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A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART

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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.

We publish elsewhere a selection of the numerous letters, telegrams, and resolutions that have been received by Mr. Victor Grayson since his suspension. These, together with the reports of numerous meetings held all over the country, constitute amply sufficient proof of the assertion which we made last week, to the effect that Mr. Grayson's protest would command the sympathy and the support of the whole Socialist movement outside Parliament. Sympathy with Mr. Grayson, however, does not necessarily involve desertion of the Labour Party, and we do not for one moment suggest that the Socialist leaders in the House have permanently forfeited the confidence of the majority of their supporters. On the contrary, the most characteristic feature of the I.L.P. movement is its strong disinclination for anything like a split, and the steady loyalty which has been the chief source of its strength is not to be easily or quickly shattered. The Labour Party will have plenty of rope, and if it should hang itself it will not be able to escape full blame for the catastrophe.

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The concerted attacks upon Mr. Grayson delivered by the I.L.P. leaders are scarcely likely to have their desired effect. They have all been purely personal in tone, whereas the sympathy with Mr. Grayson which they were designed to destroy is not for the most part personal at all; it is simply the impersonal satisfaction felt by Socialists at having their views forcibly presented to the House of Commons, no matter by whom. In any case it seems a pity that the various spokesmen of the party should not have agreed upon the foundations of their case against Mr. Grayson. We have Mr. Jowett complaining in the "Clarion" that everybody knew when the "scene" was coming, and on the other hand, we have Mr. Keir Hardie grumbling in the "Labour Leader" that Mr. Grayson "did not even intimate that he meant to make a scene." This is hardly convincing. The real truth about the feeling of the Labour Party was blurted out by Mr. Pete Curran when he said that they were not going to allow themselves to be "switched by a boy." With that feeling we can heartily sympathise; but, after all, whose fault was it that the "boy" did what he did? If Mr. Jowett and Mr. Curran knew all about Mr. Grayson's intentions, why didn't they forestall him? He gave them three days to do it in.

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Whatever we may think, however, of the recent policy of the Labour Party in the House or of the tactics by which they have chosen to defend it, we are bound to admit that they would have been scarcely human if they had not lost their tempers. Indeed, we welcome their outbursts of last week as proof positive that their powers of invective are not yet seriously impaired by the deadening influences to which they seem temporarily to have succumbed. The hard things that have been said may perhaps be forgotten without very much difficulty—with one exception. Mr. Philip Snowden in "taking off the gloves," as he called it, exposed a pair of hands which, for his own sake, he had much better have kept hidden from the world. The mass of fabrication, based ostensibly upon waiters' gossip, which he presented to his constituents would have been unworthy of a third-rate private inquiry agent. Moreover, he has declined either to withdraw or to substantiate his statements. The most charitable view of the affair that we can take is to regard it as a lapse due to a too intimate acquaintance with the controversial methods of the "Daily Express," at whose hands Mr. Snowden himself has suffered in his time. But, even so, a man who can be guilty of that sort of lapse ought not to be allowed to represent Socialists upon so much as a Board of Guardians.

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Mr. Asquith's proposals for dealing with Unemployment during the coming winter should convince even Mr. Henderson, who, by the way, to give him his due, does not pretend to be a Socialist, that there is nothing to be got by trying to placate a Liberal Government. We were told that important developments were going on in the Cabinet with reference to the Unemployed question which would have been jeopardised if the Labour Party had taken aggressive action too soon. The developments have now culminated, and we are all in possession of the result. £300,000 is the sum which Mr. Asquith is prepared to devote towards the maintenance of at least 1,200,000 unemployed workmen and their families. Some authorities put the number much higher, but if we accept 1,200,000 as a fair estimate the Government grant works out at 5s. per head, or say 3d. per week per family from November to March. In addition to this, 8,000 men are to be given 25s. for a week's work as extra postmen at Christmas time. That this last item should have been included in a serious statement of the Government's

proposals for dealing with the present industrial situation suggests that the ignorant apathy of the Cabinet is far worse than we had even dreamt. We can appreciate the point of view of Guy Fawkes.

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The Parliamentary correspondent of the "Daily News" (Mr. P. W. Wilson) listened to the Premier's statement with the holy gratification which Mr. Asquith knows so well how to inspire in the hearts of the sentimental philanthropists who keep him in power. "One felt," he writes, "that the Prime Minister was proclaiming a real brotherhood between all classes of the community, that he was breaking down the un-Christian barriers which have been set up between the successful and the failures . . . a great statesman, moved throughout his whole being by an accurate appreciation of the tragedy of casual and irregular trade." And the cost of obtaining this adulation is only threepence per week per family.

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The "Daily Mail" on the other hand criticised these same proposals in a manner worthy of better traditions than its own. After pointing out the ridiculous inadequacy of Mr. Asquith's emergency measures and showing that they will aid at best but one in fifteen of the unemployed, it continues: "The whole treatment of poverty in this country needs reorganisation. The problem is always approached in a hand-to-mouth and piecemeal manner . . . The doctor, hard-working man who is out of work through no fault of his own, the community should aid to surmount calamity. . . . To leave the honest to starve is the worst possible course, but this is the net result of the existing system. The waste of national resources is immense, but even more disastrous is the ruin to the worker's health, the injury to his family, and the lowering of his morale which come from undeserved unemployment." On the strength of this we cordially invite the "Daily Mail" to join us in a campaign of national efficiency. We are not disposed to scorn help from any quarter in respect of so vital and urgent a matter as the abolition of the evils of poverty.

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In an article on "The Personality of Mr. Burns" the "Nation" remarks, "The restricted character of the Government's programme of temporary relief for the unemployed must, we suppose, be attributed to Mr. Burns, and will be regarded as the victory of a view of unemployment which the President of the Local Government Board holds in common with the bulk of Conservative and middle-class opinion in England." This is doubtless true, but at the same time it is due to Mr. Burns to point out that his failure has been rather in practice than in principle. He has been quite right, as Mr. Shaw mentioned in these columns last week, in refusing to sanction a policy of doles to the unemployed or any other policy based on the assumption that unemployed labour can be organised in remunerative industry without preliminary training. But he has been quite wrong in his incorrigible optimism and in his failure to put forward any sort of scheme of his own. Also his half scornful, half vindictive attitude towards the Labour Party has not increased either his dignity or our confidence in his capacity. There is no getting away from the fact that he has been a failure from all points of view except that of, say, the "Spectator." He has made a host of enemies and no friends, and he will have a lot of leeway to make up when the promised comprehensive measure dealing with unemployment comes along next session. If Mr. Burns still holds to his Socialist principles he will have a chance of proving it then.

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As the Moderates on the L.C.C. have been claiming that Mr. Frank Smith's action in causing the adjournment of the Council delayed the passing of schemes for giving work to the unemployed it may be as well to state the facts. On the day on which Mr. Smith made his protest, there were upon the agenda paper it is true several proposals relating to tramway extensions, but these were all projected works which will have to be sanctioned by Parliament and cannot be commenced for at least a couple of years. The highways committee met on the following day and, according to the account of a member who had strongly condemned Mr. Smith, seemed much chastened in spirit and very desirous of silencing the "agitators" as soon as possible. It was hastily decided to advance certain proposed works by a couple of months. On Tuesday last the Council confirmed this decision and actually agreed to employ some direct labour. In fact, Mr. Smith has induced the L.C.C. to do more for the London unemployed than Mr. Asquith proposes to do for the whole country.

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The new local veto clause in the Licensing Bill was passed by a very large majority. If you can have such a thing as a negative mandate, it is certain that the Government had such a mandate on this point. The crushing defeat of the Liberals in 1895 has always been attributed by all parties to the strong feeling in the country against Local Veto, and no one has made any attempt to show, or even to assert, that the people have changed their view since then. The proposal is a perfectly frank attempt on the part of a minority to force their will upon the majority. As Mr. Hilaire Belloc pointed out to the House, local veto is based upon the principle "that liquor is a bad thing and is in some way to be legislated against. That view certainly is not shared by a majority of the English people." No reply was forthcoming to this undeniable statement, nor to the further excellent point urged by Mr. Belloc that if the people should have the power to limit the number of licences, they should also have the power to increase them. There was no reply because there was nothing to be said. It was impossible to maintain the pretence of a democratic demand in this case and so the Liberals quietly fell back upon their second line of defence, the deep and righteous convictions of their grandmothers.

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Miss Christabel Pankhurst, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Home Secretary are all to be congratulated upon the parts they played in a very pretty incident. We frankly envy Miss Pankhurst her opportunity. There are many small matters upon which we should like to examine Cabinet ministers, though we are not sure that we should acquit ourselves with the ingenuity and good temper that never seem to desert the Suffragettes. When we recall the persistence of Shakespeare's Portia in regard to a certain ring, the comparison which has been so widely made seems neither inapposite nor ill-omened.

> "I will have nothing else but only this;
> And now, methinks, I have a mind to it."

And Portia got it without much delay. The hitch in last week's version of the drama did not occur until the complacent Cabinet ministers were departed, leaving to an idiot official the conduct of the final scene and the brutal ringing down of the curtain. One can understand now why the police did not want a trial by jury. No jury would have convicted. Fortunately, Mr. Gladstone's personal acquaintance with the facts and with the nature of the evidence will leave him no excuse in this case for refusing to interfere.

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The list of gentlemen who have been selected by Mr. Churchill to form the panel of chairmen for his new Arbitration Court is very disappointing, and disposes of all hopes for the success of the scheme. Also it disposes of Mr. Churchill's democratic pretensions. It is a mere string of titles, and several of the "eminent and impartial" persons chosen are noted for their hostility to the claims of labour. What Trade Unionist in his senses would agree to submit an industrial dispute in which he was concerned to the judgment of Viscount St. Aldwyn or Lord Balfour of Burleigh? And why should the Duke of Devonshire's name be included when that of Mr. Sidney Webb is omitted? Does Mr. Churchill think that the Duke is more eminent or more impartial than Mr. Webb, or does he regard the former as a greater expert in the matter of industrial disputes?

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We have received a copy of "The New Situation in Egypt," by Mr. Wilfrid Blunt (Burns and Oates,

6d. net). In this admirable pamphlet, Mr. Blunt appeals to the Liberal Party to give practical effect to its sympathy with the Young Turks, by recognising that it is the duty of Liberalism to satisfy the aspirations of the Egyptian Nationalists. He warns England that Egypt will not long remain quiescent under a rule of British bayonets, with a Turkish Parliament sitting at Constantinople. Egypt is waiting anxiously for Sir Edward Grey to move. We are not so optimistic as Mr. Wilfrid Blunt, and we shall be astonished to see the Liberal Party grant Egypt a Constitution. It is possible that the Nationalists may force Sir E. Grey's hands; but the granting of a Constitution to Egypt will depend on whether English statesmen believe that the Nationalists are determined enough to fight for their ideals.

A Challenge to the Labour Party.

By Victor Grayson, M.P.

THE Labour Party is angry—and apprehensive. It has lost its temper—and its dignity. It has descended to unworthy charges and trivial abuse. To prove that a "theatrical and irresponsible boy" was wrong in his perspective the finance expert of the party has been exercising his mind on members' dinner-bills. On all the Labour platforms throughout the country the Labour members have been on their defence. There have been charges of a desire to disrupt the Labour Party; to bring discord where hitherto was peace and harmony.

As the letters and telegrams pour in from I.L.P., Trade Union, and L.R.C. branches approving one's attitude, it is difficult to feel impressed by pathetic protestations of "harmony" from the Labour leaders. They know for the past eighteen months at least there has been growing among the rank and file a strong feeling of unrest and dissatisfaction. Some of that feeling found vent in the rebellion of the Colne Valley Labour (now Socialist) League against the official red-tapeism of the I.L.P. Executive. Constituencies where robust I.L.P. branches have been preaching with success for years have fretted against the bonds of an alliance now grown irksome and well-nigh impossible. A younger generation of Socialists has come into existence, and the new wine is tending to burst the old bottles. Time after time during the last eighteen months a crisis has been but narrowly averted, and then only by the most extraordinary methods. The chief accusation levelled by the old school against the restive "wreckers" has been that they are mostly young. When the situation has appeared to be desperate, there has been a painful platform exhibition of ancient veterans and heroes. Some of us, with all the veneration and reverence in the world, have grown tired of our criticism being answered by pathetic references to "men whose hair has grown grey in the movement." I, for one accord the utmost admiration and gratitude to the men and women in the movement who did the brave and thankless work of pioneering. I have known men whose heads have grown bald in the movement, but their opinions on effective Socialist policy are none the truer for that fact. Messrs. Hyndman, Blatchford, and Bernard Shaw are not yet precisely "grey" as to the hair, but their criticisms of the Labour Party and the I.L.P. alliance are none the less thought out and matured, nor is their service to the movement less honourable than that of others. Our rank and file should be allowed the opportunity of considering all points on their merits, without irrelevant appeals to legitimate personal sentiment.

We have, of course, at present, no sure means of knowing whether in ten years we shall find the Labour Party's attitude of constitutional cheese-paring the best method. But we can, and I feel should, strongly object to pawning our Socialist principles on the problematical assumption that we shall be able to redeem them after many years. The rank and file of the I.L.P. is jealous, and rightly so, for its Socialist identity. Labourism at its best stands for the amelioration of the workers' lot under capitalism. Socialism stands for the abolition of capitalism. The power of a Socialist majority resides in its comparative inflexibility. The Labour Party are asking us to applaud them because of their extraordinary *flexibility*.

I here make a challenge to the advanced wing of the Labour Party. Dare they at this precise stage of their career throw the Government over on the Licensing Bill until Unemployment—the confessedly prior question—has been reasonably dealt with? Would it not be regarded by the Government and the bulk of moderate opinion in the Labour Party as a gross breach of a tacit, but none the less real, rapprochement between the Liberal and Labour Parties? It is no use blinking at the facts. There is no need for ill-natured abuse and personal recriminations. The plain facts are these: the Labour Party have decided, rightly or wrongly, that they will get more out of the Government by quiet, respectable Parliamentary methods than by inconvenient obstruction. The Liberal and Tory Parties in the House have given them a reputation for moderation and temperate demand. And all the members are doing their best to live down to that reputation. Mr. Keir Hardie, speaking at Llanelly the other night, said that if Mr. Asquith's promised proposals proved unsatisfactory, the Labour Party would justify the expectations of their most enthusiastic members. The proposals are now announced, and the Labour Party in the main have expressed their dissatisfaction with them. I am anxiously awaiting the promised action. They may debate the matter with cogency and eloquence. Liberal eyes will melt in sympathy. Liberal cheers will ring through the Chamber. But Liberal votes will be solid for the Government. It is futile to threaten the Government that if they do not do something adequate the Labour Party will meet—and—and—pass a resolution. The Premier will smile and promise something more "next session."

Members of the Labour Party foresaw the impending urgency of the unemployed question. But that did not deter them from appearing on U.K.A. and Band of Hope platforms with Cabinet Ministers and Liberal M.P.'s as their colleagues in support of the Licensing Bill which they knew to be the first and most important official business of the autumn session. They have bartered their pledges for a waft of the odour of respectability. Further, I know from personal observation that on nearly every question of importance discussed in the House the Government is made cognisant of the Labour Party's intentions. Take an instance. When practically the whole nation was indignant at the proposed visit of the King to the Tsar, the Labour Party were granted a whole day to discuss the question. During the early afternoon one was met with the encouraging spectacle of Mr. Balfour, Earl Percy, Sir Edward Grey, and Mr. Arthur Henderson in the gloom behind the Speaker's chair, consulting their watches and making arrangements for the application of the closure. It will be remembered that the present writer suffered by that arrangement. The Labour leaders have won the respect of the House—and they have earned it. They are losing the respect of the democracy—and not without good reason. Their division records are splendid. They have been faithful to their pledges on gooseberry mildew and every other major matter, and they do not believe in violence. We shall see.

Mr. Grayson's Protest.

WE print this week a small and almost haphazard selection from the telegrams, postcards and letters received by Mr. Grayson and THE NEW AGE congratulating him on his action in the House of Commons on Thursday and Friday of a fortnight ago.

The number of communications received has been enormous and the work of several secretaries has been necessary to read and classify the contents. With rare exceptions, amounting to no more than half a dozen in all, the messages have been not merely congratulatory, but enthusiastic. It would seem as if England had been waiting for some such expression of its pent-up indignation these many days.

Nothing more significant has occurred in domestic politics since the days of Parnell. We venture to think that merely as a symptom of current thought and popular feeling, the correspondence here printed is extraordinarily interesting; while as a definite indication of the direction in which Socialist political thought is moving, with the force and rapidity of a rising tide, the total correspondence is more than interesting, it is momentous.

We confine our selection this week to communications from private individuals. Next week, however, we propose to print a selection from the many resolutions that have been passed in favour of Mr. Grayson's action by various Socialist, I.L.P., Fabian and Trade Union branches of the Socialist and Labour movement.

TELEGRAMS.

Colne Valley Socialist League Executive fully endorse your action in Parliament respecting unemployed crisis.

Swelling with pride in your friendship. Who is the first Commoner now?—M. E. (Aldbourne.)

Bravo; now you are getting to business yet again.—B. S. (Lincoln.)

Your action enthusiastically endorsed by two thousand unemployed workers assembled at Tower Hill. Good Luck. —J. W. (Strand, W.C.)

Thank heaven for one man brave enough to do and dare. —R. (Huddersfield.)

Stick to your guns; country with you.—F. M. C. (Manchester.)

Well done, Grayson. You have the angels on your side. Most truly have you proved a friend of the people. God bless you, and may He send more into Westminster of the same pattern.—F. (Bristol.)

Well done thou good and faithful servant.—L. (Bridghouse.)

Good old Grayson; fight the devils.—N. (Neath.)

Hearty congratulation. More power to ye.—Belfast.

Bravo Victor. Curran's and Snowden's speeches disgraceful.—G. (Liverpool).

Leicester unemployed congratulate you on their behalf.—M. A. P. (Leicester.)

POSTCARDS.

Bravo, bravo, and bravo for the next time. But what is one among so many?—H. Q. (Upper Edmonton.)

Bravo Victor; Colne Valley is proud of you.—A. P. (Colne Valley.)

This card represents a host of comrades who are carrying their heads high and proudly. To be a peaceful member of the House of Commons has become a dishonourable thing.—M. M. (Colne Valley.)

Hurrah! Bravo Victor!! Proud to be living in the same century as you. Shame on a tinkering Government that allows hungry children to cry themselves to sleep because their fathers want work. First things first.—J. W. M. (Colne Valley.)

Irish Socialists congratulate you on your courageous and effective stand on behalf of the unemployed on the sacred "floor of the House".—W. O. B. (Dublin.)

Bravo Victor. We are all proud of you. Keep the Red Flag flying.—L. M. (Marsden.)

Please do it again. Good owd lad. Proud of you.—S. M. (Colne Valley.)

The movement rejoices and is glad. More power to your elbow.—E. J. R. (Cardiff.)

Many thanks. Samuel Plimsoll, by unparliamentary action, saved thousands of sailors' lives. I hope to God that Victor Grayson will also, by his brave action, save thousands of unemployed from hopeless starvation. The Government is doomed.—A WORKING MAN (Bristol).

I most heartily congratulate you on your attitude on the Unemployed question. Victor Hugo said that a man with a principle was like a fixed star, and the darker the night the brighter it shines.—A. B. (Huddersfield).

Good lad, Victor, keep the Red Flag flying. We would rather you were suspended than sitting inside going to sleep and seeing nothing.—J. C. (Colne Valley).

Good old Grayson! I admire your pluck.—C. H. G. (Hampstead, N.W.).

Bravo! worthy descendant of Cromwell, Wilkes, Parnell, Plimsoll, and Bradlaugh.—A. F. R. (Forest Gate).

Victor is still victorious. The more I see of men, the better I like my horse.—JOLLY ROYCE (Coventry).

Splendid! The gods are with you. Go on. Don't be down-hearted, old chummy. We shall send you again with a majority of 5,000, for you will be faithful unto death.—B. M. (Colne Valley).

The people of the Colne Valley are the finest workpeople in the world represented by the finest M.P —B. S. (Golcar).

Two of the best days' work you ever did in your life.—J. T. S. (Colne Valley).

Dear Mr. Grayson,—I am only a little girl, but I like you very much.—M. W. (Golcar).

Fight on, comrade, for the workers are with you. Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!—(Bristol).

Permit me, though a Conservative, to offer you my heartiest thanks and congratulations for your plucky attempt to draw attention to the unemployed.—O. R. D. (Kensington, W.).

The Coventry Socialist Sunday School beg to congratulate you on your courageous stand in the cause of the Unemployed.

I wish to God we had a lot of you there.—C. S. (Bristol).

Do it again, comrade. Raise hell if they won't listen on Unemployment.—C. G. B. (Bristol).

Congratulations on your expulsion from the Drug Market. I consider your course the only one that can be adopted with success. Unemployment and urgency are synonymous. —F. R. (Silvertown).

LETTERS.

Man, you are splendid. Actions like yours must awake hundreds of us who have been sleeping. This, however, is not to tell you what you must know yourself, but to ask how we can help. If I can be of any service in town, command me. In any case, if you appeal to Colne Valley, I will go up and do what I can.—W. S. (Wimbledon).

I have the honour to take off my hat to you as the only man in the House of Commons who has the courage of his convictions.—R. D. (Cheltenham).

Bravo! Bravo!! and yet again bravo! My heartiest congratulations to you.—G. O. H. (Manchester).

As I understand that you may be resigning your seat and seeking re-election, I take the liberty to enclose a cheque for £1 towards your election expenses. I offer my congratulations to the electors of Colne Valley in possessing a representative who prefers to break the rules of the House rather than to break the hearts of those who trust him. But I offer my congratulations even more to you, for you have gained the gratitude of the starving poor. It is indeed the supreme honour that the nation can confer.—B. C. (Cambridge).

Heartiest congratulations. The best thoughts and wishes of all real revolutionary Socialists are with you. Don't forget what Dr. Stockman, "The Enemy of Society," says in Ibsen's play of that name: "You see, the fact is that the strongest man upon earth is he who stands most alone." I am also enclosing you John Davidson's stirring lines to "The generation knocking at the door." Yours for the Revolution.—D. B. M. (Hammersmith, W.).

Please allow me, a Socialist Christian (Church of England) to express my admiration and gratitude for your action during last week in the House of Commons on the Unemployed question. Your action, in my opinion, was absolutely correct and imperatively called for by religious principles, to say nothing of poor suffering humanity. I am ashamed of my Church because of its failure to see its clear duty in social matters, but I hope yet that the Socialist movement will capture it. I beg of you to continue in the course you have set yourself. The loss of attendance at the House is of small import when contrasted with the educational gain to the public mind which you so richly pursue. Again, I thank you.—T. W. I. (London).

Every good wish to ye. May the fair winds blow your way. . . . May your sun never set. You are on the right track; and so say all of us. Think not, friend, that I am indulging the excitement of the moment when I hope that you will call me to arms whenever your time comes: to-morrow—the day after—a year hence—at any time—whenever—whatever. And I dare say I could easily muster a few of the brave round your banner. Art, philosophy, literature—these are all my games; but, by God, I can't play at them in this present muddle. . . . I'm thinking that the truest dreamers are always men of action, though your man of action be not always a dreamer. Lately I have

been making and polishing up my armour: now I'm ready for the fray. At your service, comrade.—D.M. (Regent's Park, N.W.)

You have not exaggerated the woes and wants of the starving. I am a bailiff with a large practice in this city. My God, sir, the degradation, filth, and squalor in which the poor exist in this mighty metropolis of the north would make any one worthy of being called a man, sick. Men, women, and children absolutely hungered, and then, the shame of it, all must be evicted from the awful hells where they live. This I do from sheer necessity. You need not be ashamed. Shame and brazen-faced effrontery is with the adventurer and professional politician. Fight on, the country can be aroused by a few men like yourself. God speed you.—Yours respectfully, W. L. (Newcastle-on-Tyne.)

A thousand congratulations on yesterday's "scene." Good luck to you. Every Socialist worth his salt is proud of you. —Very sincerely yours, H. F. R. (Brentwood.)

Bravo! and again bravo!! Hundreds, if not thousands, of the men who voted to put the Labour Members where they are, are, with their wives and children, at starvation's door. And these members are indifferent. Yes, "traitors" is the word. Once more—bravo!!—A Unionist and Tariff Reformer.

Absolutely fine and right. I should think it worth while to have lived myself in order to make that protest at the psychological moment. God in heaven. Jokes about cigarettes and bad beer while 5,000 police kept the doors against starving men. Victor, I love you—J. K. S. (London, E.C.)

As a woman I wish to thank you for your manly behaviour in the House of Commons this afternoon. According to the "Evening News," you were laughed at from all parts of the House. It was probably "the loud laugh that speaks the vacant mind." Such frivolity on the part of members is not very flattering to the judgment of the electors who sent them there. When women have votes, I trust we shall see a different kind of member. My husband, who is a Conservative, joins with me in what I have said.—Yours sincerely, A. S. (Portman Square, W.)

May I, as a Fabian, thank you for your magnificent impeachment of Parliament before the bar of Humanity?—Wishing you God-speed, J. R. J. (Carnarvon.)

Bravo! dear old Victor! Bravissimo! You are stirring things up fine, and I am pleased with your action. If you do resign I shall strike all tasks and come and help to send you back to lick the Government into something that matters.—Affectionate greetings, C. S. (Anderton.)

Dear me, dear me! Don't you know that all the other M.P.'s are just as keen as you to put "unemployed" business first, only they have more dignity than to say so? Anyway, let this be a lesson to you to learn patience! And I hope you will go and tell the unemployed that, after all, they will gain nothing by being restless and discontented. It is so foolish! I wish I lived in London, then on such occasions as these I could come and see you.—A. P. H. (Lydd.)

Bravo, comrade. With unbounded admiration.—A. G. (Stroud Green.)

I was very proud to find that there was some one who dared to speak the truth. May God grant you strength to carry it on in spite of the great odds you will have to face. I am the half-starved wife of one of the unemployed; you would say so if you saw both myself and children, with our pinched faces. My husband is an Army pensioner. After 19 years' service he is not given the right to work for his wife and children. He could work with any man, at any thing, if he could get it to do. Eighteen months ago he left the service; he has not done three months' work all told during that time. What we have suffered and gone through I could not tell you. Pawned and sold everything; blankets off the bed, and little garments and boots off the children, to say nothing of the lamp, fire-irons, curtains, cups and saucers, books; everything we valued, all had to go. My husband has often tramped eight and ten miles, expecting to get something to do, nothing to eat before he started, and nothing for him to have when he returned, often dripping wet, and no fire. I have often wondered what his feelings are, for he is very fond of me and the children. I have been ill this 12 months, and he knows how I suffer, and he is helpless to do anything. I have often felt broken-hearted, no fire, no food, little helpless children looking up to you for what you cannot give them. Then you see two or three ladies in a motor that costs enough to keep you in comfort for two years. I often wish I was a man; if I had the chance to help myself to anything I should not hesitate to do so. If I was lucky enough to find a purse with a lot of money in, as I heard someone did last week, I should not be fool enough to return it. I could hardly spare the penny for the stamp, but I felt with my husband I was bound to wish you grace to stand firm. God bless you.—E. A. B. (Bristol.)

I wonder if you will descend to come to a small band of University students, firebrands, thorough-going fellows. You see, any weeknight will do. A sumptuous dinner (sic). —F. (Union Society, Oxford.)

I see from all the evening papers here that you have had the honour of being expelled from the capitalist House of Commons. May I, as a Socialist, offer you my very hearty congratulations upon your bold and altogether admirable stand? I trust you will on no account allow yourself to be induced to send the Speaker any sort of apology. It is to you, and all those you represent, that the ruling classes must ultimately come on bended knee. Let the ruling classes tremble at a communistic revolution. Life to the Socialist Republic! Speed the day. With affection.—Yours fraternally, A. S. (Nottingham.)

It is good to know that there is one in that stronghold of self-satisfied stupidity who has not yet come under its awful spell, which appears to have influenced even the Labour Party, for they, apparently, have more regard for rules and regulations than for a people perishing.—L. R. (Kidderminster.)

Many congratulations on your splendid effort on behalf of the unemployed. Believe me, you have the rank and file of the movement behind you.—E. C. (Romily.)

Allow me to express my intense appreciation of your heroic protest against the callous indifference of the Commons to the real needs of the people. You can, I know, endure the laughter of the fools who cannot recognise the greatness of your action. It was grand to face, as you did, the frozen semblance of dignity. You are a man, sir, and from my soul I thank you. You, and you only, truly represent.—E. N. (Ellesmere.)

I cannot let the moment pass without letting you know how I glory in your courage. You did well by telling the House that they are well fed, human beings; a more disgusting set of people we have not had there since the days of Cromwell. I am a staunch Constitutionalist, and a Unionist to the backbone, but I glory in your pluck, and you have the good feeling of hundreds with myself.—W. L. R. (Lewisham.)

Your conduct in the House yesterday has been the chief subject of conversation among my workmates to-day, and although they have read the leader in the "Dispatch," they and I think you were justified in your action. There can be no doubt that your courage will draw more attention to the unemployed than anything that has been said or written hitherto.—B. D. (Everton.)

The fact that the Press has so strongly condemned your action has brilliantly vindicated it in the eyes of those who are something more than echoes of imbecility. The irritation you aroused in those who are indulging in the deathly slumber of political warfare found its natural expression in the peevish and fretful cries which assailed you as you addressed the House. The House of Commons could yesterday hold up its head, for it contained one member who dared to defy law and order—the order which can stand complacently by whilst men and women starve—and a law which places the rich robber in Park Lane and the poor one in prison. I trust that my small donation of £1 may be of some use in helping you in your task of driving such law and order out of England.—R. W. (Colville Garden, W.)

LETTERS TO "THE NEW AGE."

Every true Socialist must applaud the courage and sincerity shown by Mr. Victor Grayson in the House of Commons on Thursday.

Apart from the question of common humanity, it is the plain duty of Parliament, as a matter of business practice, to deal with matters in their orders of urgency, and if Parliamentary machinery interferes with this, so much the worse for Parliamentary machinery.

The members of the Labour Party may be content to "ask questions" and to receive "answers" (?), but Mr. Grayson has the courage of his convictions.

I feel sure that the action of Mr. Grayson will have a beneficial effect on the cause of Socialism.—CHAS. H. HART.

As an obscure I.L.P'er, I feel it right to express my extreme disgust at the unmanly conduct of the Labour Party in Parliament when they refused to help Mr. Grayson in his protest against the Government's childish waste of time while people starve, and my even greater disgust at the yet more unmanly and mean paragraph which they communicated to the Press.

Is not the time coming when Socialists will have to set to work to re-combine their forces? Should it be beyond the power of man to get the S.D.P. and the advanced members of the I.L.P. and Fabian Society to form a Socialist Party?—ARTHUR D. LEWIS.

An Unemployment Bill.

THERE is an idea in some circles, because certain people are quite ready to push their tactics to the point of political revolution, if that be the quickest way of gaining their end, that therefore they are wild, unbalanced thinkers who are not prepared to put their schemes into the shape of a Parliamentary Bill. There could be no greater mistake. The only revolutionist worth consideration is the man who realises that the time will come when his most glowing words, his wildest actions, must be translated into the cold clauses of a Bill in the House of Commons. If these clauses do not stand criticism, then all the revolution is sheer waste of energy. The time has come to say exactly what details are necessary for the remedy of unemployment. That is no light task; if there is any truth in rumour, even the mighty Royal Commission is standing shivering on the bank before it makes the plunge. But we must not expect Royal Commissioners to say anything original. They never do. They are not likely to find any causes for unemployment and poverty which have not already been discussed, for example, in the masterly series of researches published by Mr. J. A. Hobson. They will not define the problem more clearly than Mr. Hobson has expounded it in his book, "The Problem of the Unemployed." But it is necessary to face the fact that theories and solutions must soon be drafted in the form of clauses in a Bill to place before the legislative assembly: it is time we Socialists repeated what we want Parliament to do: for the Labour Party's Bill, granted some reasonable amendments, has already laid down the lines of the legislation we demand.

We do not intend to be unreasonable in our demands; not because we desire to be reasonable, but solely because it is useless being anything else. There is only one real remedy for Unemployment—Socialism. Now, it is not within the scope of practical politics to draft a Bill which will establish Socialism to-day, or to-morrow; we do not intend to set out on any such wild-goose chase. Socialism will grow with the stately majesty of an oak-tree. But if we cannot at once get at the root of unemployment, we are quite determined to do away at once with the worst of its ghastly effects. If we cannot prevent men and women being out of work, at least we can prevent them starving and becoming physical and mental wrecks before they can find their next job. Therefore, there must be a clause in our Bill which will make it the duty of some public council to find maintenance, up to the standard of reasonable living for all those persons who cannot find a place in the wage-market. That, be it observed, is nothing more than poor relief. Under the present poor law, a man must be "sold up" before he is entitled to relief. The new law must intervene before that uncivilised state of destitution. But while the individual has this right to be protected by society against social breakdowns (e.g., trade depression) which are, in general, entirely beyond his control, he in return has the duty of giving Society something in exchange for his maintenance. It must therefore be within the power of the council administering the relief to compel the recipient to give a fair exchange for it. At present Society demands disfranchisement and destitution as this exchange. Could the former be more unjust, or the latter more stupid? A rational unemployment Bill will demand, instead, some duty which will make the receiver a better citizen instead of a worse one. Here will be the opportunity to insist that anyone receiving maintenance must submit, for example, to a course of technical instruction in a trade, so that he may be a more efficient worker; and, if necessary, the council must have power to keep the person at this work until he has completed the course. It is useless to let a man go out half-trained.

So far we have arrived at two essential features of a Bill. First, the compulsory duty of the State to give maintenance up to the standard of a civilised life; secondly, the duty of the recipient to submit to an educational discipline which will make him a better citizen. But all this only deals with the outskirts of the subject. We started by laying it down that maintenance is only for those who cannot find any place in the wage-market. A large number of these persons are undoubtedly "unemployables" and inefficients who could be made made employable by a course of training and discipline. But with Board of Trade figures, which show at present over 9 per cent. of the skilled trades out of work, it is impossible to say that the unemployed problem is a question of unemployables. There are thousands of efficient unemployed persons whom it would be waste of time and money to spend money on training: persons for whom there is but one thing desirable—the opportunity of doing work. What is the duty of the community towards such people? They have already fulfilled their duty towards society by learning a trade, and therefore they have nothing to offer, in return for maintenance, except their power to do work. Indeed, by training the so-called unemployables we have but added to our task, by putting more trained workmen on a market which is already overstocked. Has the community any duty to provide work? Has it any power to provide it? It is certainly its duty, if possible, to provide work, because it is stupid to allow men to stand idle if they can be set to the work of producing useful wealth. As to the possibility of finding work, a proper Bill will, of course, set up labour exchanges all over the country in the hope of bringing employers and employed together. But no one expects them to help very much; except in so far as these exchanges can be made a means of compulsorily regulating (and therefore extinguishing) the supply of casual labour. So the Bill must certainly give to the central State and the local councils power to undertake any work which can be demonstrated to be useful. That must be the test: is the work useful? If so, set men to do it. But there must not be any pretence of doing poor, useless work as an excuse for relief. Above all, public works must be carried out by the best men in the market, not taken on from the unemployed list if better men can be found elsewhere. Finally the highest standard of wage must be paid. So, the community has no duty to provide work where there is no useful work to be done; it has no right to employ any but the best men on that work.

What, then, shall the State do for the efficient workman whom it cannot supply with work, either through the public labour bureau or directly in the public service? It must pay him, out of Exchequer grants, administered, probably, by the local councils, out-of-work benefit on the most liberal scale, never falling below the most generous standard of a proper living. It must perform for the whole labouring class the service which a trade union performs when it pays unemployed benefits to its members. What exactly the State can demand from the maintained persons in return for the benefit is a difficult question. A wise State will always, in fact, avoid the difficulty by finding useful work. Whether this will be the development of agriculture or afforestation or road making or something else must be left to the decision of experience.

G. R. S. TAYLOR.

The News of the Week.

NEWS comes from Melbourne that a number of unemployed attempted to rush into the Federal House of Representatives, and were only driven back after a long struggle with the police.

The L.C.C. has issued an order forbidding any kissing games to be played in the public school-grounds. It is rumoured that this excellent hygienic precaution may be followed up, within the next hundred years, by an order for the abolition of slums.

Speaking at the Colchester Oyster Feast, the President of the Board of Agriculture stated that 20,000 persons had applied for 300,000 acres under the Small Holdings Act, of which 12,000 acres had been supplied. Under 2 per cent. of the applicants asked for freehold farms.

At the end of September 60 persons per thousand were receiving poor relief in Poplar. The number of adults receiving out-relief was 16.2 per cent. over the previous September. The Local Government Board has complained that the Poplar Guardians grant excessive relief when they give 10s. per week for a wife, 2s. for the first child, 1s. 6d. for the second, and 1s. for each succeeding child over one year of age in cases where the father is in the workhouse.

Miss Dove, the principal of Wycombe Abbey School, has been elected mayor of the borough of Chepping Wycombe. She is the first woman to hold such an office. She was elected a councillor in November of last year, and has served on the Health and Hospital Committees. Miss Balkwill, the first legal woman candidate for the L.C.C., was defeated by 1,745 votes at Hanmpstead on Saturday last. Only 6,163 electors out of 15,373 took the trouble to vote.

In answer to a question by Mr. Summerbell, M.P., Mr. Burns stated that during the year 1907 there were 46 cases in London where a coroner's jury had returned a verdict of starvation or death accelerated by privation. He added that in many of these cases relief had been applied for and given when too late.

In a paper read by Dr. Papillon before a French Congress, he showed that during the years 1906-7 Government officials increased by the number of 200,000; which is almost twice the total number at the close of the Empire. He also stated that the percentage of bachelors in this class exceeds the proportion in any other section of the population. The doctor prophesies national torpor and other alarming consequences.

At the general meeting of the Association of Municipal Corporations, held last week, the President, referring to the recent statement by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons, said that it was the business of the State to find money for the unemployed relief works, and that the method of municipal loans would end in disaster. The meeting also unanimously decided that the Exchequer must provide a larger proportion of the increasing sums now demanded for educational purposes, especially the money required for medical inspection.

The York correspondent of the "Leeds Mercury" states that the military authorities of that town served out twenty rounds of ball cartridges to their men under instructions to hold themselves ready to proceed to Bradford, where the police feared a demonstration by the unemployed and suffragettes against the Postmaster-General. This representative of his Majesty's popular Government was, however, able to hold his meeting peacefully in a hall surrounded by 300 policemen.

It appears that the negotiations of the last eight months are about to end in the signing of an agreement to amalgamate the whole of the marine engine works of the North-East Coast. The capital involved amounts to £5,000,000. It is expected that this arrangement will lead to extensive economy in management, and it certainly seems a wise step in the organisation of industry. It only remains for the workers to show the same wisdom in amalgamating their trade union and political associations.

In reply to Mr. Frank Smith's resolution asking the L.C.C. to take the necessary steps to provide work for the unemployed (seconded by Alderman Sanders), the following amendment was moved and carried by 72 votes to 46:—"That, having considered the policy and action of the various committees, the Council is satisfied that all proper measures are being taken in view of the present want of employment in London." Mr. Crooks expressed the opinion that it was the intention of the Council, by this amendment, to "fool the people."

At a meeting of the Irish Parliamentary Party, held in Dublin, Mr. Ginnell proposed the following resolution:—"That as the best method to promote reforms most urgently needed, and the national movement by the same action, only a contingent of this party go to Westminster at present; that these do not reside there, but go there periodically for obstruction and fighting, and that not the same men, but a different set, go on successive occasions, in order, if possible, to escape demoralisation, and that all the other members of the party work in Ireland to check emigration by promoting the distribution of the ranches, forcing compulsory sale, and, by a general strike against rent, and in every other way, to bring alien rule in Ireland to a dead stop." This was not seconded; but there are growing signs of a revolt against the present policy of the official leaders of the party.

The "Municipal Journal" records a momentous event in public health history in an article on the Sanatorium for Consumptives which has just been opened by the Birmingham Corporation. With the exception of a temporary scheme working under the Sheffield Council, this is the first attempt to make this all-important department of hygiene a public service. The treatment will not only include the period spent in the sanatorium, but also general supervision for two years after leaving the hospital. At first only those cases will be accepted where there is every hope of permanent cure; but it is hoped that the system will eventually be extended on a scale which will include all victims of a scourge which science has declared to be remedial whenever the public intelligence demands action.

We learn from our contemporary, "The Railway Review," that Mr. Wardle, M.P., has protested against the action of the Postmaster-General in ordering three postal employees to refrain from taking an active part in I.L.P. meetings. The Right Honourable gentleman has replied that "such action constituted a breach of the rule which enjoins all Post Office servants to maintain a certain reserve in political matters, and he added that in future they must abstain from such action. . . . They cannot be permitted to take a prominent part at public meetings organised by, or in connection with, a political party." If Mr. Wardle will continue to persistently force this matter before the House he will be doing invaluable service to the Socialist movement. A vital principle is at stake.

The French Government has declared that it will not dissolve the General Federation of Labour, in spite of the recent revolutionary activity of some of the members of that body. M. Viviani, the Minister of Labour, said that the revolutionary element had been much exaggerated, and that the development of trade unionism was beneficial, in that it tended towards the organisation of the democracy. M. Jaurès refused to be appeased by this pretended kindness, and asked the pertinent question: If the Government loves the Confederation, why does it persecute it? and he led his followers, to the number of 60, into the voting lobby against the Ministers. This is an excellent example, which our Labour Party will do well to observe, of the proper method of treating concessions which have no real value.

The centre of interest in the Canadian Parliamentary situation is the cumulating evidence of the existence of gross corruption in the matter of public works. Sir Wilfrid Laurier takes the line that the accusations are unworthy of his notice; but the "Times" correspondent has telegraphed: "I regret to say that the information which I have received goes to corroborate these accusations. From a source absolutely trustworthy I have learned that, on a certain portion of the [Transcontinental] Railway at least, the contractors ars swindling the people of Canada. It is a shameful story of falsified pay-rolls, falsified books, and falsified statements of work done. . . . Indignation, when Canadians learn the truth, will also be caused by the system under which poor labourers are placed in a position which is little, if any, better than the peonage in the Southern United States. . . . An official at Ottawa told me yesterday that he knew that it existed, but did not know how to prevent it." Canada, in short, has, like every other country, to face the problem of replacing inefficient officials by efficient ones.

Socialism.

By The Rev. Percy Dearmer, M.A.
Vicar of S. Mary The Virgin, Primrose Hill.

(A paper read before the Church Congress at Manchester.)

WE know, in a company like this, something of the horror and shame of modern civilisation; we know it partly from our own personal experience, and more securely from the cold light of the statistics that have been laboriously collected in such cities as London, York, and Glasgow. And if we love our neighbour a tenth part as well as ourself, we must be greatly concerned with whatever proposals are brought forward to reduce the vice, misery, disease, and early death, to change the process by which a large proportion of our children are brought up degenerate, and to reconstruct society on a Christian basis.

Therefore we have to put aside all that hinders a clear judgment—all the prejudices of our particular class or coterie, all the peculiar inhibitions of our upbringing, and all the subtle blindness which our self-interest so easily imposes. We have to consider all schemes of improvement in the light of the Gospel.

The most prominent of these schemes is Socialism. Indeed, at the present day it seems to be the only scheme that is at all complete, that has a universal moral appeal, that evokes prophetic fervour. There are, no doubt, still some people who believe in the Individualist principles of fifty years ago—the principles which German economists have named after the town where we have the honour of meeting to-day—and who think that Individualism can cure the evils which it has created. But such political homœopathy as this is hardly in the range of practical affairs. The Individualist criticism of social principles will indeed always be valuable, always necessary. No one should know better than Churchmen that there are dangers in concerted action and co-operation, dangers in centralisation—in order itself; for the historic Church has exemplified all the diseases to which Socialism is subject, being herself the oldest Socialistic institution in existence. She has gone through the trials, she has suffered the abuses—and still suffers them far too easily; but she has learned also—at least the Lambeth Conference has tried to teach us—that the safeguards lie in democratic government and in the spread of education.

Therefore the warnings of Individualism are welcome. It is from Christianity also that the world has learnt the inestimable value of the individual soul, the freedom, the responsibility of each separate human being. Christianity insists on Individualism while it is at the same time intensely social. Nay, is not the Socialism of Christianity due to the fact that it for the first time revealed the right of the humblest individual—the slave and the outcast—to the highest development, the fullest self-manifestation? It is the same conviction that makes men Socialists to-day: it is because they believe in the value of each human soul among the despised, oppressed, and neglected, that they seek in the principle of co-operation a remedy for our present disorder.

Thus it is that, for all the usefulness of the Individualist spirit, every measure of improvement in recent years—beginning, indeed, so far back as the great factory legislation promoted in the name of Christianity by that great Christian, Lord Shaftesbury—has been a step along the Socialist road. Conservatives and Liberals may alike express their abhorrence of Socialism; but none the less, when they are in power, it is Socialistic legislation that they give us. Even Protection, which is the one dominant enthusiasm of his Majesty's Opposition, is Socialistic—though whether it is a good or a bad form of Socialism is not for me to discuss. This is not the fault of the two great political parties. They cannot help it. All other doors are shut. In opposition the politician may denounce Socialism as impracticable; in office he finds very little to be practicable that is not Socialistic.

Now, this principle of common management has become the idol of the most intelligent and the best organised section of the working classes. They look no longer to revolution, but to an orderly reconstruction through Parliament, through the municipalities, and the Civil Service—in a word, to Collectivism or State Socialism, which is the precise opposite of anarchy, of robbery, and of violence.

Of all phenomena surely nothing will fill the historian with such surprise and admiration as this: that the organised working classes of to-day—with such immense temptations to violent upheaval—have yet turned for their deliverance from the land of bondage, by an almost instinctive preference, to the great principles of law and order, to the most orderly, the most restrained, the most disciplined plan of society that has ever been drawn up by scientist, philosopher, or prophet. They have turned to the conception that floated in the vision of the world's greatest seers, from Plato to Ruskin, the conception that was the constant ideal of the historic Church—the conception to which the great Christian fathers looked up from a world of slavery as the mark of the city of God—the orderly service of each for the good of all, the brotherly co-operation of the many members in the one body. For this is Socialism.

It is their ideas of fellowship and service that are being welcomed and preached with passionate and self-sacrificing enthusiasm by thousands upon thousands of the higher artisans. Remember, this ideal does not come from the slums, it was not invented by the sufferers: it was invented by compassionate men of the middle class, and it is being spread abroad by that section of the working class that suffers least and has least to gain. And wherever we study the literature of this movement we find the same insistence upon moral principles, the same inspiration of the Christian ideal. These men may be mistaken—we all may be—but at least there is no denying that they think they are seeking brotherhood, service, and charity, that they are moved by compunction and compassion, that they are sincerely attacking selfishness and the worship of Mammon.

(To be concluded.)

Egypt.

"YA RABB, Rah yigi emta al alfi malyun gini dol?"*

This modest prayer, evidently of long standing, might never have been recorded, had it not been overheard; it happened, however, that I observed a fellah upon his knees, and listened.

Momentarily, my spirits rose, for the man who thought in such big sums must have imagination—at least. Reflection, however, silenced these raptures; the man was merely a child and greedy. As infinity to the schoolmen, so was "alfi malyun" to him; all he wanted was a lot, and the more he asked for the more he was likely to get. But the sheikh with whom I rode ignored the portent and continued to descant on the iniquities of the cottonworm . . .

In the village we drank coffee with the omdah, who complained bitterly that he had no leisure, and wondered how long the Government expected him to work for nothing. I murmured something fatuous about "public service"; a remark received with silence and knitted brows. . . . Returning, the village gaffir accompanied me, and without delay plunged neck deep into eulogy of the Occupation, discoursing vaguely on the benefits which that phenomenon had given to the country. Having run the gamut of every department, from irrigation to finance, up the scale and down, with considerable eloquence and fervour, he paused, adding somewhat lamely: "Splendid people—the English." I perceived wearily that this was merely the overture—the groundbait, as it were, heralding the approach of

* "Lord, when are those thousand million pounds coming?"

even more succulent matter. I whistled nervously with a poor affectation of high spirits as I watched my friend gathering his forces And suddenly the attack came, and a cry of "Genab el Mefettish" † quivered into the air with throbbing mournful emphasis. There was a note of deeper appeal and more genuine interest now in the voice that had lately with gay animation discoursed on the merits of an alien race. Briefly, it was a case of six children and P.T.120 a month. I wrote his name in my book—a fat book, already bristling with such details; not for pity or any personal interest in the case: merely a note and a record, that might be of some use later.

Back in the rest house we dined—two other wandering inspectors had taken refuge here—and talked shop. The Nile, the crops, "the native," "the Lord" who had gone and "Gorst" who was here; but it was the fortunes of K—— that moved us, for he had just been promoted to a fat billet at LE900 a year. We were agreed on his merits, and declared him a good fellow; wondering in our hearts how soon our turn would come. "Damn this filthy country," said B——, and having drunk to this sentiment we went to bed.

Next morning I met my friend Sadiq Effendi Mohammed, a native doctor late of the Government service, who had retired into private practice. I asked him how he liked the change and he beamed. "I made a hundred pounds this month," he said . . .

The English, we are told, are here for the purpose of teaching Egyptians to govern themselves, and the Egyptians it may be supposed are working heart and soul to learn that lesson. So that an imaginative man at home might have visions of stirring mutual endeavour, helpful co-operation, individual energies and enthusiasms consciously directed to a single large purpose. In effect we find a band of roving provincial inspectors—whose hopes are centred on rises of pay and promotions, with the glorious prospect of leave once every two years: it is true they work hard—are mostly overworked; but their work is nothing but an incident of which the happy consummation is retirement and a pension. In India the government official is wrapped in his work, so wrapped that he talks India on board his homeward boat, finds England a devilish dull place, and pants to return to his East. In Egypt we take at the most a professional interest in our work, and there is probably not one of us who would not leave the country to-morrow if he got the chance.

Of the native population over eighty per cent. are fellaheen, sleepy barbarians buried in ignorance and superstition, whose mental outlook is literally bounded by the limits of a cotton field. The remainder comprises for the most part the Effendi class, the educated native who wears trousers and talks French: he is probably a more or less ardent supporter of the Nationalist Party, which will continue to be ineffective as long as its politics are inspired by the vapourings of the "Lewa," and as long as its leaders are actuated by a desire for notoriety and the hope of personal advancement. It is sufficiently discouraging to find the English officials indifferent, but when even the Egyptian patriot is a self-seeker, it is difficult not to give way to despair.

If we are merely policemen, put here to keep order, run the finances of the place, and secure equal justice for all classes, we do our best to attain these objects, and achieve a certain measure of success. It is even possible that after an indefinite lapse of time our particular methods of government might, by a slow process of permeation, come to be appreciated and understood by the Egyptian. If, however, it is our desire (and we have professed it) to teach the Egyptians self-government, this implies more than the conscientious performance of routine duties; it implies on our part a genuine sympathy with the Egyptian people, and on their part a belief in the sincerity of our motives and a willingness to co-operate and learn. Yet this mutual understanding is impossible as long as the rank and file of the two peoples shun each other in society and abuse each other in secret.

† Genab means "honour"; mefettish, "inspector." An "inspector" out here is a great man—all Englishmen, therefore, are "inspectors."

When the true Nationalism comes, it will be a Nationalism as dear to the heart of the Englishman as the Egyptian, and it will only come when on both sides the desire of personal gain has been swept away by the passion for public service. That day seems far distant; for the two have so little in common. The Egyptian's background of experience is thin and empty; he has no literature, no art, no drama, no music worthy the name; his history is not an inspiration. Moreover the Egyptian drinks coffee. On the other hand, there is the Englishman, sport-loving, sport-talking, whisky-drinking. This question of drinks may sound trivial; but it is one of those little things that widen barriers, strengthen antipathies.

They have, however, one thing in common; politically—if they are interested in politics—both are fanatics: that is, both see things through their own particular telescopes, refusing to admit the existence of other telescopes or to acknowledge the truth in other points of view. As an Englishman (an exceptionally unprejudiced, open-minded one, of course) I am inclined to regard the Egyptian political outlook, *i.e.*, the "Lewa" or Nationalist outlook, as elementary and childish. Nationalism by all means, but intelligent Nationalism, based on some knowledge of history, not merely the history of wars and dynasties, but the history of thought and ideas; Nationalism, in fact, backed by a sense of proportion, an intelligent recognition of facts.

It is depressing, for instance, to read in the leading Nationalist newspaper that "the English have no history worth mentioning, no ideas deserving consideration, save only the philosophies of Darwin and Herbert Spencer, the former of whom had no respect for the human race, whilst the latter dealt only with material benefits." Egyptian political ideas are about on the same level of intelligence as this criticism. As for the Anglo-Egyptian, he runs to a type: dull, conventional, unimaginative.

To unite these discordant elements, and inspire this unpromising material with an enthusiasm—something that has no connection with income—can it ever be done? Possibly race antipathies are too strong, personal ambitions too violent; perhaps the leopard can never change his spots or the Ethiopian his skin; perhaps, even, there is no one here who cares about these things, no one in Egypt who feels the lack of a common purpose, or misses the thrill of the sense of co-operation; perhaps, indeed, we are all humbugs—just satisfied with regular meals.

And if these things are true, then it is needless to rail and fret. Egyptian and Englishman alike may continue to do their daily work, conscientiously and coldly, whilst the cry of their hearts is: "Ya Rabb, Rah yigi emta al alfi malyun gini dol?"

L. H. C. SHUTTLEWORTH.

Mansura, Lower Egypt.

My Black Boy Again.

By Richmond Haigh.

OTAI came into the room at about the usual time and said, "The bath is ready, sir."

"All right!" I said. "I shall be ready in a minute. You may take the things down."

M'litsi was the name of the tiny stream which ran past my hut, and very precious was the little flow of water in that ever dry and thirsty land. Dribbling over the sand, never more than an inch in depth, it could be stepped over in a walking stride; ever apparently on the point of running out, it had never within living memory failed to supply the wants of the three considerable kraals—with the hundreds of head of cattle and goats belonging to them—which some distance apart from each other, depended upon it solely during winter months for drinking, cooking, and washing purposes. But there was greater strength in the stream than appeared to the eye! Summer storms had washed that bed for ages, and the banks were high on either side in many places, but the storm that washed it out brought ever a new supply of sand with it, and for a depth of three feet—in places, far more—the water silted through the sand. A flock of goats, drinking together, lined along the stream would in a minute or two stop the surface flow entirely, and I have watched the knowing creatures at the lower end each, as the water did not reach it, jump up the bank and run along the stream to the head of the line, then down again to finish drinking. Often there would be no water running past my station for an hour or two, when I would know that the people at the kraal higher up and the animals there had descended together for their supply. This never occasioned any inconvenience to me, nor to the natives at the other kraals, although thirsty animals would have to bide their time. At such times the sun would in a very little while dry the surface sand of the stream bed and a despairing tenderfoot might die of thirst on the bank, thinking he had reached only another of the many dead watercourses with which that part of the world is cursed. The water running over the surface is used by the women of the kraals only for washing things, such as their clay pots, and is never taken for cooking or drinking. When in the morning or evening they go down to fetch water, with their calabashes they scoop holes in the sand, away from the running stream, and by the time they have cleaned their pots the hole will be full of beautifully clear, cold water. Towards the mouth of the stream, where the depth of sand is greater, the water is never seen on the surface, and here it is necessary to make holes four or five feet deep, but the supply never fails. The instinct of game and cattle bred in that country leads them, if the surface is dry, to walk up the bed of the course tramping holes until the water oozes through. The less the depth of sand, of course, the more strongly do they smell the water.

As it was not convenient for me to go upstream some distance for my bath, to where the water bubbled between some rough stones on a rocky bed, I had procured an extra large zinc bath, and part of the boy's duty every morning was to get this ready for me. The bath was kept under the bank of the stream, and Otai's usual method was to commandeer three or four picanninies, give each a scoop, see that the hole each made in the sand was clear, then let them bail away until the bath was full. When this was done, he would come and tell me, and if I was ready he would take a chair and the rest of the things down. From a kraal on the other side of the stream, hidden in a dense forest of prickly-pear bushes, women and girls came every morning for water, and on the occasion of my first bath I must have sat for at least an hour with only my head out of the water expecting them to go away, but they had a greater contempt for time than I, and they quite plainly wanted to see whether I was white all over, or whether it was my face and hands only that differed from themselves in colour. Native women don't speak in low voices, and although there were none nearer than fifty yards, their remarks were quite audible to me, and when at last I stepped out of the bath and took a towel from the chair, I found what they said so quaint and amusing that I was pleased they had not left earlier. They were most jokingly inclined, though a few were very serious, and there was a native freedom and broadness in many of the remarks which only an expert in the English language could properly match; but there were many such remarks from the girls as, "Oh! he is white all over." "No! his body is white but his neck and head are red." "True!" "True!" "See how the sun shines on him." "Ba tsaba Basadi" (he is afraid of women)—meaning shy. "True." "True." And the ever-ready laugh rippled along the line. They are quick and clever at repartee, and I knew them too well to make any remark or take open notice of them, so that, after a few days, if any women came for water at my bath time (which was not their usual time for coming) they would just casually look across; some might call out, "Dumella M're!" or "Da ma kgos!" which are ordinary greetings, fill their pots, and go without further notice.

So it was that Otai came as usual to my room and said, "The bath is ready, sir." Taking towel, soap and chair, he started off for the bathing-place, but had hardly left the room when he returned and said, "The chief is here."

"Who?" I asked; but before he could reply the chief was at the door and asking Otai if I was within. The youngster answered "Yes," and walking to the middle of the room said aloud, "Sir! the chief is here." "Come in, chief!" I called, and in walked a remarkable figure and the most consequential native personage of all this land. Mapejani was the royal wife of a great chief against whom a considerable British force had not found it easy to prevail. The chief is long since dead, and the power of the tribe has been broken entirely, but Mapejani, with the aid of her councillors, looking back only a few years to the time when the tribe was entirely free and independent, hangs on desperately to every little shred of authority, and tries by all means to keep the people from breaking up. At the time of which I write, she could have been no more than 55 years of age, nor did the troublous and exciting life she had experienced appear to sit heavily upon her. She was an enormous woman; taller than most men; she was broader and carried more weight than any man or woman of all her people. Upright in carriage, and with a fine head, her blue blood was at once noticeable in her slender, shapely hands and feet. Whether attended by men or women as she went, no one would hesitate for a moment to single her out as the chief; and her deliberate movements and address (though she would be jolly and cheerful enough on occasion) were well suited to her appearance and dignity.

As she entered my room I went forward to greet her, shaking hands in the usual way, then pointed to the chair, which Otai still held, upon which she sat down. Three women were attending the chief, one of whom came in and sat upon the floor beside her, while the other two squatted on the ground outside. "You are out early this morning, Chief," I said, by way of opening the conversation. The Queen, as her few Christianised subjects delighted to call her, laughed heartily, "Do you think this early? Why, I'm out before the sun every morning. Only white people lay in bed in daytime." "Yes!" I said, "but they don't sleep all the afternoon as you do." "One cannot work in the heat of the day," she replied. "Even animals know better than that." "Quite right," I said, "but you have no work to do. You can simply please yourself." I knew that she was always busy about her own huts, and said this only to find out why. The reply was almost exactly what might have

been expected from a careful housekeeper at home, and rather astonished me. "No work? Do you think I can trust the women to keep the place clean? The dirty, lazy things! Will cows keep the kraal clean? They love the dirt!"

It appeared, after a little more talk, that the Chief was going to look at one of her corn lands and had stopped to see me, and get a cup of coffee, on the way —the coffee, as a matter of course, had been handed to her almost as soon as she sat down—and now she rose to leave again.

Otai, who had brought the coffee in, knowing that I would wish to finish with the bath quickly, had not left the room, and now, when Mapejani stood up, the eager youngster hearing her bid me adieu took the chair upon which she had been sitting and started off at once for the bathing place. Alas! alas! A remark I made about the dryness of the season reminded the chief—who prided herself on having some virtue as a rain-maker—that she wished to ask me whether I would have some real salt sea-water (a powerful aid in rain-making) sent up for her from the coast, and, while putting the question to me, she sat down again. Great Heavens! What a crash was there! Huge and fat, she must have turned the scale at nineteen stone. The room had flooring boards raised a few inches from the ground, and how they stood the shock was ever after a surprise to me. The whole building shook. The horrified attendants stood for a moment aghast—as did I—then we all rushed forward to the chief's assistance. Mapejani went white and green with rage; she fairly foamed at the mouth. Otai, who had hardly passed out of the room, hearing the mighty thud, looked back and, seeing at once what he had been responsible for, was struck motionless with terror. With a considerable effort we—the women and I—raised the chief from the ground, and bringing my own chair round I pressed her into it. The women now stood back, shivering and gibbering with fright; their lives had been passed at the royal kraal, and each of them had doubtless many times seen the assegai used at a word from an angry chief; someone must die! Such an awful shock to chiefly dignity could only be wiped out with blood—much blood. Poor little Otai! He stood on the threshold, speechless, while I, talking as quickly as the words could come, to keep back the storm and explain the accident, poured out a glass of water and handed it to her Majesty. Glaring at me, the Chief heard my words and noticed my concern as I jumped for the whisky bottle—Oh! blessed peace maker!—and poured the liquor liberally into her glass. I saw the suspicion that I had deliberately placed this insult upon her leave her face; then she turned and glowered balefully upon my utterly nerveless little servant.

"Whose boy is that?" her voice quivered with rage and indignation, as well it might, for surely never great chief cut a more ridiculous figure than did she when she flopped so huge and helplessly upon the floor. What more outrageous thing could have happened to her as a woman (of her size) and a chief?

"Son of Jaboadi, of the Sepeke," I replied. "He is my boy. A good boy! It was an accident, Chief!" and again I rattled off the explanation.

Jaboadi's name was held in honour amongst the tribe; my own character was good amongst them, and the whole affair was plainly without evil intent. Yet it took me quite a while to soothe Mapejani. Unaided, I might have failed in the end and she would have gone back to her council with an ill heart towards me which would have brought to an end my usefulness as an agent in that part; but I had an extremely able friend in the shape of a square bottle whose occasional remarks eventually raised a smile with a glimmer of generosity upon the face of the chief, and I thanked the Lord that he had led me to be almost harshly chary about giving the chiefs liquor, although they were continually trying to get it from me.

Otai, who had, I believe, expected to be slain on the spot, was sent out of sight. Mapejani—which word, by the way, means "little pot," and as a name for this chief speaks volumes for the native sense of humour—was persuaded to rest awhile and I lost my bath. But many times afterwards Otai would look at me sorrowfully and go away as I burst into laughter at the remembrance of the whole thing.

An Alphabet.

By G. K. Chesterton.

A is an Agnostic dissecting a frog,
B was a Buddhist who had been a dog,
C was a Christian, a Christist I mean,
D was the Dog which the Buddhist had been,
E is for Ethics that grow upon trees,
F for St. Francis who preached to the fleas,
G is for God which is easy to spell,
H is for Haeckel and also for Hell,
I is the Incas now commonly dead,
J is a Jesuit under the bed,
K is the letter for Benjamin Kidd,
The Angels and Devils said don't, but he did.
L Louis the Ninth who unlike the Eleventh,
Was a much better man than King Edward the Seventh.
M is for Man; by the way, what is Man?
N is for Nunquam who'll tell if he can,
O is the Om about which I won't trouble you,
P for the Pope and P.W.W.
Q is the Quaker quiescent in quod,
R is for Reason, a primitive God,
S is the Superman, harmless but fat,
T a Theosophist losing his hat,
U the Upanishads, clever but slight,
V is a Virtuous Man killing Beit,
W is for Wesley who banged with his fist,
X for King Xerxes, a monotheist,
Y is for You who depraved as you are,
Are Lord of Creation and Son of a Star.
Z Zarathustra who couldn't take stout,
He made war on the weak and they banged him about.

To certain Legislators who speak scornfully of Suffragette Methods.

You, from whose lips the words of cold disdain
Have stung with bitterness, but not dismayed,
Those hearts which, for their birthright, would invade
The hollow sanctities of your domain!
Have you forgot what men have done to gain
Your freedom? Think of many a bloody blade
Struck home in silence, many a barricade
That stemmed the tide of proud Oppression's reign.

Now Freedom's dawn for Womankind has come;
And if their souls, that long in silence yearned,
Break into flame, and shame your feeble spark,
Keep you your scorn: remember—and be dumb—
Not yet man's fullest lesson have they learned:
Pillage, and fire, and murder in the dark!

J. H. COUSINS.

Books and Persons.

(AN OCCASIONAL CAUSERIE.)

I OBTAINED the new book of Anatole France, "L'Ile des Pingouins," the day after publication, and my copy was marked "eighteenth edition." But in French publishing the word "edition" may mean anything. There is a sort of legend among the simple that it means five hundred copies. The better informed, however, are aware that it often means less. Thus, in the case of the later novels of Emile Zola, an edition meant two hundred copies. This was chiefly to save the self-love of his publishers, who did not care to admit that the idol of a capricious populace had fallen off its pedestal. The vast fiction was created that Zola sold as well as ever! One Paris firm, the "Société du Mercure de France," which in the domain of pure letters has probably issued in the last dozen years more good books than any other house in the world, has, with astounding courage, adopted the practice of numbering every copy of a book. Thus my copy of its "L'Esprit de Barbey d'Aurévilly" (an exceedingly diverting volume) is numbered 1,424. I prefer this to advertisement of "second large edition," etc. One knows where one is. But I fear the example of the Mercure de France is not likely to be honestly imitated.

* * *

If Anatole France's "editions" consist of five hundred copies I am glad. For an immediate sale of nine thousand copies is fairly remarkable when the article sold consists of nothing more solid than irony. But I am inclined to think that they do not consist of five hundred copies. There is less enthusiasm—that is to say, less genuine enthusiasm—for Anatole France than there used to be. The majority, of course, could never appreciate him, and would only buy him under the threat of being disdained by the minority, whose sole weapon is scorn. And the minority has been seriously thinking about Anatole France, and coming to the conclusion that, though a genius, he is not the only genius that ever existed. (Stendhal is at present the god of the minority of the race which the "Westminster Gazette" will persist in referring to as "our French neighbours." In some circles it is now a lapse from taste to read anything but Stendhal.) Anatole France's last two works of imagination did not brilliantly impose themselves on the intellect of his country. "L'Histoire Comique" showed once again his complete inability to construct a novel, and it appeared to be irresponsibly extravagant in its sensuality. And "Sur La Pierre Blanche" was inferior Wells. The minority has waited a long time for something large, original, and arresting; and it has not had it. The author was under no compulsion to write the history of Joan of Arc, which bears little relation to his epoch, and which one is justified in dismissing as the elegant and dazzling pastime of a savant. If in Anatole France the savant has not lately flourished to the detriment of the fighting philosopher, why should he have spent years on his "Joan of Arc" at a period when Jaurès urgently needed intellectual aid against the doctrinairism of the International Congress? Jaurès was beaten, and he yielded, with the result that Clemenceau, a man far too intelligent not to be a practical Socialist at heart, has become semi-reactionary for want of support. This has not much to do with literature. Neither has the history of Joan of Arc. To return to literature, it is indubitable that Anatole France is slightly acquiring the reputation of a dilettante.

* * *

In 'L'Ile des Pingouins" he returns, in a parable, to his epoch. For this book is the history of France "from the earliest time to the present day," seen in the mirror of the writer's ironical temperament. It is very good. It is inimitable. It is sheer genius. One cannot reasonably find fault with its amazing finesse. But then one is so damnably *un*reasonable! One had expected—one does not know what one had expected—but anyhow something with a more soaring flight, something more passionate, something a little less gently "tired" in its attitude towards the criminal frailties of mankind! When an A. B. Walkley yawns in print before the spectacle of the modern English theatre, it really doesn't matter. But when an Anatole France grows wearily indulgent before the spectacle of life, one is inclined to wake him up by throwing "Leaves of Grass" or "Ecce Homo" at his head. For my part, I am ready to hazard that what is wrong with Anatole France is just spiritual anæmia. Yet only a little while, and he was as great a force for pushing forward as H. G. Wells himself!

* * *

The preface to the new book is amusing. It conceits that before writing the history of the penguins the author went to consult an aged historian. And this is what the aged historian said to him: "Why, my good sir, put yourself to so much trouble, and why compose a history when you have only to copy the best known, as is the custom? If you have an original view, a new idea, if you show men and things in an unexpected aspect, you will surprise the reader. And the reader does not like to be surprised. In a history he only looks for the nonsense which he has learnt already. If you try to instruct him, you will only humiliate and vex him. Do not attempt to enlighten him, he will cry out that you are insulting his beliefs! . . . One word more. If you want your book to be well received, neglect no opportunity for exalting the virtues on which societies repose: devotion to riches, pious sentiments, and especially the resignation of the poor, which is the foundation of order. Affirm, sir, that the origins of property, of the nobility, and of the police will be treated in your history with all the respect which these institutions merit. Let it be known that you admit the supernatural when it presents itself. On this condition you will succeed in good company." In the opening sentences of the foregoing a certain acrimoniousness against the critics of "Joan of Arc" seems to be displayed. The satire here errs a little in crudity. (Perhaps Mr. Andrew Lang's remarks have put him about.) But the concluding part is very agreeable.

JACOB TONSON.

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

Recent Verse.*

Francis Thompson died on November 13, 1907. His work had been held up to the skies before his death, and his sufferings descanted upon in the stream of praise that followed after; so that, on the cover and fly-leaf of this admirable book of selections from his poems, the publishers now boldly intertwine a Crown of Thorns, symbol of the agony of the Man of Sorrows, with a crown of laurels; and his friends have let it pass. The quotations from contemporary criticism, thoughtfully given at the end of this book, tell us that Thompson was hailed as a poet of the first rank, a man

* "Selected Poems of Francis Thompson" (Methuen, Burns and Oates, 5s.); "Beads from a Lover's Rosary," by G. F. Wilson (George Allen); "The Rustic Choir," by A. R. Thurlocke (Samurai Press, 3s. 6d. net); "The Soul of a Dreamer," by A. F. Bates (Stockwell).

"of imagination all compact." But was he? Splendour of utterance, splendour of imagery he had:—

> Day's dying dragon lies drooping his crest,
> Panting red pants into the West;

or this, to the sun,

> When thou didst, bursting from the great void's husk,
> Leap like a lion on the throat of dusk.

One might multiply in quotation. An unperturbed—one of his favourite adjectives—an unperturbed flow of intense thought he had, and expressed in his rushing imagery. He embroidered his work with coloured words, with sensuous words, words that expressed the fruitfulness and the beauty of earth; and he brocaded all with pattern of gold and silver. But does all this constitute a poet of the first rank? Skill of word and splendour of imagery serve the emotion, the imagination and the thought in what they have to say to us; but it is in the novelty of what these three have to say, and principally in what the first two have to say, together with the degree of artistry brought to their expression, that presumably the greatness of a poet lies. The poet thus looks through a kind of telescope of four sections, which he sweeps round on life. Francis Thompson, I think, was only novel in expression and imagery. In emotion, he seems to have been equal and austere. Little children, the woman whom he exalted in Love in Dian's Lap, certain aspects of Nature, and the Catholic religion moved him; but in spite of all the critics, never in such a manner as to carry one (say, myself) away like Blake, in the "Songs of Innocence," like Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, in the "Love Sonnets of Proteus," like Keats, in "What the Thrush Said," and like Verlaine, in "Sagesse." And the reason of this seems to lie in Thompson's very excellences. His imagination was always at the mercy of that "wassail of orgaic imageries," whose novelty took away the breath of his critics; so that his greatness in one direction obscured his whole vision, just as the view would be obscured if only one section of a telescope were pulled out. He gathered his imageries on all sides as in imagination he strayed like an earthly clod about some bower-garden of the heaven he looked to. He wove them recklessly into the stuff of his emotions; and his verse in consequence is nearly always heavy as gold and silver brocade is heavy, and his emotions deadened by the pall. Either he stands and broods, or else he staggers along, though often his strength comes and he runs, beneath its weight; for though he brought many flowers of pure gold to earth, they that had been imponderable in heaven became heavy and a harsh contrast when woven into a "Tellurian" scheme. To leave the metaphor, I think Thompson would have achieved more had he been more simple. He was too prodigal of word and image and not careful enough of rhythm; his expression in becoming involved stifled his emotion; and his imagination nearly always was hardly distinguishable from mere imagery. In the way of thought he, being a Catholic, had nothing new to say. He was more concerned with the relationship of man and Life and Death to God than with man himself, or men. He did not look through a telescope on a new and far vision, but through the kaleidoscope of the world's imaginings. And yet, despite all these drawbacks, there are great things in his work. In "A Child's Kiss," in "A Corymbus for Autumn," and in "To a Poet Breaking Silence," for instance, there are passages—emotional this and imaginative those; but nothing in his thought that appeals to a mind scalded by Nietzsche and modern life. With the exception of the matter of symbols spoken of above, this little volume is an excellent one in all respects. There is a good portrait-frontispiece.

Mr. Wilson in "Beads from a Lover's Rosary," has hardly done himself justice, and it is a pity. Some of the quatrains composing his book he could not have read more than once. Here and there is a hint of better things if Mr. Wilson had lingered a little with the file. He could, in telling the story of his love,

have been simple and passionate, and yet employed a great deal more art.

There is much that is pleasant reading in Mr. Thurlocke's book, if only because it reminds us of heaths, hills and beaches we have ourselves visited, and there is much, for so small a book, that was not worth printing—lines like these, from "To a Daisy,"

> What magic art do thou possess
> To teach you how to grow . . . .?

and so on. This too facile marvelling and ruminating over beauties of nature is an evil, and must be burnt away, before poetry, phœnix-like, is reborn with a new song from its own ashes. Only once in this book does Mr. Thurlocke come near to the heart of the matter, in the lines,

> What is it that whispers to me?
> When I sit by the pool in the evening?
> The sedges have something to tell me;
> I stand in the wood in the winter—
> It speaks from the oakleaves that rustle.

In quite a number of the other poems, there is a sweeping rhythm and descriptive breeziness that are not displeasing. The "Rustic Choir" has such a beat that one unconsciously supplies a tune, in quick time. Mr. Thurlocke, like the author of "The Soul of a Dreamer," which is touched upon next, is moved by the inequalities and misery of the present day. But it is only in "What is it That Whispers to Me?" that he seems to have any other senses than the five. This poem, however, which a few days' brooding would have made a haunting thing, is stillborn.

"The Soul of a Dreamer" makes a bad start with the portrait of its author, endorsed, "Yours sincerely, W. F. Bates," and underneath, printed, "Mr. W. F. Bates." Given these strange errors of taste, one is prepared for the fustian which largely makes up this book, and surprised, fustian apart, at the good notes which are struck now and again. To him, Mr. Thurlocke and Mr. Wilson, may one without impertinence suggest a more careful control over their words and rhythms? "Words are only certain good," says Mr. Yeats; but they must be watched, or they will become mere words. We should seek deliverance from their domination, and from that of ready-made rhythms and square-cut stanzas. Poets, as Matthew Arnold says, must wear the sackcloth, and watch and pray for a new music and a new vision—their own. "Why do you wish to be a poet?" someone is asked in Pierre Louys's "Roi Pausole." "To see nothing, not even a fly, with the eye of my neighbour," is the answer. Where are the new poets? Who is eager to scorn delights and live laborious days that Beauty may again wing her way among men, whispering strange words? What is the world doing in its ditch? Come!

F. S. FLINT.

REVIEWS.

The Woman and the Sword. By Rupert Lorraine. (T. Fisher Unwin. 6s.)

This is Mr. Fisher Unwin's great 100-guinea Prize Novel. It is stated in one of Mr. Unwin's publications that he "has devoted himself largely to the capture of young authors . . . still unaware how easy it is to be clever, devoid of all idea how hard it is to be stupid." If Mr. Rupert Lorraine is one of Mr. Unwin's "clever" captures, then it is easy to be clever, and it must be hard to be stupid! "The Woman and the Sword" is a story of blood, more blood, and then more blood. It is on a very little higher level than the penny "dreadful"; and the author's knowledge of the Thirty Years' War is much too good a frame for the paltry picture he presents us in his first novel. It is unconvincing, the incidents do not live; it reminds us of a marionette show, and the hand that pulls the strings is evident throughout. No one will doubt for a moment that Gilbert Charrington will marry Mistress Hilary Page. There is no redeeming charm in the style. Most of the action is unnecessarily brutal. Fancy finding, in a romance, the terrible details of a trooper picking up a baby by its heels, simply because it cried, dashing its head upon the

stones, and flinging it out of the window into the snow! We have much sympathy with the publisher's readers if this is the best they could find amongst the "18 miles of typewritten matter" sent in in the competition. Mr. Jacob Tonson's strictures on contemporary fiction are simply misleading understatements. Mr. Rupert Lorraine with the hundred guineas must be wearing his tongue in his cheek; but Mr. Fisher Unwin did not chance much more than the prize money on his "fancy," for the format of the book is of the cheapest and plainest description.

The Roman Empire. (B.C. 29—A.D. 476.) By H. Stuart Jones. ("The Story of the Nations.") (Fisher Unwin. 5s.)

One of the most valuable books which have appeared in this famous series. It deals with a period which no serious student of human affairs can overlook; especially is it packed with lessons for the politician. For it includes a most detailed attempt at government by a bureaucracy. It was at the full swing of the reaction from the primitive democracy of the comitia. It was a period of autocracy which was often beneficent; and yet was unstable because it was not based on a sufficiently broad foundation of popular co-operation. The problem of liberty versus government is summed up by a shrewd sentence from the Consul Fronto who meditated that "while it was bad enough to have an emperor under whom no one might do anything, it was worse to have one under whom everyone might do everything." We would particularly notice the chapter on Nerva, Trajan and Hadrian. Mr. Jones calls Hadrian "the only man of genius amongst the Emperors of Rome," and he quotes five lines of his death-poem which have the touch of lastingness. He analyses him as "a poet and artist, but with a passion for the details of business and finance; a voluptuary, determined to drain the cup of human experience to the last drop, and at the same time a ruler who laboured strenuously for the well-being of his subjects —such were a few of the diverse parts which Hadrian played." There are over fifty full-page illustrations of the greatest interest for the archæologist and the artist.

Warp and Woof. By Edith Lyttelton. (Fisher Unwin. 3s. 6d. net.)

This is an ugly, depressing play, all about the ugly and sordid realities of fashionable dressmaking: overwork, long hours, society puppy, anæmic and consumptive workgirls, the irascible proprietress, driven and driving. The ball for which all this slime was stirred up and set boiling actively rouses and breaks Theo Heming's spirit and kills her sister Phœbe; but Society passes on with a look of cold sympathy and a total lack of imaginative insight. The fault of this kind of play is it may arouse indignation, but it makes no appeal to the imagination. It has the virtues and faults of a Fabian tract. We have to fear any revolution brought about by an appeal to reason; and rather than bring on our stage the bare facts of our present existence we should seek so to fire and inform the imagination with beauty that we shall become intolerant of the hideousness of life. The opening chapters, say, of "A Dream of John Ball" or of "News from Nowhere" will make more revolutionists than "Warp and Woof," or Shaw's or Brieux's plays. However, within her limits, Mrs. Lyttelton has done her work well. Probably she has no desire to make revolutionists.

Yrivand. By Henry Baerlein. (Sherratt and Hughes. 6s.)

We do not hesitate a moment in writing down that "Yrivand" contains work which is quite beyond the standard of the every-day novel. There is the note of fresh thought and original methods on every page. It in when one begins to offer reasons for this opinion that it is realised just exactly how fresh and original that thought and method are. There is a subtle freakishness, a full grasp of realities running through the book which elude hasty criticism. We give an example, rather than deductions, therefrom: "Old Einar

was no musician of the commoner sort, agile only in his fingers. No! when the dancing had become furious he danced as well—but more sedately, turning with grave, little steps, for the partner whom his arms were holding was a life-long love. But he never boasted of this, he never sneered at any love which seemed to be more mundane. On the contrary, whenever he chanced to play at a wedding he was always contented and sprightly because he was sure it was a love match. He was just as sure of this as is every well-conducted newspaper when a prince is going to marry a princess." Einar is typical of the old-world Norwegian village where everything in this books happens; where Marget, who has the reality of a dream, lives; where Frederikke writes grotesque poems on the death of cows and other important deeds. "Let it, meanwhile, be recorded in her great honour that she, at all events, did not once, on account of the mere technicalities, say what she did not wish to say." That is delightful; so is the whole book.

DRAMA

Cooking and the Drama.

MINE hostess sighed.

"Why," she asked, between two dainty sips at the cup of China tea, "why are the Continental thinkers so much more wonderful than ours?"

"They're not," I retorted, indignantly.

"Oh yes, they are. I wonder why?"

The decadent poet shook back the long black locks from his pale face and smiled complacently.

"It's the cooking," he whispered, softly.

"My dear fellow!"

"Isn't it obvious?" He settled himself comfortably back in his chair, and pointed a finger at us. "French cookery is artful and provocative, and you get Anatole France, Montaigne, Voltaire, Rabelais. German cooking is philosophic and individual, an attempt, if you like, to conserve and perfect the Ego of the meat, and it gives us Goethe, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche and Kaiser Wilhelm the Second. We English eat our meat raw and stew the individual soul out of our vegetables, and we produce Ruskin, Herbert Spencer, W. T. Stead and Carlyle. Er—was he? Well, the Scotch are as bad.

"Now note the effect on the theatre. In France it is a sparkle, in Germany a lamp, in England—well, the English Drama, like Mr. Lamb's baby, is more easily conceived than described."

"Bosh! Had we never a stage?"

"Never!"

"Well, really, you know"—the glance of my hostess wandered doubtfully from face to face—"I always thought we had a tolerable list of world-famous dramatists."

"Yes, madam, famous on the Continent, not in Balham, that Athens of England. Balham only knows of Shakespeare and Cecil Raleigh, and thinks the modern incomparably the more actable of the two. Our geniuses we never have acted but on sufferance. We have always preferred Beaumont and Fletcher to Shakespeare, Dryden to Congreve, and Mr. Colly Cibber to the pack of them. Whereas the German, the mere Teutonic man-in-the-street is on speaking terms with Ibsen, or bowing terms with Maeterlinck, and on fighting terms with Shaw (and goes to see Shaw all the more often because he is on fighting terms with him). Goethe, Schiller, Lessing, Wilde, Shaw, Björnsen, Ibsen, Shakespeare, Sudermann, Hauptmann, Schnitzler, Wedekind, Maeterlinck, Gorki and the Greeks—all the best playwrights of the planet jostle for a place on his boards. Do you know, I saw a play of Synge's in Berlin. Synge is his name, isn't it? The author of 'The Riders to the Sea.' Think of it! And then think of our one wandering glow-worm of a Vedrenne-Barker with its Irish dramatist! . . . Shakespeare? No, we don't play Shakespeare. We execute him."

My hostess nodded her head, and looked convinced.

"Don't listen to him, madam," said I. "What

he reproaches to my countrymen is a quality they may well be proud of. This is how the matter really stands. We Britishers love Life. The Continental is past that. Your Parisian can only endure it dressed up delicately and set dancing to ballet music. If it stop but for a moment, he hears at the bottom of his soul the horrible rushing summons of the Seine. The German accepts life as an excuse for thought—systems and ceremonies. But the Englishman loves Life for itself—Life for its own sake. Life stark naked (yes, Life, not Art)—Life in its most repellant disguises. Ugly clothes, fœtid slums, mouldy institutions bother him no whit. Give him his little daily breath, and he is contented. He is the last and greatest of the optimists, and a contempt for criticism, let me remind you in passing, is the proudest privilege of optimism."

"And its easiest explanation."

"Exactly. The critic is the master of detail; it is all that he sees. Only a critic could revile the drama and cooking of England. For the optimist they are tremendous assertions of the Love of Life."

"But——" began my lady.

The Poet swept her down.

"My dear fellow, please don't talk about the Love of Life. What is Life, anyway? The Love of Life for its own sake is an exploded superstition. What you and Miss Marie Corelli call the Joie de Vivre is in reality nothing better than an absence of palate—the palate being an organ with which Providence, for some hidden purpose, has omitted to supply the inhabitants of these islands."

"Bosh! It isn't the absence of palate; it's the presence of hunger. The Continental wouldn't eat at all if it weren't for the spices; the Englishman loves Eating, per se. What does he want with your seductive sauces! To blazes with them! Give him a solid beef chunk he can set his teeth into and growl over."

"And to blazes with your art and intellect?" murmured the Poet.

"Of course! Why your own pet Irish dramatist has called art and intellect bad names, though he only exists by virtue of them. Anyhow, the Briton finds them impertinent in the theatre—they distract him from the true business of the place, which is to contemplate himself prodigiously assembled there. His firm conviction is (sit he in a Covent Garden Opera box or a Tivoli gallery) that the public and not the play's the thing. Plays he does not object to, but they must be unobtrusive."

"Unobtrusive! Have you actually the courage to call musical comedy unobtrusive?"

"Certainly. Compare it with Ibsen. Ibsen makes one forget there is anybody but oneself and the actors in the theatre. Ibsen monopolises things. If you try to join in the chorus a ghostly presence thunders 'Hush!' Now, that is just what the Englishman cannot stand. 'Cheeky little playwright!'

"He wants to realise himself and his fellows, he wants to feel himself a conscious atom of a crowd, a crowd in holiday mood, to break free from the tight walls of his individual life, to lose control (but not consciousness) of himself in this great ocean of men. He wants a play, then, that will interfere as little as possible with his mood, he wants bright dresses to go with the bright, pretty faces, strumming music, traditional morality and immorality, and now and then a song with words that don't matter set to a tune he seems to have heard before.

"Now, these are all admirable desires. We are too prone to attach vast importance to art and intellect; too slow to admire the happy normal man who seeks the wine of the immortals from the scandalous, innocent adventures of the So-and-So Girl."

"Perhaps you are right," murmured the Poet wearily, "but I am tired of this voracious person who swallows pâté-de-foie-gras and broken bottles with equal delight. Undoubtedly his absence of palate (or presence of hunger, as you prefer to call it) makes the Englishman a good coloniser of remote regions where no sort of cooking is to be had. But it is a dreadful nuisance to such of us whom the corruption of foreign influences or some subtle taint of hybrid ancestry has betrayed into a delicacy of taste. What you say about him loving the spectacle of his public self better than the stage-piece is quite true, of course. Why, then, not let him have the theatres without the acting? What do you say? Yes, I know, but even the semblance of it. Or at most a bioscopic sheet. Provide him with song-books of the minstrelsy of the folk—'Swannee River,' 'Auld Lang Syne,' 'Marble Halls,' 'The Lost Chord'—give him now and then a singer with a fresh store of melodies—a Harry Lauder or a Madame Patti; give him an orchestra with plenty of brass and not too many fiddles, and let him chorus until cock-crow."

I (contemptuously): "In fact, a cross between the old music-hall and the Crystal Palace Festival."

He (unperturbed): "Quite; I see you take me. Suppose, then, we do as I suggest; theatres sufficient to contain our friend are turned into Halls of Song (and precious little turning some of them will need); a simple mathematical operation will convince you that two or three will be left over, and these, I trust, we, the decadent minority (no, I don't know why decadent,

but liver-sick stockbrokers always call us so) may enter into possession of our birthright, and be given a chance of seeing some of those English masterpieces which Continentals like so much. We are no inconsiderable minority, let me tell you, but in every constituency they outvote us. I plead for segregation . . . This, too, in cooking. When you have given your happy normal man, God bless him! a sufficient number of yards wherein he may struggle for raw meat at a fixed charge per head, reserve, I pray you, for us miserable palate-possessors a few small dainty restaurants where the food shall be tasteful and varied . . . "

"And clean," I added.

"And clean," he assented. "But let us not wash out the essential juices with the dirt. And let us not perpetuate that marvel of ancient British cooking whereby the essential juices were magically extracted and the dirt preserved. Even in the present enlightened age this has, I believe, at times been found possible, but I must refer you to Mr. Redford for that."

The Poet swept back his hair again—(a gesture for which I always have envied him)—and dallied luxuriously with his extinguished cigarette. Mine hostess frowned.

"I think," she ventured, looking up at us after a pause, "that you are both wrong. I believe the whole thing might be put in a phrase: The Continental goes to the theatre as he goes to the restaurant—to get fed; the Englishman goes to the theatre as he goes to the public-house—to get drunk."

"Yes," retorted the Poet, sitting bolt upright, and becoming earnest, "but don't you realise that the Englishman goes to the restaurant for the same reason he goes to the play, and to the library, and the political meeting, and the football match, and the church? Now, I don't object to the drunkenness, but I want you to admire the poor stuff your countrymen can get drunk on! Such plays, such politics, such religion, such beer! Don't you think that argues a lamentable absence of palate?"

"Talking about beer," I said . . .

And then we drifted into quite another discussion.

W. R. TITTERTON.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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STOP IT.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

In common with every other active member of the I.L.P., I am sick, sorry, and tired of the confusion and disorganisation into which the Party has drifted, and the incapacity with which its affairs are administered. The present rupture has brought matters to a climax, and it is necessary that the soldiers of the movement make their voices heard, and insist on the generals keeping the peace between themselves, and devoting their energies to the enemy. I am not going to take sides between Grayson and the Labour Party, but on behalf of the thousands of men who have done the work of which they are reaping the glory, I tell them they must stop their quarrelling and public laundrying of foul linen, and learn to behave themselves in decent fashion. It is our business to see they do so. I, for one, have given twenty years of solid hard work, without reward or the desire for it, and I am not going to see the result of my work frittered away and the movement made the laughing stock of gods and men because our M.P's. have no better manners than to brawl in public among each other.

Grayson's attack on the Labour members was reprehensible and—but for the excuse of passion—unpardonable. These men are neither traitors nor cowards. They were doing brave and honest work while he was in swaddling clothes, and put the wave in motion on the crest of which he is riding, when to do so was to incur derision and sacrifice. But Grayson is a good comrade, and I ask him, in friendship and sincerity, to withdraw unreservedly, and apologise for the insult he hurled in the heat of passion.

But though Grayson was the immediate originator of the present quarrel, his offence was unpremeditated and the result of violent excitement. But what are we to say of Philip Snowden? Here's a man no longer young, who has been on the N.A.C. for eleven years, during three of which he has occupied the greatest dignity in the power of the party to confer, and yet who has no greater control over his tongue but he must go to Blackburn two or three days after the occurrence, when anger had had time to cool, and repeat the tittle-tattle of the servants and waiters of the House of Commons. I can assure Mr. Snowden that the party takes no more interest in how Grayson spends the money he earns than it does in the thousands a year Snowden was popularly supposed to receive from the journals for which he writes. Indeed, I doubt if it is more reprehensible to give a champagne dinner (even were it true) than to be a reciter of risky stories.

There have been several letters published lately from Macdonald, Snowden and others, appealing for discipline and loyalty on the part of members to their mighty selves; it is time these gentlemen displayed some of those qualities towards the party which has elevated them to their present positions. After all, it is we of the fighting ranks that matter. It is we who have made the movement; it is we who find the money and do the hardest work; and it is we who must see to it that our servants do not become our masters, but behave honestly to the party which has so honoured them. Snowden and Grayson are both paid mem-

bers of the I.L.P. If Grayson has neglected his duties or taken action of which the party does not approve; or if Grayson considers the other I.L.P. members have not supported him in a proper manner, let them lay their charges before the party. It is rank treachery for them to brawl in public and disgrace the movement.

But this melancholy business is chiefly our own fault. Who is to bring the wrong-doers to book? By which court are they to be tried? The N.A.C. should be the body, but the N.A.C. to all intents and purposes is Hardie, Macdonald and Snowden—scarcely an impartial tribunal. These men have gained possession of the whole movement. They are the N.A.C. They succeed each other as chairman. They are our M.P.s; our chief delegates to the Labour Party Conferences, they agree among themselves as to the policy to be pursued and then give forth that policy to the party from which they exact a sheep-like adherence. The party is never consulted before action is taken, it is only asked to endorse policies already decided on. The unemployed Workman Bill was drafted and laid before Parliament without submission to the Party. Undoubtedly it is a good Bill and meets with the approval of every member as a whole, though there are clauses in it to which considerable opposition might be urged. The Licensing Bill has received the unanimous support of our I.L.P. members of Parliament. They have appeared on public platforms along with Liberal members at thinly disguised Liberal meetings, and there is no one to call them to account.

Cockermouth was fought, Newcastle left unfought, entirely on their own responsibility; all sorts of wirepulling and intrigue go on in constituencies who contemplate running candidates. The party organ has also come under their control; it is not the paper of the I.L.P., but the register of the official view; and their henchman, the editor, is allowed to let loose those vituperative insults which are his chief qualification for his position, on any individual who dares to criticise the action of Olympus.

This oligarchy is provoking general dissatisfaction. I hear of individuals, even whole branches, seceding, or threatening to do so.

What poor-spirited treachery to a great movement. Where will the dissentients go? To what organisation will they transfer themselves? Assuredly if they submit to dictatorship in the I.L.P., they will be subject to a similar yoke in the S.D.P., S.L.P., S.P.G.B., or any other alphabetical combination.

It is not by secession to other bodies less democratic than our own, but by internal reform that the remedy must be found. Our N.A.C. must be made more representative of and subject to the control of the Party, and it must exercise an efficient and energetic supervision over its members of Parliament. To do this M.P.s must be rigidly excluded from the Executive of the Party. This seems a hard saying, but it is the only method by which the Party can shape its own policy. The outlook of the Parliamentarian is limited; the walls of the House of Commons prevent him seeing the outside world; his point of view is different from ours, and his position, unless there is an effective check, enables him to thrust his own views upon an unwilling following. The business of the Party should be decentralised, the local organisations and federations should deal with their own election policy, and their own finance, and the "Labour Leader" should be put under the control of a committee elected specially at the Annual Conference.

These are the most important matters and are well worth the consideration of the branches between now and the Easter gathering.

H. RUSSELL SMART.

* * *

MR. H. G. WELLS AND MR. MAX HIRSCH.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Mr. H. G. Wells has declined my request to place before readers of THE NEW AGE any examples of the "misrepresentations and abuse," of which he alleged that they constituted the principal part of my pamphlet "An Exposure of Socialism." On the other hand he has carried out the plan, against which I protested, of marking, in a copy of the pamphlet, the passages which in his opinion justified his accusation. As I had foreseen, these passages are far too numerous to allow of publication in full. I can therefore only select those which Mr. Wells himself has designated as the most objectionable by courteously marking them with the words "Lie," and similar expletives. Strange to say, though he has not been sparing with such amiabilities, not a single passage is marked as abusive. I can therefore take it, that though he made the allegation that the pamphlet was full of abuse, the most microscopic search made by the accuser himself failed to discover a single sentence which could be so described.

Now for the worst of the statements which Mr. Wells first described as misrepresentations and now as lies. The first sentence marked with the word "Lie" in capitals is:

"The great majority (of Socialist workers) advocate equal reward in value, regardless of the value of services rendered, as the only plan (of distribution) feasible under Socialism."

I cannot, of course, show that a numerical majority does so, for I would have to count them all. But if Mr. Wells will read the publication of the Fabian Society, of which he is a member, he will find there the admission that this is the only feasible plan; he will also find it in Grunlund, Bellamy and other Socialist writers.

The next paragraphs marked with the same expletive are not statements of fact at all, but deductions which I make from facts, i.e., having shown what Socialists propose to do, I state that certain consequences must follow and show the reasons for this assertion. These matters of opinion marked by Mr. Wells as "Lies" are:

Under Socialism "it would be as good to the individual to be inefficient and lazy as to be efficient and industrious."

"State officials would choose for them (the young people entering industrial life) the industry or profession in which they are to be employed and determine the whole course of their lives." . . . And "No special material reward can be hoped for by any inventor or discoverer."

All these statements I repeat are deductions from two facts which few serious Socialists will dispute, i.e., that Socialism aims at nationalising capital and that when the State manages all industries, it is not feasible for it to reward the workers otherwise than equally. It may be that my deductions can be shown to be erroneous. So far it has not been attempted, but suppose it were done, and done successfully, would that justify anyone in describing them as "misrepresentations" or "lies." I leave your readers to judge.

Mr. Wells, however, has other expletives in his vocabulary.

The last part of the third of the speeches reprinted in the pamphlet in question is headed, "Will we undo the Work of Runnymede." Against this heading Mr. Wells places the apparently irrelevant remark, "That is why I reminded people that you were a Jew." Further on in the pamphlet the following sentence is underlined:

"The British people have been most stubborn and most successful in this long-drawn battle of freedom."

Somehow this undeniable historical fact seems to have acted upon Mr. Wells as a red rag on a bull, for he, who has falsely accused me of abuse, has written against it, "You sycophantic alien."

Melbourne. MAX HIRSCH.

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