the more that character is emphasised the more is the value of human wisdom, but because it is the first step in collective action.

The individual experiment has not been successful, largely because the individual experimenter has been dominated by the aspect of domination it is sincerely to be hoped the committee will be free. The Little Theatre is, no doubt, a possible source of profit to investors, but if it be pursued entirely with the view of making profit it will not be successful.

The business of a One Act Theatre is to produce One Act Plays; the business of a committee is to define their type, collect a repertoire, and find a suitable building. Having done all this the time will have arrived to call in the financial experts to collect the money required, and the managerial experts to see that the affaires are conducted in proper order.

As far as the finances are concerned, the One Act Theatre is against ordinary stock enterprise. And a directorate of artists and experts backed up by a number of shareholders is much more likely to succeed than the same artists and experts and experts backed up by the whimsies of some 'backer.' I have mentioned these points merely to show I do not neglect them; but the important thing, and the thing upon which success will depend, is the right selection of plays.

It seems certain that a One Act Theatre must be small, and it will present a programme of several one act plays at each performance. This gives the opportunity of having a limited audience of a special group, and it is earnestly to be prayed that we do not get any such special appeal as that of the "Grand Guignol." In their finest form, one-act plays, like plays at each performance. This gives the opportunity of having a limited audience of a special group, and it is earnestly to be prayed that we do not get any such special appeal as that of the "Grand Guignol." In their finest form, one-act plays, like performances just paid their way, the advertisement would

But the more that character is emphasised the more is the value of human wisdom, but because it is the first step in collective action.

Beyond this there are other developments possible. The Stage Society and the other pioneers ought to have a theatre of their own. Is there any insuperable reason against ordinary stock enterprise? And a directorate of artists and experts backed up by a number of shareholders is much more likely to succeed than the same artists and experts and experts backed up by the whimsies of some 'backer.' I have mentioned these points merely to show I do not neglect them; but the important thing, and the thing upon which success will depend, is the right selection of plays.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

Correspondents are requested to be brief. Many letters weekly are omitted on account of their length.

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.

START OF THE I.L.P.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

In your weekly No. of Mr. William Holbrook Jackson's book, referring to the formation of the I.L.P., you give a list of names as those who were in at the formation, and amongst them is that of Mr. Eder.

This is not correct. Mr. Eder was opposed to the formation, and when the Attercliffe by-election was fought, refused to join an Independent Party which would not allow him to retain his membership of the Liberal Party. You omit the names of several who were prominent in the formation of the I.L.P., to wit, R. Blackford, F. W. Jowett, Joe Burgess, then Editor of the "Workman's Times," and others.

EDWARD B. HARTLEY.

N.-W. MANCHESTER BY-ELECTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

At a meeting held in the Union Hall, Manchester, and Salford held on April 13th, it was decided to contest the above constituency in the Socialist and Labour party, and amongst the names is that of Mr. Eder.

We appeal earnestly to your readers who sympathise with us, to assist in the very excellent work of this party. Contributions may be sent to either of the undersigned.

J. FREDK. GREEN, Treasurer, S.D.F.
S. D. F. Office, 21A, Maiden Lane, Charing Cross, W.C.

HUNGER-TAMENESS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

It seems to me curious that Mr. Holbrook Jackson, surveying the wretched line of degenerates in Kingsway waiting for the soup of charity, should discover that "nature" had provided them with something lower than the brute. Of course, nature has done nothing of the kind, civilisation and Christianity are solely responsible for the existence. Here are plenty of "saviours" to-day who will not wait for food, but will take it, but we will not find them in the Kingsway queue, but at the works of the poor and hungry. Mr. Holbrook Jackson is but a perfect portrait of one in "Major Barbara." Andrew Undershaw, the genial millionaire, confesses he was a "dangerous man" when he was poor, when "thou shalt starve ere thou wert." Dr. Eder's article on Socialism and the Medical Profession sounds a welcome note in the dreary waste of medical politics. It is melancholy to note how the noblest and humanest of professions can be forced into a position of antagonism to the best interests of the community through the pressure of commercial competition. The only way of release is in a State Medical Service, whose first aim would be prevention, and in which education would play a leading part—to teach the laws of health and the necessity of obedience for the enjoyment of life. Curative art, not standing by the brilliant results, is, in most cases, only the confession of failure: it should never have been necessary.

Mr. Eder's article on the Medical Profession would pay the State handsomely, while from an ethical, the gains would be so great that one is soiled with impatience longing for such a happy consummation.

A. G. JOHNSON, M.B.

SOCIALISM AND THE MEDICAL PROFESSION.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Dr. Eder is unrepentant and inaccurate. He says—

"To-day practically no junior would be elected to a hospital staff who had not carried out some experiments which require at least inoculation or other forms of vivisection."

In the large hospital to which Dr. Guest was attached sixteen men have been appointed to the staff in the last ten years or so; of these only four had done work involving inoculations or other forms of vivisection.

He speaks of the various lectureships in the medical schools and says that to his certain knowledge the lecturers are not chosen for their teaching ability, but simply because they are on the hospital staff. At none of the London hospitals with medical schools do the lectures on physiology or I. think anatomy, either members of the staff or ill... to become so.

He has also failed to supply those admissions which involve a lifetime's acquiescence in palpable absurdities.

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We appeal earnestly to your readers who sympathise with us, to assist in the very excellent work of this party. Contributions may be sent to either of the undersigned.

J. FREDK. GREEN, Treasurer, S.D.F.
S. D. F. Office, 21A, Maiden Lane, Charing Cross, W.C.

WANTED A STATE MEDICAL SERVICE.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Mr. Eder's article on the "Socialism and the Democratic Party" sounds a welcome note in the dreary waste of medical politics. It is melancholy to note how the noblest and humanest of professions can be forced into a position of antagonism to the best interests of the community through the pressure of economic competition. The only way of release is in a State Medical Service, whose first aim would be prevention, and in which education would play a leading part—to teach the laws of health and the necessity of obedience for the enjoyment of life. Curative art, not standing by the brilliant results, is, in most cases, only the confession of failure: it should never have been necessary.

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Week by week the most distinguished and brilliant writers of the day have contributed to its pages. Among these may be mentioned: Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, G. K. Chesterton, E. Nesbit, Hilaire Belloc, M.P., Arnold Bennett, Havelock Ellis, Edward Carpenter, Pilson Young, Sir William Hartley, John Galsworthy, Israel Zangwill, Wordsworth Donisthorpe, Hubert Bland, Oscar Levy, Aylmer Maude, Edwin Pugh, Conrad Noel, Eden Phillpotts, Tolstoi, Anatole France, Gustave Herve, Dr. Jostah Oldfield, John Davidson, and many others.

Vol. II of the New Age is a complete record of the intellectual life of England during the last six months. The English-reading public will probably awake to the fact in about ten years from now, by which time the present volume in its bound form will be fetching fabulous prices.

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