

THE NEW AGE

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.

A FORTNIGHT ago the attention of the whole country was riveted upon the question of Unemployment. The political atmosphere was electric. It was one of those rare golden moments when Governments may be induced by proper pressure to introduce measures entirely against their own wishes. Another such moment occurred three years ago, immediately after the Manchester unemployed riots of 1905, when Mr. Keir Hardie forced Mr. Balfour to bring in and pass the Act which is now in force, and which, ineffective as it is, amounted at the time to a positive outrage upon Conservative sentiment. To-day Mr. Hardie is still in the House of Commons, but with the difference that he now has a party at his back. Yet the great opportunity of 1908 has been allowed to pass. The atmosphere has become almost normal again. Men are talking of other things, and there seems no hope for the out-of-works during this winter but in private charity. But who can blame the public? For the Labour Party itself is talking of other things.

* * *

We are almost inclined to wish that Mr. Keir Hardie stood alone in Parliament. For so he would probably have achieved more for the unemployed. The Labour Party has unwittingly been a positive obstacle in the way of immediate relief measures. Inside the House the Labour members have asked a few questions, received their answers, and sat down. Outside the House they have only been referring to the subject of unemployment in a deprecating fashion, as if to say "keep cool: look at us, we are not in the least excited." And thus they have actually poured oil on the troubled political waters and smoothed the path of a Government which fears agitators but cares not a jot for working-class statesmen. There is not the smallest doubt that the Labour Party could have driven Mr. Asquith to better his proposals out of all recognition if it had only made the most of its position a fortnight ago. But since the men on the Labour benches are not excited, why should the men on the Treasury bench inconvenience themselves?

* * *

We understand that the N.A.C. has come to an arrangement with the Labour Party by which local

branches of the I.L.P. are to be allowed to run Socialist candidates independent of the auspices or consent of the Labour Party, on condition that if such a candidate should be returned he must join the Labour Party and take a salary from its funds. These are the very terms that Mr. Grayson is refusing. The local Socialists are to find the money and do all the work of the election; the electors are to be led to suppose that they are voting for a man who will make an independent stand for Socialism in the House of Commons; and then when success has crowned their combined efforts the Labour Party led by Mr. Arthur Henderson is to step in and absorb the new member—and silence him through the purse-strings. It is a pretty idea, but not exactly what we are aiming at. We also understand that a circular has been addressed to I.L.P. branches from the head office summoning a special conference of divisional areas. The most important item on the Agenda is "General Policy of the Party." We must point out that the divisional areas of the I.L.P. exist only for purposes of organisation, that such a conference is not competent to deal with General Policy, and that the delegates may refuse even to discuss it. General Policy can only be considered at an ordinary General Conference or at a Special General Conference convened for the purpose. The meaning of this irregularity is obvious. There is wire-pulling to be done.

* * *

The recent Municipal elections have resulted in a net decrease of Socialist representation on local authorities. The "Nation" attributes this, rightly as we think, to the reaction towards Toryism which always takes place during periods of trade depression. It points out that it is in times of prosperity and security that the workers are inclined to turn towards an ideal like Socialism. To-day the working classes are turning towards the party which puts an ostensibly immediate cure for unemployment in the forefront of its programme. They will not support Liberals because of the apathy of the Government, and they will not support Socialists or Labour men because of the confession of impotence implied in the Labour Party's acquiescence in the present delay. Nothing but a dramatic protest in the House of Commons or a really great and stirring anti-Liberal campaign in the country can re-establish the reputation of the Labour Party and convince the unemployed—and the class who live in constant fear of unemployment—that the Tariff Reformers are not their best friends. If the Labour Party continues to drift along its present lines, the set-back of last week may well prove to be but a prelude to annihilation at the next General Election.

* * *

The Committee stage of the Licensing Bill was concluded on Monday. Only one change of importance was made during last week's discussion, and strange to relate that change was a real concession to

public opinion. The section giving power to local justices to abolish barmaids was withdrawn, not without protest of course from the temperance wing. It is not to be supposed from this however that Mr. Asquith has repented of his policy of flouting the people's will. He will never do that, for he is a true Liberal at heart. It was simply that "the Grundys and the Chadbands of the House," as Mr. G. Roberts happily called them, were less to be feared on this particular occasion than the other party. Perhaps, too, the prospect of giving the suffragettes a new and very effective weapon against the Government had something to do with it. In any case barmaids are to remain, and those who fear the effects of the "tainted atmosphere" upon women will now, perhaps, join us in working for the only solution that remains, the removal of the taint by making public-houses as "respectable" as tea-shops. We note, by the way, that Mr. Mackarness is trying to get a new clause introduced into the Bill making it illegal for brewers to "tie" public-houses. This would be a really valuable addition.

We congratulate Mrs. Drummond upon her speedy release from gaol, and we hope she may soon be joined by her two fellow prisoners. But how Mr. Gladstone can justify his action in the matter it is impossible for us to guess. The reason given for Mrs. Drummond's release is that she was ill. Do all prisoners who fall ill get a free pardon signed by the Home Secretary? Or can it be that Mr. Gladstone, in spite of his protestations of powerlessness, is according special treatment to the Suffragettes? And if so what reasons has he for refusing special treatment to Mrs. and Miss Pankhurst? Surely they can only be personal ones. The explanation of a truly ridiculous position is doubtless to be found in the character of the Home Secretary. He has done what a man who is both obstinate and weak always does. He has first defied public opinion by refusing to have all three prisoners transferred to the first division and then, apprehensive of the consequences of his defiance, he has striven to placate his critics by an absurdly illogical concession.

The Report of the Departmental Committee appointed to consider the question of encouraging the life insurance business of the Post Office was issued last week, and is excellent as far as it goes. It advocates an increase of the maximum insurance from £100 to £300, the relaxation of various existing restrictions, attractive advertisements, and a system of commissions to sub-postmasters for business procured through them. In short, it makes the revolutionary proposal that the State should definitely enter the insurance business on real business lines, as a competitor with private firms. Of all the numerous industries and businesses which the State might undertake at once with advantage to the community insurance perhaps stands first. The ordinary case against State enterprise fails altogether here, for it is not proposed to establish a State monopoly. The comparative efficiency of public and private enterprise will be automatically tested, and if the State should fail to hold its own and to obtain customers no harm will have been done. But why should the limit be fixed at £300? If the Post Office can issue £300 policies without endangering the commercial prosperity of the country, why not £3,000 policies, and fire and accident policies as well? The existing organisation of the Post Office, with its facilities for collecting premiums and so forth, would enable it to undertake every sort of insurance more economically than any private firm, and it is only stupid conservatism that has prevented us in the past from making the most of such an opportunity.

The settlement of the cotton trade dispute came suddenly, but was none the less good news for that. It was time the struggle was ended upon almost any terms. It would have been very hard to justify the continuance throughout the winter of a fight which caused so much suffering and privation amongst large masses of workers who, being only indirectly affected, stood

to gain nothing in any event. Besides, it was clear from the very beginning that the operatives' chances of success were practically nil. Morally they were in the right, of course; but morals have always been treated as irrelevant in the highest business circles of this Christian country, and it is only the incorrigible idealist who persists in trying to introduce them. The question for a Trade Union to consider before it enters upon a struggle is not "Is our claim just?" but "Are we strong enough to enforce it?" And when it forgets to do that it must expect to suffer defeat as the cotton operatives have just done.

The fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the direct authority of the British Government over India was doubtless a suitable occasion for the King to address his Indian subjects and claim their loyal devotion. But nothing can excuse the bombast of the language employed in the Royal Message. It is true that the Indian people constitute at present a subject race, but we certainly have no reason to be proud of that truth, still less to emphasise it in our dealings with them. The chief blot on English rule in India during the past fifty years is that we have done absolutely nothing to change a vanquished and servile people into self-respecting and independent citizens of the Empire. The Civil Service to-day is notoriously more overbearing and insolent towards the natives than ever before. "The law," so runs the proclamation, "has been simplified and adjusted to the requirements of ancient communities slowly entering a new world." Could a sentence have been penned more gratuitously insulting than this or more thoroughly typical of the essentially vicious attitude of British Governments towards India? The superiority is there, together with the maddening assumption of its permanence; the complacent self-satisfaction is there; and, worst of all, the passion for universal Europeanisation is there. We have never questioned Lord Morley's literary ability, but in this he has excelled himself. If he had deliberately sat down to draft a manifesto that would drive all the more moderate elements in India to bomb-throwing he could not have done better than he has done in this Royal Message.

The result of the Presidential Election in America was a foregone conclusion, and for that reason alone we are disappointed at the result. One's sympathies in such a case are naturally with the "outsider." Otherwise it simply did not matter who won. There was no real issue between the two parties. Both candidates denounced the Trusts and both professed sympathy with "Labour"; and if Mr. Bryan's denunciations and sympathy were expressed in rather stronger terms than Mr. Taft's, the difference was quite balanced by the probability that of the two the latter was the more capable of carrying his promises into effect. The complete figures are not yet to hand, and so we are unable to obtain definite information upon the most salient fact connected with the election, the growth of the Socialist vote. There appear to have been extraordinary scenes in New York during the announcement of the results. The crowd paid little attention to the bulletins, but gave itself up to an orgy of extravagant and dangerous rowdiness. According to the description of the "Times" correspondent the scenes were incomparably worse than anything which occurred here during our "mafficking" period—and, after all, there was some excuse for "mafficking." The decivilisation of the United States proceeds apace.

The measures by which the German Government propose to raise the additional revenue of £25,000,000 which is required by the Imperial Treasury seem to show exemplary courage. The proposed tax on all commercial advertisement seems in many ways an ideal tax in so far as it affects flashlight and other advertisements displayed in public places, for it will tend to curtail expenditure which is wholly wasteful from the national point of view. In the case of newspaper ad-

vertisements, however, the tax may not prove an unmixed blessing, for it will inevitably fall, not upon the rich competing advertisers, but upon the newspapers themselves, and will tend to strengthen great amalgamations of the Harmsworth type at the expense of small struggling journals. But the two boldest of the new proposals are the change in the laws of inheritance and the creation of a State monopoly in the distilling of spirits. In the future only direct lineal descendants or ancestors and husbands and wives are to be allowed to inherit property. This, we take it, only applies to intestacies, but even so, the change is sufficiently radical, and must have far-reaching effects, perhaps even of an international character. The new spirit monopoly is estimated to produce £11,000,000 a year, and the production of pure spirits is to be the first consideration. Here are some valuable hints for Mr. Lloyd George.

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VICTOR GRAYSON'S FUTURE ENGAGEMENTS.—Nov. 11th. Bermondsey Town Hall (Evening); 15th. Hippodrome, Birmingham (see advt.); 18th. Holborn Town Hall (Evening).

Fragments of Political History.

Edited by V. G.

AND at the time it began to be noticed that the toiling masses were growing restive under the burden of poverty and oppression. They had already, indeed, partially overcome the mutual distrust which had for a century facilitated their exploitation. After much bickering and strife, petty jealousy and ambition, they had got themselves organised into protective unions and federations.

And in all these things it was perceived that a small but determined sect called Socialists were the primary inspirers and organisers. They had acquired a reputation for exceeding subtlety and prescience. Many averred that they were of coarse and vulgar grain, with a fundamental objection to aspirates and a congenital prejudice against soap. In justice to these strange people, however, it must be said that the chief apostles of their creed were eminent scientists, philosophers, poets, artists, and economists. These people, having dabbled in the science of Economics and projected certain ideals, were sore perplexed when they scrutinised the habits of the organised working classes. They had said openly for years that the lords, owners, and overseers of the earth were "parasites," the latter being a compound Greek word connoting an organism that derives its sustenance mainly or exclusively from another and bulkier organism.

They perceived that when unsophisticated workers had been goaded to the point of revolt, they had resort to what was popularly known as a "strike." They also observed that though the sum of these strikes left an ostensible profit to the credit of the strikers, the wealthy classes, by a clever manipulation of the political side of the equation, managed to restore what is known to the learned as the "status quo ante."

Now, this state of things perturbed the doctrinaires extremely, and they decided, with much argument and misgiving among themselves, to defer the propaganda of the abstruse until they had made the working classes conscious of class antagonism, and thus won them to political independence. So did this angel of Socialism close up his wings and bend to the task of organising the workers on the single basis of *amelioration*, hoping secretly that some day he would be able to carry the stodgy and slumberous giant to his high Utopia. But

these said wings and as Lamarck had said, "the tendency of organs left unused is to disappear."

And so it happened. The Socialists did merge themselves with the organised working classes in an alliance based on considerable compromise. In homely simile, the little leaven of Socialism leavened the loaf of Trade Unionism. But it so fell out that some fine palates complained that they could not taste the leaven

The Labour Party in Parliament, soon growing tired of isolated and aggressive action, and becoming softly enamoured of the good intentions of the Government, studied Parliamentary form and demeanour, and thoroughly mastered its exquisite etiquette. With the result that they were lavishly eulogised by *all* parties and party papers as wise, far-seeing, and moderate statesmen. Their dealings with the Government henceforth were conducted on the basis of a tacit arrangement, called "quid pro quo." But after a little while many people could be heard to mutter that there was an intolerable amount of "quid" to a pitiful ha'penny-worth of "quo."

But the moderate and non-Socialist element in the Labour Party were predominant. And whenever there was a constituency to be fought, there were arguments as to the character and opinions of the candidate who was to be selected. And one constituency quarrelled and adopted a Socialist candidate, and was therefore deserted and left to fight the fight alone, bereft of the money and the heavy artillery of the Labour Party. And in spite of all these things, he was returned with a mandate to adopt Socialist methods in the House of Commons. He emphatically refused to sign the constitution of the Labour Party methods of ostracism but he declined to be drawn into the web of Parliamentary diplomacy And after the economic boom there was a great industrial depression. A mantle of misery overspread the kingdom. Little children cried for food, and their starved mothers gave them dry breasts. Hungry and desperate men gathered in public squares to protest, and were bludgeoned by the police in the interests of law and order. And the cry for work or bread grew louder and louder

But the Government had to pass the Licensing Bill because of the clamours of the Nonconformist conscience. And the Labour Party, being possessed of the latter to an inordinate degree, had promised to help the Government to see the Licensing Bill through in that session. The Cabinet Ministers said they were sorry—*ever* so sorry—but they wouldn't do anything till next year And the Socialist member for the rebellious constituency refused to acquiesce in this state of things. So he stood up and moved that the House should adjourn to consider the urgent matter of Unemployment and Starvation. Therefore the members being incensed, turned him out of the Chamber. But he returned next day and repeated his demand, and refused to sit down until they attended to the people's sufferings. And they suspended him for the whole session. The Government were annoyed. The Labour Party were shocked beyond expression. They said bitter things.

But the people in the country, the Socialists, applauded the rebel and condemned the complacents and there was a great change.

VICTOR GRAYSON.

DELICIOUS COFFEE

RED WHITE & BLUE

For Breakfast & after Dinner.

The Advance of Fabius.

EVEN the sombre majesty of black printer's ink cannot take all the glow from the formal statement in this month's "Fabian News" whereby it is declared that the Society at last is going out into the troubled waters of politics. We confess that we read the momentous news with a distinct thrill, for it means, indeed, nothing less than a revolution in the habits of this cautious association. The continual waiting, waiting, waiting for the best moment to strike at the enemy had ended in giving that enemy the most complete feeling of security, and the Society was rapidly losing all influence. The elaborate myth that Liberal and Tory Cabinets live in a state of trembling anxiety for what the Fabians will say or do is no longer part of a rational belief. It is not true that every member of His Majesty's Government has his wardrobe searched each night, lest it contain a member of the Fabian Executive waiting to spring on him with some terrible poser which will disorganise the plans of the Ministry. The Fabian Society has not of late been feared by the forces of reaction; it is, rather, welcomed as a convenient buffer against the persistence of more determined men. As against the vigour of the Social Democrat and the Independent Labour man, it was always comforting to think that the Fabians would preach sweet reasonableness and caution.

But the paragraph in the November "Fabian News," headed "Fabian Parliamentary Fund," puts a different complexion on the situation. It reads: "The total amount promised for this fund, promised in five annual instalments, is now £2,655, contributed by 343 subscribers. Under these circumstances, the Executive Committee feel justified in proceeding in the matter and taking steps to promote the candidatures of eligible candidates in suitable constituencies." Here we have a declaration that the Fabian Society is about to pack up its baggage, strike its tents, leave its camp followers behind it, and march out to do battle for all, or some at least, of the many principles of reform it has discussed in private committee and lectured on in public places. It has realised at last that there are two equally essential parts in the movement towards Socialism; there is the duty to teach the academic principles and details of the Socialist system; there is also the political fight to get that system put into action. No one can deny that the Fabian Society has done magnificent work on the former part of this complete scheme: it has hammered out the finer issues of Socialism, without which it could never become a crew of practical statesmen; it has continued Karl Marx's work of turning Socialism from a vague theory into a scientific principle of government.

On the political side, however, the Fabians have hopelessly failed to organise their efforts. They have been without any clear political view; they have deliberately kept on kindly terms with all political parties in the belief that they will all do something for the Socialist cause. They have certainly affiliated themselves to the Labour Party; but that must not be taken as a proof that they really intended to identify themselves with the policy of that party. On the Fabian theory of permeation, it would be perfectly logical to join the Labour Party, the Primrose League, and the National Liberal Federation, and anything else, from the Aborigines Protection Society to the Turf Club. But this generous impulse towards the entire political universe, this idea that we shall get Socialism without making some men our enemies, will not be within the possible scope of the Society when it takes its politics seriously. The House of Commons cannot be run on the principles of Christian brotherhood.

It was our charge against the Labour Party last week that it failed to grasp this necessity for attacking the Government as a body with which it was beyond the

power of diplomacy to deal; which must be dealt with henceforth as a declared enemy of reform. That criticism applies with double force to the Fabian political policy, so far. It has formally identified itself with the Labour Party, and has at the same time allowed its members to support Liberals and Tories. Even more; Fabians have stood as Liberal candidates, and have been elected to the House of Commons, where they have been compelled directly to oppose measures and motions which have been introduced by the Labour Party, to which their Society is affiliated. For example, last week it was the business of Mr. Percy Alden, a Fabian, to defend the Government from the vote of censure which the Labour Party moved. Either the Fabian Society should have closed its connection with the Labour Party or it should have expelled Mr. Alden for acting contrary to the express wish of his fellow Labour members to support that party. Again, Dr. Clifford has more than once sent commendatory letters to Liberal candidates who were being opposed by Labour Party men. Once more, we say that if the Society takes its politics seriously it must expel Dr. Clifford. By refusing to do this in the two specimen cases given above, the Fabian Society has demonstrated quite clearly that, in spite of its connection with the Labour Party, it has not regarded politics as any but a harmless pastime.

We ask very earnestly if we are right in assuming that the resolution to proceed in the matter of the Fabian Parliamentary Fund is to be taken more seriously than the Fabian political pastimes of the past? We have heard before of a Fabian advance; but somehow it never came. Further, we would tell the members with all respect, that they must see to it that this political fund is used in support of no candidates but those who will whole-heartedly back up the efforts, and stand as part, of the party with which the Fabian Society sees fit to ally itself. If they allow it to be spent on Liberal candidates they will make their politics the laughing-stock of the Socialist movement.

We admit that the choice of a party is not as clear an issue as it was even a year ago. The Labour Party has failed to maintain its promise to lead the way in political rebellion against a Government which only concerns itself in protecting capitalists. If the Labour Party refuses to arouse itself to greater activity, then the forces of Socialism and Labour will have to look around for another party which will represent their views. That subject is now under discussion in these columns. We only refer to it now because it should remind the members of the Fabian Society that a decision on this matter must be come to, before they can proceed any further in administering their Parliamentary Fund. They must first decide which party their candidates shall support before they begin to collect money or to arrange their plans. We venture to think (indeed, we know) that no sane person will subscribe money which may be used to support a political party with which he absolutely disagrees. We therefore call the attention of all Fabians who mean this Parliamentary Fund to be a real advance towards intelligent political action, to the sentence in the "Fabian News" which says that their Executive "felt that there would be no advantage in coming to any general plan of action at present." We cannot but think that this may conceal an attempt on the part of the universal fellowship politicians (and there are many in the Society) to leave the political affairs of the Society in their present state of illogical muddle. It will be the business of the real politicians to defeat this attempt; by insisting that a clear policy is stated at once.

BIRMINGHAM LABOUR CHURCH. ANNUAL MEETING, HIPPODROME, SUNDAY, 15th November, 1908.

Speaker: **VICTOR GRAYSON, M.P.**

Chair to be taken at SEVEN o'clock by

ROBERT BLATCHFORD.

Doors Open at 6 o'clock.

TICKETS: Orchestra Stalls, 1/6 (Numbered and reserved); Circle, 1s.; Pit 6d.
GALLERY Free. From A. WILLISON, 26 Grosvenor Road, Handsworth.

Labour Party and S.R.C.

OF the Labour Party it may be said, as Heine said of Guizot: "Il ne fait rien, voilà le secret de sa conservation." But Guizot lived in a country and at a time where everyone was in turbulent activity, so that inertia was really a revolutionary process. In our country, where inactivity is pertinently described as masterly, it behoves those of us who are not the masters but the mastered to seek by vigorous, determined effort to free ourselves from the toils in which we lie ensnared. Passive acquiescence in any policy which does not rapidly fructify is for the Socialist the whole of the seven deadly sins. If one line of tactics does not succeed in forcing the conversion of these islanders to Socialism, we must strike out another. We cannot afford to move slowly for the simple reason that the evils beneath which we groan are cumulative; the condition of the people question grows worse from decade to decade. It is not a question of merely marking time nor of a movement to the rear in order to spring forward the more clearly. No; the incubus grows monstrously, overwhelming us so deeply that unless we occasionally stand aside casting a dispassionate eye upon our civilisation, we shall be found among those rejoicing at a progress that threatens the annihilation of all that is human in our lives.

Yes, we are in a hurry, old and young alike. We must urge a forward movement. We shall respect no forms, however ancient, no blessed words, however appealing, unless they make for Socialism. When Mr. MacDonald tells us that so long as he remains a Democrat he shall value the House of Commons and try to keep its reputation unsullied, we are left wondering what he means by democracy and what reputation Parliament has to lose. How can the House of Commons be said to represent democracy when more than one-half the adult population is denied a vote, when the representatives of that coerced section are knocking at the gates of Parliament for a vote, when its just requests are insolently refused, when the magistracy and the police become the agents of the Government in suppressing the women's legitimate demands?

O unsullied reputation! Can anyone besmirch the reputation of Parliament more than the action of its members who pretend to uphold it? What shall an unsullied reputation avail starving men and women and children? How did the House treat the question of the Unemployed? Perchance there will be the fewer unemployed, for we may hope that many will die in this rigorous winter. This, in fact, becomes their answer—with its next year.

If the Labour Party believes that to work at Committee, to act as the left wing of the party in power, is its life-work, well and good, we shall not quarrel with it. This is necessary, essential work, but we require something more than this from Socialists in the House of Commons. They must tear to pieces this Government of organised hypocrisy; they must employ every device known to obstructionist tactics to force the Government to deal with serious questions in a serious way. This Government of shams, which puts up its members to make advanced speeches in the constituencies so that it may bluff the people into a belief that it is going to act and then with shameless turpitude affirms that nothing can be done, this Government can claim no respect or attention from well-disposed people.

We want men in the House who shall be perpetually stinging the nest of plutocrats; we must have active Socialists, who, unfettered by alliances with other parties, are alone capable of harassing and destroying the plutocracy. Let the Labour Party remain at its present work, but let us have a Socialist Party to represent the views and wishes of the Socialists.

We must make that party. How? Do you remember in the "Swiss Family Robinson" how everything always turned up just in the nick of time? Whenever there was "if we had that," that was always discovered by one of that happy family. The Socialists are like a Swiss Family Robinson in this respect that

someone always seems to come forward with a solution to every difficulty that presents itself.

In our last week's issue, "One of the Rank and File" outlined a scheme for the federation of the existing Socialist organisations which should strengthen by uniting them for all fighting purposes, but which would yet allow each organisation or society to preserve its individuality, its freedom of action, under which its name and power have been built up.

Mr. Keir Hardie invites us "to close the ranks"; it is good advice. We are not of those who go about crying Peace, Peace, when there is no Peace, but neither are we of those who desire to promote discord among the brethren. At the moment it seems to us there is an almost unanimous feeling in this country for fuller intercourse among Socialists and for a desire to cast off hampering constitutions.

The I.L.P., as the strongest of the Socialist bodies in this country, must lead the way. Those who have read the letters and messages to Mr. Grayson will have realised that a large section of the I.L.P. (we do not know exactly how large) is anxious for a forward movement. The leaders of the I.L.P., we are sure, have no wish to flout the wishes of the branches. Some way must be found for a conference, even if all the formalities cannot be exactly complied with, where the issue of alliance or no alliance with the Labour Party can be fought out. If this question be not soon settled there is a real danger of the strongest branches seceding and forming detached Socialist groups, meaning a complete disruption of the I.L.P. So far as our information goes, there is a very general feeling among the members that the I.L.P. would be doing better work for Socialism unfettered by an alliance with those who are not Socialists.

If the majority of the I.L.P. at a conference takes this view, it will not be difficult, we believe, to decide upon the next step. This should be a summoning of all the Socialist organisations in this country to promote a Socialist Representation Committee. Our contributor last week suggested that some non-Socialist organisations might be admitted if they pledged themselves to independence of all other parties. This would not in itself be sufficient; we should, of course, require a pledge of independence from all who join the Committee, but we think it should be an essential condition that all bodies joining the federation pledge themselves to Socialist principles. This granted, there need be no difficulty in admitting Trades Unions that prefer to belong to the Socialist Committee rather than adhere to the L.R.C. But no bait should be held out to such bodies, no attempt made to induce them to sever themselves from the L.R.C.

It will be said that a S.R.C. must be numerically weak. For our part, we should prefer to see a decidedly Socialist body, however small, than to continue the present disrupted and spasmodic attempts that take us nowhere. We prefer to reject the support of him that hath no stomach for the fight, convinced that we shall press forward the more readily when all those in the ranks are agreed as to that end. It lies, then, with Socialists of the I.L.P. to commence.

[We have received a considerable number of letters on the subject of the S.R.C., and these will be printed wholly or in summary, in due course.—Ed N. A.]

SOUTH LONDON I.L.P. COUNCIL.

SURREY MASONIC HALL, Camberwell New Road, S.E.

LECTURE BY

G. K. CHESTERTON

On "Why I Am NOT a Socialist,"

On Wednesday, 18th November, 1908.

CHAIR TO BE TAKEN AT 8 P.M. BY

HILAIRE BELLOC, M.P.

TICKETS: Reserved 2s.; Unreserved, 1s. and 6d.; to be obtained from NEW AGE PRESS, 149 & 150, Fleet Street, E.C.; and Hon. Sec. I.L.P. COUNCIL, Morris Hall, 11a, North Street, Clapham, S.W.

The News of the Week.

A PARLIAMENTARY paper just issued shows that at the end of September pauperism was 4.3 per cent. in excess of the corresponding figures last year. The increase is general; but greatest in London, Lancashire, Durham, and Cumberland. Indoor paupers were more numerous during July to September than in any previous year.

We observe in the interesting "Library World" a suggestive paper by Mr. Duff Brown on the choice of fiction for public libraries. This is a reply to the recent resolution passed at the Brighton Library Association, which decided that "novels must be chosen on account of their literary, educational, or moral qualities."

The London and District Right to Work Council, representing Trade Unions, the Labour Party, the I.L.P., and the S.D.P., is appealing for funds to enable it to rouse London to provide public works to meet the present crisis. The secretary is E. C. Fairchild, 2, New Court, Carey Street, W.C. All efforts should be concentrated for assisting this representative body.

It is reported that Mr. Lloyd George will address the Women's Liberal Federation at the Albert Hall on December 5th in support of a motion asking for the extension of the franchise to women. It has not yet been decided whether the right honourable gentleman on this occasion will be clothed in white, green and violet, or in sack-cloth and ashes. It is expected that two doors in Holloway Prison will ask whether they can logically remain closed any longer.

Eugene V. Debs, who stood so courageously for Socialism in the United States Presidency Election last week, has given one more proof of his determination to ally Socialism with all that is best in modern culture; for he has written to Mr. Harmon, the editor of the "American Journal of Eugenics": "The brave struggle you are making is already won in substantial results achieved and in the inevitable triumph which shall crown it in the end."

The Labour Party of Australia has refused any further support to Mr. Deakin's Ministry, on the grounds that the new Protection proposals do not sufficiently provide for the protection of labour. It will be impossible for Mr. Deakin to carry on his Government, and it seems possible that a Labour Cabinet may be formed. The whole situation is worth the careful attention of English Socialists, because it shows how a protective policy can be turned to the advantage of wage-earners.

The Cotton Trade Dispute came to an end last Friday. The men agreed to a 5 per cent. reduction in wages from March next. The men are beaten—they almost always are—they have wasted their hard-earned savings, while the masters have got rid of their surplus stock, which was exactly what they intended to do. One of these days it will dawn on Trade Unionists that they will get more for their money if they invest it in Socialist Members of Parliament, who will get the laws changed, instead of spending it in useless strikes, which always end in defeat.

Miss Margaret Bondfield, who stood for Socialism in a debate at the Caxton Hall last week, said that there were now 4,000,000 women engaged in industry in England, of whom 1,000,000 were married; and most of this was sweated labour. "They could not obtain full development without economic independence, and women could not obtain full independence until the sources of wealth were collectively owned." Lady Francis Balfour presided at this debate, and said "she did not think she was a Socialist, though she was not quite certain on that point."

Mr. Philip Snowden, in his interesting weekly article in the "Sheffield Guardian," says: "The best way in which the Labour Party in Parliament can help the Unemployed during the next few months is by assisting the local authorities to make the most of the Government's proposals. They are not much, it is true, but it should now be the work of the Labour Party in every borough to see that schemes are submitted by the councils to the L.G.B." This confirms our opinion that the work of the members of the Labour Party should now consist in touring the country in a campaign which will rouse the people to demand work from their governing councils.

From the turmoil of sordid hypocrisy and blatant vulgarity which make up the politics of Messrs. Roosevelt, Taft, and Bryan, the manifesto of the United States Socialist Party stands out as solid commonsense: "Human life depends upon good clothing and shelter. Only with these assured are freedom, culture, and higher human development possible. . . . Whoever has control of land and machinery controls human labour, and with it human

life and liberty. . . . In this battle for freedom the Socialist Party does not strive to substitute working class rule for capitalist rule, but by working class victory to free all humanity from class rule, and to realise the international brotherhood of man."

Mr. Taft has been elected President of the United States. He went to the poll as Mr. Roosevelt's good little boy, with paternal instructions to say very threatening words about the great trusts. No one really thought he meant business; but it was good enough to take in some of the voters. Alas, two days before the poll, Mr. Rockefeller gave the whole show away by announcing that he himself was going to vote for Mr. Taft! So Mr. Roosevelt and his little boy had to pretend they were very indignant. Anyhow, Mr. Taft has got in, and the stocks and shares are going up splendidly; while the new President has given a fairly broad hint that the trusts can go on as before and rob the American people as much as they can.

The inhabitants of the Garden City of Letchworth passed their fifth anniversary the other day, and feel themselves old enough to meditate on their past. The local "Citizen" recalls the day when a little body of "dreamers, poets, cranks" met under a tent and determined to set out on their first great adventure. Not long ago we wandered round the weird jumble of bricks and mortar which they call their city; and a nervous panic seized us lest this sort of thing should get too popular. We love poets and cranks—but there is really no need why they should waste their valuable time in inventing a new shape for almost every house they build, especially when so few of them get within the limits of sound architectural art.

The "Municipal Journal" gives the details of the new municipal dwellings which were opened in St. Pancras last week. They show that a public council can build better houses than the ordinary private builders; but they do not show that the council have yet solved the problem of providing houses for the working classes; for the rents of the block in question are 10s. for three rooms and 7s. for two rooms. Now three rooms cannot make a proper home for any family; and the rents charged are quite beyond the limits of the poor man's purse. We are told that these rents were fixed in order to make the scheme self-supporting. A real Socialist policy would first decide to house the houseless, and would throw the burden on the people who could afford to bear it—who would not be the overburdened shopkeepers, by the way.

The preliminary meeting of the Irish Socialist Group will be held at the offices of the Fabian Society, 3 and 4 Clement's Inn, Strand, W.C., on Tuesday, November 24th, at 8 p.m.

A committee, of which the secretary is Mr. W. H. Leed, 20, Somerfield Road, Finsbury Park, N., has been formed to provide native Indian lecturers to explain the present political and social situation in the East, and they will be only too glad to supply such lecturers to clubs of any kind, debating societies, Sunday schools, drawing-room meetings, P.S.A's., and so on, within easily reachable distance of London.

THE NEW AGE readers will perhaps be interested to hear that the committee of University College has invited Mr. Anthony Ludovici to deliver a course of three public lectures upon the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche. Tickets giving all details as to dates and hours may be had from Dr. Oscar Levy, 1, Talbot Mansions, Museum Street, W.C.; Dr. Bernard Hollander, 35a, Welbeck Street, Cavendish Square; at Mudies' Select Library, and the publishing offices of THE NEW AGE.

The League of Progressive Thought and Social Service, the president of which is the Rev. R. J. Campbell, is holding a national conference on Monday, November 16, in the City Temple. There will be a morning conference on social questions. Among the speakers are J. A. Seddon, M.P., Frank Smith, I.C.C., Miss Margaret McMillan. In the evening there will be a great demonstration. In addition to speakers named above, Rev. R. J. Campbell, Philip Snowden, M.P., and Jerome K. Jerome, will address the gathering. Free admission.

"Robert Blatchford comes in for some rough handling,"
so says *The Dudley Herald*.
"Never has his true character been more critically analysed,"
so says *Common Sense*.

**"A GODLESS
SOCIALISM."** 3^d.
By FRANK G. JANNAWAY.

This pamphlet has compelled Mr. Blatchford to rewrite "Merrie England," in the new edition of which he has suppressed a whole chapter and many former facts.

Published by WALTER SCOTT, Ltd., Paternoster Square, London.
On Sale at all W. H. SMITH & SONS' Bookstalls.

The Hermit.

SHE moved the reeds by the cold brim
 Aside, and gathered reverently
 A lily, on its lucent stem
 Less pale than she.

From brow to white throat, beautiful:
 Her eyes bloomed through her parted hair
 As though the spirit of a smile
 Were nested there.

She crossed the parlous mountain bar
 Seaward, and gained the valley head.
 She seemed to loiter, or to fare,
 As Time were dead.

They came up through the misty vale,
 Up from the town across the wold.
 And one had flaxen hair, faint, pale;
 But one had gold.

Whose eyes by tear-wet lash were brushed,
 Who went with step irresolute—
 She grieved so that the vale grew hushed,
 The birds hid mute.

"My nurse hath often told a tale
 Of one who died her troth to save.
 They say her spirit haunts this vale—
 Ah, maiden brave!"

"Who called?" Like stir of reeds, the tone.
 "Who called me?" said the Lily Maid.
 They turned; and one remained, but one
 Ran back, afraid.

That night, a Form unchallenged sped
 Past men-at-arms, through armoured hall:
 And in the morn, to the bride's bed
 They bring a pall.

They gasp; they to each other turn—
 Upon the pall a lily gleams.
 The Hermit broods by her cold urn:
 What be her dreams?

BEATRICE TINA.

The Rand Magnates' Latest Plot.

By Douglas Blackburn.

Two very significant facts were the subject of news from South Africa last week. One is that the Rand magnates are in favour of the unification rather than the federation of the colonies; the second that a group of Rand magnates have offered a loan of one million pounds to Portugal on the security of "a sort of mortgage" of Lorenzo Marques at Delagoa Bay.

When Rand magnates take a financial interest in politics it is safe to assume that they are not actuated entirely by patriotic motives, for it is hard to imagine the unnaturalised German crowd who dominate the Rand being enthusiastically anxious to further British ascendancy.

It has been cynically suggested that the magnates are in favour of unification rather than federation because it would be easier to "square" one Parliament than four.

This Portuguese loan business also lends colour to the theory that the Rand magnates intend to make Delagoa Bay the port of entry for the Transvaal, to the exclusion of Natal and Cape Colony, but particularly of the former. It is well known that Johannesburg financial houses are the owners of large parts of, and are still quietly purchasing as much more of, the Delagoa Bay foreshore as they can get hold of, and no one suggests that their object is to erect there seaside bungalows for their staffs.

There is no getting away from the economic and geographical fact that Delagoa is the natural port of entry for the Transvaal. Not only would the transfer of

coastal business thither benefit the Rand companies, who will own and control the wharves and docks, and probably the entire sea frontage, but as only some twenty miles of the railway from Delagoa to the Rand run through Portuguese territory, the freights earned would mainly benefit the Transvaal.

Under these circumstances, it is easy to believe the suggestion that the object of the Rand magnates is to freeze out Natal, for, with possession of Delagoa, they will have no use for that colony. At present all goods brought to the Rand via Durban are carried 304 miles over the Natal line out of the total of 507 miles to Pretoria. So that the Transvaal gets only about two-fifths of the freight earned, and of course nothing from the port of Durban.

This, then, is the secret of the Rand antagonism to Natal; also of the Natalians' suspicion and general mistrust of the patriotic professions of German Rand Magnates. Both Natal and Cape Colony realise more fully than Englishmen at Home that the Rand being absolutely under the financial control of Germans, very few of whom have thrown over their nationality, it is absurd to accept the assurances of them and their subsidised press that their chief aim is the extension of British ascendancy.

It is an open secret that the Rand magnates favour Unification because in such a scheme the Transvaal would be the dominant partner, and as the German financial crowd dominate the Transvaal, it is fairly easy to guess who will be the masters of South Africa as a whole.

Socialism and the Crank.

By W. L. George.

THE reading of Mr. Hamilton Fyfe's article in the last issue of THE NEW AGE reveals two interesting if not novel facts, viz., that (1) the writer is sane and the crank must necessarily be the other fellow; (2) there is room under Socialism for those whom Mr. Fyfe calls cranks. I do not for a moment intend to defend the crank, though Galileo and Christopher Columbus seem to me to have been cranks of a most virulent type; nor do I intend to say that the crank of to-day is the genius of to-morrow: everybody knows that. But really it is difficult to know a crank when you see him, even if he does prefer a vegetarian régime and wear Jaeger boots. Mr. Fyfe slings at Mr. Shaw. I believe the latter is a vegetarian, but I have not seen his boots; even if they were Jaeger, however, I do not know that the evidence would be quite strong enough to convict Mr. Shaw.

There are, however, other counts in Mr. Fyfe's indictment, and it gives me much pleasure, as a non-Socialist, to answer a fellow non-Socialist. There is the sex-crank, we are told. But why call him a crank? Because, says Mr. Fyfe, there is no need to revolutionise society to give him his wish. I am not going to support the crank (species licentious), but it should really be obvious to a sedulous reader of Socialist papers such as Mr. Fyfe that the present state of the law as regards (1) marriage, (2) facilities for divorce, (3) wife desertion, or, alternatively (4), affiliation, (5) illegitimacy, is not such as to encourage free-union. The "crank" therefore suggests an alteration in the law. Is not that legitimate? as legitimate as the modification of our fiscal system or of our licensing law? It comes merely to this: The "crank" is in the minority; if he ever obtains a majority he will automatically cease to be a crank, and the burden will be transferred to his traducers of to-day.

As regards the endowment of motherhood, I cannot see that the would-be endower is so pronounced a crank. We already endow motherhood as it is, in our grudging, half-hearted way, through the medium of the poor-law, the lying-in hospitals, etc. The "crank" suggests that we should go a little further; it is allowable to disagree with him, but why dub him a "crank"?

Even the Fabian Society, that most practical of bodies, does not escape the righteous wrath of Mr. Fyfe. I have not got the basis before me, and take it therefore that the Society does wish to expropriate without compensation. Very good: I do not support, nor do I attack the project, but it does not seem to me so very impracticable, for it should be remembered that we always rob ourselves vicariously, viz., through the medium of Parliament. Where, then, is the impossibility? Cannot the Socialist suggest that we should (for instance) tax railway profits to vanishing point? or (single tax) load the land to such an extent as to make its retention in private hands impossible? This, the Socialist may say, can easily be done if we get, in the first place, a mandate from agriculturists to tax the railways, and then (oh! Machiavelli!) whilst the railways are groaning under the Socialist screw, another mandate from the railwaymen to tax the land. This may be quite dishonest, immoral, etc., but that is how, in a minor degree, we carry on Parliamentary government. The men who want to turn this minor degree into a major degree can hardly be called cranks: they are evolutionists.

A few words now as regards the "Little England" crank. Socialism of to-day is partly national and partly international, but as far as I can see, it *begins* by being national, for there can be no understanding between democracies until there are democracies. Now, whereas the British and the German democracies could quite conceivably treat with one another, where is the Egyptian or the Hindu democracy (organised, that is) with which the British democracy can deal? I do not therefore think that Mr. Fyfe is justified in calling the Little Englander a crank because he happens to be a Socialist. If he happened to be a Liberal, I suppose Mr. Fyfe might call him a traitor, but hardly a crank.

Lastly we come to the Free Trade crank. I am not sure that any organised body of independent Socialists such as the Fabian Society could not give Mr. Fyfe a list of Socialists who believe in Protection. I don't; and I do not pretend to be a Socialist. But why should a Socialist support Protection? On account of dumping? Of all governments, I should say that a Socialist Government would welcome dumping. You have to pay for dumped goods and to pay for them in kind, and if you could obtain, for instance, clothing in exchange for an article costing eight hours of labour instead of making it yourself at the cost of twelve hours of labour, would not that be an excellent transaction from the Socialist point of view? This must appear to any who realise that Socialists do not at all desire to keep people in factories for twelve hours a day if they can run the country on a six-hour day. The reasoning may be all wrong, but a man who reasons is not a crank.

And perhaps the king crank is the one who discovers lieges among everybody who differs with him upon some of his own pet subjects.

The World from Black Maria.

By Stewart Gray.

"As private secretary to 'Mr. X' I have opened your letter, but regret to say he is out of town till the beginning of the week."

So it ran when passed through the pigeon-hole of my stuffy cell. Thus an anticipated melodrama dropped to the level of a mean tragedy. Thus a Cabinet Minister was saved from being the clown in a farce, and before any other offerer of bail could be got at I was one of a dozen ballast for Black Maria on her journey to the "everlasting night" of Brixton Prison.

I was last man in—nearest the light—knees knocked by the compartment door, stern on the snick as of a cross, nose barred just short of the policeman's ear. He was sixteen stone, content to carry the weight, bore no malice, carried no cares—a sedative waste. I liked him. The fresh air (Bow Street brand) blew in—first for eighteen hours. It refreshed. The look of the grey

sky assured me there was a God in Heaven, and the grate and trundle of the removal van were sweet.

It reminded me of boyhood days—of rides in Scotch hay carts jolting their way down rugged accommodation roads of unbroken field stones, half spread and rutted; and the recollection seemed to live, and live so boyishly, that I had to ask myself—the rakish mood within me—"Why so joyous, little man in kilt of heathers?" said I to myself said I. And he answered, "'Cause we are boys again." And cogitating, I fingered all the crannies of a dozen pockets—that rake's savings bank for the stumps of fags from imitation Melachrinos to real Woodbines, and out of the thrifty remnants made a real fat resurrection affair—a repast for a rainy day, counter-paned in a piece of crumpled newspaper.

This I placed in its crater of destiny as a silent prayer for Lucifer; a hungry-eyed youth opposite saw the situation, and essayed as answer a box across the chasm behind the policeman's helmet. But these hungry eyes in doing so prayed a counter prayer. He looked unlikely to find his bail, if any was. "Like to be a week without," thought I, so I handed back the box and the fag. And what a "Thank ye" rose with every puff and flare of the frowsy rolley polley.

That was "boys again" true enough, but there was more in the message from the swarthy one within—more than that. There was a feeling of deep confidence such as permeates the child. "Father" was behind all. Bail was sure of coming, and experience was valuable and priceless. For the time no cares weighed hard. No printers' bills could rise in place of the morning sun; no thirty mouths could look for the bread and dripping of the Hunger Marchers; no host of weary souls could look to me for inspiration; no heroics hurled at burly police for breaking England's constitutional laws of public meeting and free speech could be demanded of the man in the belly of Black Maria.

For he was dead—dead to the world. It expected nothing of him. I could be quiescent, I was restful—free in Black Maria.

And when I looked out on the thousands that we passed catching a sigh of "auld lang syne" or "perhaps to-morrow" from not a few, but each, it seemed to me, most visibly bearing his burden of sorrow whilst Black Maria's crew was happy, happy all—the feeling of pity for the burden bearers grew and grew. I was sorry for them. I wondered—of a sudden—

"He that loseth his life shall gain it."

One more wicket for the old classic, thought I.

The riddle solved—the fresh air—the harmony—I slept like a child.

I awoke—Black Maria was at a stand.

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Makes delicious rich gravies or a cup of strong
Beef Tea for a penny. Ask your grocer.

Bloody Sunday.

(November 13, 1887.)

By R. B. Cunninghame Graham.

[The following article appeared in the Socialist "Commonweal," of November 10, 1888. We reprint it here with the kind permission of Mr. Cunninghame Graham. The event recorded by Mr. Graham reaches its majority to-morrow.—ED. N.A.]

EXCEPT the facts already known to the public, I fear I can tell little of the occurrences in Trafalgar Square last November. As to the reason why three men were killed, many sent to prison, three hundred or so arrested, and several condemned to penal servitude; the retail trade of the Metropolis thrown into disorder, the troops called out; as to why many men and *women* were beaten and brutalised in the public streets, the wherefore that the powers that be chose to expose their capital to the chance of being sacked and burnt by an angry populace—I confess I am still in the dark. The more I think, the more I cannot tell. It may be that Sir Charles Dogberry had heard of, and wished to imitate, the behaviour of the negro pilot who came aboard a ship in the West Indies, and immediately gave the order, "Haul um jib up, Mr. Mate," and then, amid the curses of the crew, instantly remarked, "Haul um jib down, Mr. Mate"; giving as his reason that he wished to show his authority.

What I can tell you is merely this, that I was in Birmingham and read in the morning papers that a meeting having for its object to petition the Government for the release of Mr. William O'Brien, M.P., had suddenly been proclaimed without rhyme or reason. At that time I was a newly-elected Liberal Member. I had heard members of my party, men who at that time I respected and believed to be in earnest talking big at meetings and telling lies about what they intended to do in Ireland that autumn. I had read Mr. Gladstone's speech at Nottingham, in which he had expressly said that coercion would not be confined to Ireland, but would also be applied to England if the people were supine. I had read this, and—fool that I was—I believed it; for at that time I did not know that Liberals, Tories, and Unionists were three bands of thimblerriggers. I did not know that the fooleries of Harcourt and the platitudes of Morley were anything else than the utterances of good dull men, who at least believed in themselves. I was soon to be undeceived.

To return to my meeting. I came up to London, hearing that the meeting was held under the auspices of the Radical clubs of London in conjunction with the Irish National League. Now, one would have thought that I should have met at every political club in London the local Liberal member encouraging his constituents. One would have thought that the boasters and braggers from the country constituencies would have rushed up to town to redeem their vaunts on public platforms. I expected that it would be thought as cruel and tyrannical to break up a meeting, at which thousands of Irishmen were to be present, in London as it would be in Ireland. I thought that freedom of speech and the right of public meeting were facts in themselves, about which politicians were agreed. I did not know the meanness of the whole crew even at that time. I was not aware that freedom of speech and public meeting were nothing to them but stalking-horses to hide themselves behind, and under cover of which to crawl into Downing Street. I soon found, however, that the Liberal Party was a complete cur, that what they

excelled in doing was singing "Gloria Gladstone in excelsis," and talking of what they intended to do in Ireland. You see the sea divided them from Ireland, and one is always brave when no danger is at hand. However, no political capital was to be made out of London, it appeared; therefore Mr. Shaw Lefevre thought it better to vapour and obtain a cheap notoriety in Ireland, where he knew he was quite safe, than to help his fellow-townsmen—he is, I think, a Londoner—in London, where there might have been some incurred.

Finding myself deserted by all my colleagues, with the exception of Messrs. Conybeare and Walter McLaren, who would have been at the meeting had they been able, and at that time not knowing many of the Radicals, I turned to the Socialists, some of whom I did know, and hearing their procession was to arrive at St. Martin's Church at a certain time, I determined to join it.

What happened is known to all: how no procession reached the Square; how they were all illegally attacked and broken up, some of them several miles from the Square; how in despite of every constitutional right, and without a shadow of pretext, banners and instruments were destroyed, and not a farthing of compensation ever given, though the loss fell on poor people. It will be remembered, too, how the police, acting under the orders of Sir Charles Dogberry, the Christian soldier (sic!), felled men and women, and in some cases little children, to the ground. I wonder if Mr. Henry Matthews, the pious Catholic Home Secretary, approved of this, and how he broached the matter to his priest when he went to confession? It will not be forgotten the sort of bloody assize that followed, and how Judge Edlin wrote himself down ass by the folly of his sentences. No one will forget the trial and condemnation of George Harrison, and his sentence to five years' penal servitude on the oath of one policeman, eleven independent witnesses being of no avail to save him. Then the pantomimic trial of John Burns and myself, and our condemnation by Mr. Justice Charles Shallow, also on the testimony of professional witnesses, and for an obsolete offence. It is still, I think, fresh in the memory of all, how with the help of all the professional perjurers in London, all the arms collected from that vast crowd amounted to three pokers, one piece of wood, and an oyster knife. How I failed to join the procession, and having met Messrs. Burns and Hyndman by accident, proceeded to the Square; how we were assaulted and knocked about and sent to prison, is a matter of notoriety in London.

I can tell no more of the incidents of the day than can any other spectator. I walked across the street with Burns; was joined by no one as far as I remember, and found myself a prisoner in the Square with a broken head. Whilst in there, though, I had ample time to observe a good deal. I watched the crowd and the police pretty carefully; I saw repeated charges made at a perfectly unarmed and helpless crowd; I saw policemen not of their own accord, but under the express orders of their superiors, repeatedly strike women and children; I saw them invariably choose those for assault who seemed least able to retaliate. One incident struck me with considerable force and disgust. As I was being led out of the crowd a poor woman asked a police inspector (I think) or a sergeant, if he had seen a child she had lost. His answer was to tell her she was a "damned whore," and to knock her down. I never till that time completely realised how utterly servile and cowardly an English crowd is. I venture to say that had it occurred

in any other country in the world, the man would have been torn to pieces. But no! in England we are so completely accustomed to bow the knee before wealth and riches, to repeat to ourselves we are a free nation, that in the end we have got to believe it, and the grossest acts of injustice may be perpetrated under our very eyes, and we will still slap our manly chests and congratulate ourselves that Britain is the home of Liberty.

Other things I saw that pleased me better than this. I saw that the police were afraid; I saw on more than one occasion that the officials had to strike their free British men to make them obey orders; I saw that the horses were clumsy and badly bitted, and of no use whatever in a stone street; and lastly, I am almost certain I observed several of the police officers to be armed with pistols, which I believe is against the law. I saw much, too, to moralise on. The tops of the houses and hotels were crowded with well-dressed women, who clapped their hands and cheered with delight when some miserable and half-starved working man was knocked down and trodden under foot. This I saw as I stood on almost the identical spot where a few weeks ago the Government unveiled the statue of Gordon, not daring to pay honour to the memory of one of our greatest latter-day Englishmen because they feared the assembling of a crowd to do him honour; because, I suppose, for both political parties the comments on the death of a man sacrificed to their petty party broils would have seemed awkward. As I stood there, as I saw the gross, over-fed faces at the club and hotel windows, as I heard the meretricious laughter of the Christian women on the housetops (it is a significant feature of the decadence of England, that not one woman of the upper classes raised her protest by pen or on platform to deprecate the treatment of her unarmed fellow-countrymen; no, all their pity was for the police), I thought yet, still—I have heard that these poor working men, these Irishmen and Radicals have votes, and perhaps even souls, and it seemed impossible but that some day these poor deceived, beaten, down-trodden slaves would turn upon their oppressors and demand why they had made their England so hideous, why they ate and drank to repletion, and left nothing but work, starvation, kicks, and curses for their Christian brethren? Somewhat in this style I thought; this I saw as I stood wiping the blood out of my eyes in Trafalgar Square. What I did not see was entirely owing to the quietness of the crowd. I did not see houses burning; I did not hear pistols cracking. I did not see this—not because of any precautions the authorities had taken, for they had taken none, but because it was the first time such a scene had been witnessed in London during this generation.

Now, whilst thanking the "Commonweal" for giving me so much space, I can only say that I do not contemplate the renewal of such a scene with much pleasure. "You can beat a cow till she is mad," says the old proverb; and even a Londoner may turn at last. I hope that there may be no occasion for him to turn in my life-time, but I know that if he is not forced to do so, he will have only himself to thank for having avoided it. No party will help him, no one cares for him; rich, nobles, City, West End, infidels, Turks, and Jews combine to cheat him, and he stands quiet as a tree, helpless as a sheep, bearing it all and paying for it all. This, then, is all I can tell you of the great riots (sic) in Trafalgar Square, where three men were killed, 300 kicked, wounded, and arrested, and which had no result, so far as I can see, but to make the Liberal Party as odious and as despised as the Tory Party in the Metropolis. All honour to the Socialists for being the first body of Englishmen in the Metropolis to have determined that the death of three Englishmen, killed by the folly of Sir Charles Dogberry and worthy Mr. Verges, the Home Secretary, shall not go unregarded, and I hope unpunished.

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"The first step is the affirmation of our faith.
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Oh Life's a good thing—
With merry-making,
Love, friendship, delight,
And the night and the day.
There are ghosts in the night :
There's Death, who is cold and thin and grey,
But Death's far away.
We know he is Master and Overlord,
But he does not sit at our jolly board
When we eat and drink and take good measure
Of peace and pleasure.

Warm shut in, we are safe from Death
For a little while at least ;
We draw full satisfying breath
At life's good feast.
Ah bountiful life—food, wine and fire—
Lover and child and wife!
A toast! "Fulfilment and desire!
To life! To life!"

The long room's rafters resound
To our cheer ;
The hearth glows bright
And the candles' light
Burns clear ;
And all around
Are comrades jolly and dear.
Life sits here crowned, beyond doubt,
And Death and the night are well shut out.
But hark—there's a hand on the door—
Can it be . . . ?
No—not He—not He . . .
Only . . . we want no more . . .
Do not open ; we want no more
Guests at our feast to-night.
But slowly, slowly the door gapes wide,
The cold night creeps inside.
What is this—what is this
Creeping along the hall
Till it stands by the table where we sit
And we drop our glasses to gaze at it?

Not Death but Life it is—
That has come to our rousing call.
The candles burn pale and clear
Like tapers around a bier
Where Death lies enthroned, a King . . .
This is not Death—but another thing :
Life we toasted—and Life is here.

Life—is it Life that we see?
Life that has crept in here?
But it looks like Death—
Death whom we hate and fear.
It is Life whom we grudged his bread,
And the roof-tree over his head,
And his very breath ;
Life—thin, shrivelled and worn,
In raiment filthy and torn ;
Life, whom we toasted so gay and free,
Stands here timid, afraid
Of the world that our lives have made.
Life, our toast, it is he!

To work till you drop asleep
To wake to a new damned day ;
To weep till ye cannot weep
For your tears are all wept away ;
To see your babies, your wives
Torn from their dwindled lives ;
To have no time for tears
In the years and years and years
As they go
Sordid, sluggish and slow ;

To have no time for play,
No happy words to say,
No time to dance or to sing
Or be glad about anything ;
No time to be idle and gay,
No heart for noble strife,
No time to make a friend—
Only time to work and grieve
And ache for enough of bread,
And long and long and long for the end
As a tired man longs for his bed—
This is life—this is life, this is life!

Now we, who sat here at ease,
We rise up, each in his place :
We cannot face the face
Of Life that fawns at our knees.
For us shall no feast be spread
Till there be a feast for all—
For the worst, the last, the least.
Life calls. We answer the call.

You, our Chosen, give heed
To the claim of our hurt heart's need.

We, whose hands are strong,
We hold weak hands in our hand ;
Listen and understand :
Their hands have been weak too long,
But our hands, our hands are strong.
You we have set on high—receive our new
command :
These things shall be no more
As they were before.
We stand up here in our place,
We who have found life good ;
They in their place stand still,
Who have found life ill.
We look ye full in the face,
You whom we set to make
Laws, good to keep, not to break.
We have set you up on the height
Whence men see the wrong and the right,
And, though ye be blind, We see :
We see what you do not see—
We tell you what things shall be.
Is it understood?

Listen and learn.
And do ye the thing we will

While day is here for you still.
His bread shall each man earn ;
The milk for each child shall be
Ready, awaiting it.
These things are fair and fit.
See to it, You
Whom our will set on high
To do the Royal Thing!
We are the People—your King.
This is Our Royal Mandate—know
That We will have it so.
Each man who works shall eat and live :
Ye need not give, ye shall not give,
Only no more have ye leave to take
From your brothers' mouths the bread they
make.

"If any work not, he shall not eat,"
You who work not may tramp the street
And lie o' nights at that cold Inn
Where the lamps of the Embankment light
The sign of "The Nation's Sin,"
This is the gospel : this is Right.
"If any work not, he shall not eat."

"How can such dreams come true?" ye say.
We set the goal : find you the way!
That's what you're there for! We are here
To give you our mandate strong and clear—
Affirm, in the face of devils and men,
That these things shall be never again.
You cannot guess the riddle? Methinks
They perished who could not answer the Sphinx!

So shall ye perish, unless ye do
 The will of those who have chosen you.
 The time is Now. Be wise, be wise!
 Read our will in our sombre eyes.
 And if ye read not, be yours the blame
 When what Love might give, and still dares refuse,
 Agony snatches and puts to use
 In a night lit up by the angry flame
 Of the fire ye have kindled.

If clean Shame
 Have no voice for you, listen to Fear.
 For doom is here: destruction is here:
 All that ye dread—it is here, is here.
 And you—even you—have the chance to be
 Heroes and martyrs. *So have we.*
 Is it we or you whom God shall use
 To right a world's wrongs? Choose!

* * *
 Be wise; it is now the appointed hour,
 Now is the day of the Lord.
 If our voice and your heart's voice have no
 power

There still is strength in the sword!
 And when the sword speaks, its voice shall be
 The thunder of God to such as ye
 Where ye lie in the dust cast down,
 Trampled and spit upon, scorned from far
 For the cowards and fools and knaves you
 are—

And for us be the martyr's crown!

* * *
 Oh, brothers, be quiet; hark to the call
 Of the still small voice that talks to us all.
 Let us not be shamed if the battle's heat
 Drive us back to our Father's feet.
 Let us say to God, each, one by one,
 "Father, Our Father: Thy will be done!
 We will do Thy Will!" And, at that breath
 Of clear repentance and fervent faith,
 The mountains that seem to stand in the way
 Will fade, like ghosts in the light of day.
 Ye fear the lions? In God's name, go!
 The lions are chained. Ye shall find them so.
 And the whole child's puzzle, so mixed and
 wild,
 Will be easy, to each who becomes a child.
 "Puzzles are easy," ye say, "no doubt
 When the master-word is once found out."
 Why, God laughs now, in His Heaven above . . .
 "Ye foolish children! The word is Love!"

E. NESBIT.

Books and Persons.

(AN OCCASIONAL CAUSERIE.)

MR. A. C. BENSON has published another book of essays, and in it he refers to the adverse criticisms which have been flung at his highly popular volumes. Dr. Robertson Nicoll has written an essay on Mr. A. C. Benson's essays which is at any rate far less tedious than its subject. But if Dr. Nicoll's essay is not a defence of tedium in essay-writing, it is nothing. He says that literary critics have taken odd sentences from the essays of Mr. Benson and unfairly quoted them as examples of the trite. Personally, though I have not minced words about Mr. Benson, I have never selected odd sentences of his work for ridicule. What I object to is the exasperating banality of the well-educated and polite soul of the work. I am quite willing that the books should be popular, but I will not sit silent while they are taken seriously. Dr. Nicoll, to prove that trite sentences are unavoidable in essay-writing, quotes trite sentences from the essays of—Bulwer Lytton! Such as: "The desire of excellence is the necessary attribute of those who excel." His point seems to be that "Tupperisms" are essential to the composition of an essay.

* * *
 If this view eases the conscience of Dr. Nicoll, no one can grumble. But a mere opinion does not suffice

him. He issues a deliberate challenge. He says: "We have any number of clever young men with an eye for what is called Tupperisms, though they do not know Tupper in the original. But I defy any of them to write an essay, say, on 'Work and Worry' which shall be readable, intelligent and helpful, without putting in some sentences as bad in themselves as any of Bulwer Lytton's." This is straightforward, and it shows how a mature and really able journalist may fail to grasp what the art and craft of writing are. I will accept the challenge. I am not sure if I am young, but I was born sixteen years after Dr. Nicoll. I will undertake to write an essay on "Work and Worry" which shall be readable, intelligent, and helpful, without putting in a single sentence that is as bad as, or could be mistaken for, either Bulwer Lytton or Martin Tupper. We will ask Mr. E. V. Lucas to be judge. If Mr. Lucas declines, the Doctor himself may appoint as arbiter any author or journalist of standing whom he has not referred to in the "British Weekly" during the last year. If I lose I will send five guineas to the London Hospital. If I win, I should expect the Doctor to do the same. This also is straightforward.

* * *
 I wish that other authors who really know how to see and how to write would follow the example of Mr. Charles Marriott and give us books of travel in the manner of "A Spanish Holiday" (Methuen. 12s. 6d.). There is no frilling to this simple and excellent book. Mr. Marriott, where he puts on full-dress, can "do" a landscape as brilliantly as anybody. It would be hard to find finer landscape descriptions than exist in "Ginevra." But in "A Spanish Holiday" he left his full-dress at home and travelled third-class. With the result that certain chapters of this book could even appear in the "Evening News": which was a good thing for the "Evening News." "A Spanish Holiday" is just notes en route, done by a man who could not write badly, but can write modestly. What a soothing contrast to the common commercial book of travel, whose first law is that it must describe what has never been described before! Nothing is more annoying than the effrontery of enterprising wanderers who, wielding a pen as though it were an alpenstock, try with fatuous self-complacency to describe Popacatapeti or Everest when they could not to save their lives give an adequate notion of Hindhead or even the slope of Ludgate Hill. A man who can both see and write has no need to seek the North Pole in order to produce something interesting. He needs but to take train or ship to somewhere quite reachable. Witness Taine! Witness Tobias Smollett! The one fault that I have discovered in "A Spanish Holiday" is in its format. Why should the publishers have made it ape a commercial book of travel? It is too high, too wide, too thick—and too dear. Can one read it in bed? Impossible. (Perhaps a giant could.) It ought to have been no bigger than an "Everyman," and no dearer than Morley's "Life of Gladstone."

* * *
 In the way of bizarre formats, certain illustrated books of recent years have passed the bounds of eccentricity. I have seen none queerer than "The Nun Ensign," with an introduction by Mr. Fitzmaurice-Kelly and illustrations by Daniel Vierge. Mr. Fitzmaurice-Kelly's share in it is like all Mr. Fitzmaurice-Kelly's work, laborious, learned, and tedious. It would be informing if it were not so sedative. But why 140 pages of the volume should have been printed in Spanish I cannot guess. The rarity of copies of Montalban's comedy on the Nun Alferéz is surely too slight an excuse for reproducing this play entire in an English book! But the curiousest feature of the volume is the illustrations. The fine drawings are reduced so small as to lose all their quality. The average area of an illustration is less than a fifth of the area of a page, and each tiny picture, printed on a trifling piece of white glazed paper, is mounted on a huge dark blue page, with disastrous effect. The edges of the book, thus striated in blue and white, are in a high degree disconcerting. One might fancy that the publisher had bought up a stock of illustrations from a French

“bijou” edition of the nun’s story, and had sworn to use it, *coûte que coûte*. Much as I admire Mr. Fisher Unwin for his brilliant gifts, I cannot felicitate him upon this weird amalgam that he calls a book and offers for three half-crowns net.

JACOB TONSON.

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

Pictures from Dickens.*

To think of our own childhood is to be once more a child. And though I am not of those who hold that children are invariably the happiest of human beings and that the days of our innocence form that part of our lives upon which we must inevitably look back with the deepest regret for their passing, I am young enough and old enough to know that there is more than an empty theological significance in the saying of Christ: “Except ye become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven.”

To the child of a right temperament, the world is just a fairy land in which all things are possible, a magic realm of make-believe in which it is as easy to die slowly and romantically of starvation in the pantry as to stab a sofa-cushion to death with a paper sword. There is no sorrow so poignant, no satisfaction so complete as a child’s. There is no other state that conduces to such vivid and radiant visions. As the slow years pass and wind their ever-tightening coil of undistinguished and indistinguishable days about our souls, experience blunts our sensibilities and teaches us philosophy. Disappointment, disillusion, and disheartenment, that unholy trinity of evils which some call worldly wisdom, in time make cynics of us all. We discount the golden bounty of the future by our present mistrust of its fair promises. Anticipation becomes the thief of pleasure that was heretofore its rich enhancement. Our lack of faith and hope may be made good by our increase of charity: for as we grow toward a better knowledge of ourselves, so we become even more kindly and tolerant toward our fellow-creatures; but what we gain in peace and contentment we as surely lose in ecstasy; and the cold daylight of reason that renders all things clear and plain at last cannot altogether reconcile us to the loss of that first waking rapture of our infancy wherein we trembled and groped on the threshold of life half-blinded by the dazzling glow of the dawn . . . the roseate resplendent dawn that broke on our eager senses like a peal of bells, its message re-echoing in our hearts, its music swelling the mad glad chorus of the birds, hymning a joyous aubade to the morning.

Whosoever transports us, then, to that bright borderland, strewn with the starry flowers of memory, lays us under an obligation that it were the act of an ingrate not to acknowledge and discharge, as far as possible. And such an obligation has this book of pictures laid upon the present writer.

I was a very small boy, certainly not more than six years old—for I cannot remember that I ever consciously learnt to read—when I first made friends with Dickens through the medium of the Household Edition, issued in monthly parts in an enlargement of the original green covers, with illustrations by Fred Barnard, Hablot K. Browne (“Phiz”), J. Mahoney, Charles Green, A. B. Frost, Gordon Thomson, J. McL. Ralston, H. French, E. G. Dalziel, F. A. Fraser, and Sir Luke Fildes. All these illustrations are reproduced in this volume from the original wood-blocks, with some that I have never seen before, not because they did not exist from the time of the first issue, but because two or three numbers were tragically missing from my grandfather’s collection.

There were, I remember, parts of “Barnaby Rudge” and “Dombey and Son” which I never read until many years afterwards; and now for me to behold the illustrations accompanying these missing parts is a fresh

* “Scenes and Characters from Dickens.” By Fred Barnard, Phiz, Charles Green and others. (Chapman and Hall. 10s. 6d.)

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delight transcending all expectation, a sensation so exquisite and thrilling that I despair of finding words wherein to express it. It is as if I had had suddenly restored to me certain portions of my life that I had counted as irrevocably lost. It is as if a dear dead friend, released from the thralldom of the grave, had returned to me and taken my hand in his and talked with me for a quiet hour, not as a pale spectre of the night whose personality is merged in the misty incongruities of a dream, but in hearty, healthy, everyday guise, with the living light of humanity in his eyes, the flesh and blood and spirit of the actual man, his voice, his smile, the aura of his homely, lovable self, breathing humorous, tender, affection and sweet, half-shy, half-shamefaced camaraderie.

Here are pictures presenting the Varden family, with Sim Tappertit and Miss Miggs, the inimitable Willitt group at the Maypole Inn, together with two or three impressions of grim incidents from the story's romantic undercurrent, which I have never seen before, and of whose existence I had no knowledge. It is the next best thing to having a new Dickens novel, fresh from the Master's hand, sprung upon me. I am only uttering the bare truth when I say that I have never enjoyed a more delicious literary experience in my life than these unexpected half-dozen pages of this volume have afforded me. Ye voluptuaries who have your Dickens all complete and compact upon your shelves in an orderly infinitude of many editions cannot enter into or understand my feelings. Until a few days ago I envied you, but now I would not give a fiddler's fee for all your former boasted advantage. And if you are afflicted with the possession of only that gallery of morbid monstrosities which Cruikshank perpetrated, then I triumph over you and exult.

I have said elsewhere that there never was an author more unfortunate in his original illustrators than Charles Dickens. Much of the current misunderstanding of his art is directly due, and attributable to, those foul lampooners of his earliest genius. Only one of them survives in this volume: "Phiz"; and he, for all his harshness and crudity and banality, his lack of depth and colour and atmosphere, was never so wanton and perverse a sinner as the unspeakable Cruikshank. You have only to turn from the besotted, bedevilled desecrations of this most vile and inept and vulgar of misinterpreters of human loveliness and grace and strength and humour to these later translations into seemly line and form of Fred Barnard, Charles Green, and Luke Fildes, which glorified Dickens' apogee, to find all your baseless, ill-considered theories concerning the unreality and the grossness and the extravagance of the Dickens immortals dissolve into their native miasmas.

On top of this it may perhaps seem invidious to carp at all. But it does seem to me that this volume might easily have been improved in one or two rather important respects. Considerations of cheapness should never have stood in the way of giving each picture a page to itself and each large drawing a whole detachable leaf of better-made paper. The book might have been planned on a more sumptuous and spacious scale. As it is, we have, here and there, placed in too close juxtaposition, four pictures of such varying quality and tone that they clash with one another and are mutually destructive. And whoever is responsible for the text accompanying the pictures is deserving of the severest censure, either for his carelessness or his incompetence. To pass such misprints as "Barnwell Junior" for "Barnacle Junior" and to misspell "Wrayburn" as "Wraeburn"—but can this be only another

instance of the ineradicable philistinism of the Scot which they miscall patriotism?—is unpardonable; and these are only two of several similar misfeasances.

But, these blemishes apart, this book is as contenting and pleasing a book as I have ever had the privilege of praising. It embodies a most happy thought most happily expressed. No Dickensian is worthy of that honourable title who omits to secure it and place it among his best treasures. And certainly no one who would recapture the first fond ecstasy of his love for the great humanist and apostle of the poor will pass it by. I am most grateful to the publishers for their gift to me of one extra day of childhood.

EDWIN PUGH.

DRAMA.

Dolly Reforming Herself (Haymarket).

"DOLLY Reforming Herself" is a leisurely farce, and a farce is like a firework, it must go with a bang; the firework that deliberates is lost.

A mild but athletic parson has preached a rousing New Year's sermon, and some middle-class drawing-room people are going to reform. The Absurd Scientist says you can't reform; your grey matter determines for you, but one might try the patent food "Palpine." Well, they don't reform, and that's the end of it, and only the unfortunate father tries Palpine. Dolly goes on collecting unpaid bills, her husband goes on swearing, and the Young Blood and the wife of the Absurd Scientist go on committing pseudo-adultery and water. That is all. The only problems are whether Dolly will get her bills paid and which of the two lovers will catch the other when they play hide and seek in and out of the conservatory (the only really exciting moment of the play). The conversation is stereotype. "Are you an English gentleman?" "I am." "Then don't do it, my boy" (the pseudo-adultery), "then don't do it." The wit is of the catchword type. Dolly sweetles her husband, it appears. "Sweetle" is a portmanteau word for "Swindle" and "Wheedle," the husband explains, amid thunders of applause.

The play, of course, is not new; it is an old favourite at the Halls, where it appears under the title of "Billing and Cooing," a "strong and dramatic sketch by John Lawson and Company"; only Mr. Lawson gets it over in twenty minutes, whereas Mr. Jones takes two and a half hours.

What does the farce mean? That we are the slaves of our personalities? I suppose that was the proposition Mr. Jones sets himself to prove—or to exploit. But after stating the case he drops it. The rest of the play is knock-about and gas. Exploit is the word for Mr. Jones's attitude towards ideas. That is the weakness of the Jonesian method. The enormous task is undertaken of being didactic without the aid of convictions. Still, if he has never believed in his sermons, he has sometimes been interested in them, but for the problem of Free Will v. Determinism it is painfully obvious he does not care a hang. A playwright need not, perhaps ought not, to preach, but he must have strong convictions; without them drama is a frivolity and a beating of the void. It is almost enough to believe in frivolity (as Wilde did—and that with all the unflinching resolution of a martyr), but for your Gallio there is no hope.

Our dramatists love nowadays to place their characters in hotel rooms. For to paint an environment and put the persons of the drama en rapport with it is difficult (perhaps that too is a matter of conviction), but a hotel-room is easy, it has no relation to its occupiers, they do not belong to it. That is why modern English

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drama is peopled almost exclusively by tourists; for the drawing-room is only a variant of the hotel; and Mr. Jones's drawing-room characters in this play are all tourists. It is the epigram-mongers have brought us to this. Wilde showed us that granted clever dialogue, a play with only lay figures in it could be made attractive. Since then the dialogue has got less and less clever, but the people have not got more real. And now epigram is bankrupt the lay figures refuse to dance. If we do not invent some method of pumping life-blood into our stage characters, English comedy will shortly come to a full stop. The naive device of the "storm in a tea-cup"—the "scene," where some one rages very violently about never mind what, will not do.

And this raging, so much in vogue now, tends to spoil what few good actresses we have left. A few more raving scenes such as Ethel Irving has had in "Lady Frederick," and this present piece will tear to tatters her delicate art. She has intelligence, humour, and a light touch. She is at her best in cajolery and banter with a glint of fire in it, but she cannot blaze, she has not the grand manner; she gets, not in a passion, but in a temper—a much more unpleasant and less terrible thing. Now almost throughout her "Dolly" part she has to be in a state of lukewarm aggressiveness, and twice she has to be wild. One sees her getting more and more nervous under the stress of it. Would she might keep in her true light comedy vein.

Mr. Robert Lorraine, as Dolly's husband, shaded the fluctuations of astonishment, irritation, tempest and tenderness in the great "bills scene" very justly; but his general acting was somewhat clumsy and obvious. I am interested in the future of Mr. C. M. Lowne. In "Lady Frederick," and here as the father of Dolly, he has had easy and identical parts. He has been what every English gentleman would like to fancy himself—cynical, blasé, good humoured, chivalrous, and self-possessed, and he has been all this very smoothly. Can he do something harder? I should like to see.

As Capt. Wentworth the Young Blood, Mr. Chas. R. Maude keeps a shining morning face and says his piece without bursting into tears. Miss Margaret Halstan, as the sickly sentimental wife of the Scientist, has sheer unbelievable burlesque to act, and acts it better than the stupid stuff deserves. But burlesque treated so earnestly becomes painful.

Let me praise Miss Ada Webster for her couple of lines. She made a work of art of them.

What could Lyall Swete have done with the Absurd Scientist but have left him the Punch and Judy figure he is? For a full-blooded actor to languish in such paste-board parts must be galling.

But really one may say the same of the whole cast. It is preposterous to set practised actors to the trouble of learning and repeating such pitiful drivel. That I have taken the trouble to discuss this drivel at some length may appear preposterous, but Henry Arthur Jones had once a name, and it is only after this careful and painful examination that I venture to pronounce him dead.

W. R. TITTERTON.

MUSIC.

Some English Composers.

No. I Joseph Holbrooke.

THERE are few figures in modern English music more interesting than Joseph Holbrooke, and few whose work has been so persistently neglected. He stands at the head of what used to be called the "Young English School," though it is difficult to say precisely what that meant.

The phrase was probably invented to describe those young rebellious bloods, who, having left school where Parry and Stanford were masters, threw their caps into the air and took to their heels, knowing vaguely where they wanted to go, but uncertain as to where they would ultimately get. Undoubtedly Holbrooke was one of the most ungrateful of scholars; indeed, from the very first he put his fingers to his nose!

"ANSWERS" AND UNEMPLOYMENT

An interesting announcement appears in this week's "Answers." In view of the acute nature of unemployment in this country, the editor of that journal is offering 100 guineas to the sender of the 3,000-word essay which suggests the most practical solution of the difficulty.

A notable committee,

consisting of Sir Christopher Furness, Sir William Treloar, Mr. Arthur Henderson, M.P., Mr. G. N. Barnes, M.P., and Mr.

G. W. Appleton, secretary of the General Federation of Trade Unions, have consented to act as adjudicators, and the winning essay will be brought to the attention of Members of Parliament.

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Since those early days he has constantly and consistently composed, and his output is surprisingly large for one who is still so young. He has shown no preference for any particular form, but has tried his hand at all, even being attracted to such combinations as mandoline and piano, and writing a 'cello concerto, a suite for five wind instruments, and a horn trio (not all published, I think), presumably in vindication of the theory that genius can do everything.

I believe a more correct explanation of these curious and interesting experiments is that genius will do anything, but although it cannot be said that all Holbrooke's works attain the high level of, say, his "Queen Mab," still I should be the last to restrict him, or to say where he may or may not wander.

Of his big choral and orchestral works, which are numerous, it is not easy to get a hearing; indeed, it is likely that no one has heard them all except himself. It has been said that his finest music is to be found in the Orchestral Poems, "The Raven" and "Ulalume," founded on Edgar Allan Poe, a poet who always appealed strongly to him, and also in parts of the new biograph venture, "Apollo and the Seaman."

I can only speak of the works I know well, namely, "Queen Mab," "The Bells," "The Homage to Edgar Allan Poe," and the fine Baritone Scena "Marino Faliero." In the first and second of these, there is sheer genius; no one since Berlioz has proved such a master in depicting the fantastic, the macabre, with an undercurrent of horror. His orchestration is masterly, brilliant in the extreme, the touch is sure, though at times unrestrained. The numerous attempts that Holbrooke has made in Chamber-music do not satisfy me that there he is entirely at his case. Except in a few of his later songs and the fine series of Rhapsody Etudes—real legitimate pianoforte music, he appears hampered working in such a narrow scope, and the music seems as though it would sound better if said in a different and larger way, namely, on the orchestra. The greater part of his violin music and many of the songs are totally unworthy of him.

Holbrooke is the most unselfish of men; he has immense faith in the latent musical possibilities of England, and few have done more to bring out the hidden talent of the country. He is a keen fighter, and has always struggled to prove that we can stand by ourselves and bear comparison with any other nation in music, and he continually chafes against the yoke of Germany, which he says weighs heavily on our necks. For my part, I think it a pity that he should spend so much time and energy in carefully nursing other people's talent, for his own irrepressible output suffers in quality thereby.

He, who by nature is so prolific, will not give himself the necessary time to compose. At intervals, between a mass of journalistic work, the scalping of some fresh enemy, a rush to remote parts of the earth to ascertain the state of musical civilisation, he will produce you an opera, a new wind-sextet, or a set of 20 orchestral variations on a national air. Still, there is a kind of sporting interest attached to him; one never quite knows what he is going to do next. That he is preparing to heave some new work at us, one feels sure, just as a cricketer practises at the nets, to keep in form. But his melodic invention—never his strongest point—suffers, he loses fineness of perception, taste, and the feeling for rare beauty. Work done at this white-heat of an energy untempered by a strong self-critical power of rejection and selection, cannot make for the maintaining of a high level of excellence, but, on the contrary, is conducive to coarseness, and there is much in the Choral Symphony, recently published, which perhaps, upon reflection, and in some less fierce gust of British spirit, Holbrooke would not have per-

petrated. He would probably tell you that such passages were fine hits. Certainly, they do reach the boundary!

EDWARD AGATE.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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

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

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

MR. GRAYSON AND MR. HENDERSON.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

I notice in the present issue of the "Huddersfield Worker" a letter from Mr. Arthur Henderson denying my statements in connection with the debate on the King's visit to Russia. He says he did not know I wanted to speak, and that I did not rise until he rose to move the closure. He also denies that he conferred behind the Speaker's chair with Mr. Balfour and Sir Edward Grey on that or any other day. In regard to the first question I can only refer Mr. Henderson to any other Member who was present, or to the general Press reports, which show that I had not only risen, but had actually been called by the Speaker before he moved the closure. In regard to the

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conference behind the Speaker's chair, I saw it with my own eyes. Mr. Henderson also suggests that I ought to produce evidence of my statement that the Labour Party officials threatened to prevent my having opportunities of speaking if I did not join the party. He is on safe ground in demanding such evidence from a man who stands absolutely alone.

VICTOR GRAYSON.

WAR PANICS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Sir,—Your correspondent, Col. A. Keene, seems to blame me for laughing at war scares, and inferentially laughs at Mrs. Barbauld for being one of the few people who managed to keep their heads cool during the "threatened" invasion of 1803. May I remind Col. Keene that the attitude of mind which breeds and fosters war has—during the Modern period at least—always evoked the laughter or sarcasm of the greatest minds, e.g., Carlyle, Spencer, Johnson, Swift, Voltaire (see the story *Micromégas*), Rabelais?

I am quite aware of the state of mind which Napoleon's camp at Boulogne excited in England: there's food for more laughter there, too! For example, on the walls of the public library here are two original invitations issued to the gentlemen of this village to attend a Volunteer meeting at the "Three Crowns," at four o'clock, dinner 4s. per head; and then is added this remarkable footnote: "There will be a drill on the green at seven o'clock, which those gentlemen *who do not dine* are desired to attend," the inference being that those who dined at four o'clock would not be in a fit condition to drill at seven o'clock.

I do not agree with Col. Keene's interpretation of the history of that time. If we can credit Bourrienne, Napoleon never really intended to invade our shores; indeed, he called those "blockheads" who thought the thing feasible. The camp at Boulogne was one of his numerous feints for creating excitement at the wrong point. His real fear was not of the patriotic Volunteers who were pleasantly mixing physical with gastronomic drill, but of the strenuous Calder, bolder Collingwood and Nelson on the high seas. As soon as he saw that his maritime strategy was all up, he marched off his camp to his true objective, which was on the Continent.

Stoke Newington, N. JNO. F. BURTON.

GRAYSON AND PLIMSOLL.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Bernard Shaw, in his article on Mr. Grayson's outburst, appositely refers to the Plimsoll incident of 1875. It may be worth while to rescue from oblivion a passage written by "B. V." (the late James Thomson, author of "The City of Dreadful Night") in my little paper, the "Republican Chronicle." It occurs in an article reviewing "The Past Session," September, 1875, and runs thus:—

"The one Act of the Session which rose out of the commonplace and the trivial, burning in the vague dusk with clear, heroic fire, was Mr. Plimsoll's passionate and very unparliamentary denunciation of the villains, in and out of the House, who traffic in coffin ships. To that genuine outburst in the Babel of conventional twaddle, the country was not slow in responding; nor could the coolest calculation have better served the same cause of that good man than did his uncalculated, irrepressible cry."

Is it true that history never repeats itself?

GEORGE STANDRING.

THE COST OF ELECTIONS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Referring to Mr. Belloc's article in your current issue on "The Cost of an Election," may I point out that more is required than to stop secret subscriptions to political funds, than to put election expenses upon the rates or taxes; more even than payment of Members of Parliament. Until some scheme is devised to put a stop to the subscriptions of Parliamentary representatives to the clubs, institutions, shows, hospitals, bazaars, etc., etc., in their respective constituencies, we shall always have a very large proportion of wealthy men in Parliament, because they are wealthy. Everybody knows the vast extent of these payments. Occasionally members kick at the continuous drain. See Mr. Joynson-Hicks' recent letter.

The Wisbech Division of Cambridgeshire will lose its present member at the close of the existing Parliament, and the Liberal Party executive, when the time comes, will come to the conclusion that the most fit and proper person to represent them in the next House of Commons is the Hon. Neil Primrose.

He has been ground-baiting the constituency for some time past with subscriptions to horse shows, flower shows, and other equally deserving objects.

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In former days the voters were bought openly; now the same end is attained, but in a more insidious manner. There is a woeful disappointment awaiting those who expect to get a large increase in real working class representation when we get payment of legislators and payment of election expenses from public funds, unless at the same time something is done to put it out of the power of Members of Parliament to corrupt their constituents by these subsidies.

F. G. ABBISS.

* * *

WANTED—A SOCIALIST POLICY.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Let us be patient as well as uncompromising. Let us not be rash. A Socialist Representation Committee may have to be established some day. But the time is not yet. The Labour Party is not dead. The Labour members have been hypnotised by the conventional atmosphere of the House of Commons. This is the worst that has happened. What a wonderful thing "atmosphere" is! The Roman Catholics speak with a deep knowledge of human nature when they claim that the religious atmosphere of their schools is of vital importance. The House of Commons atmosphere of smug respectability, suave intrigue, cynical compromise, has proved too powerful for most of our Socialist and Labour members. With the exception of Victor Grayson and Keir Hardie they have been hypnotised by the dignity of Parliament, and have been in a deep trance. We must not desert them—at any rate, not yet. We must wake them and make provision for their future protection. This must be done by a series of health-giving shocks. Victor Grayson administered the first shock. It has already produced wholesome results. It has focussed the grim attention of the rank and file upon the weakness of the Labour members. The rising tide of righteous indignation which is roaring round the Labour members, threatening to overwhelm a few of them, has caused some of the sleepers to start up, rubbing their eyes in alarm. The completion of the awakening process must now be left to the Labour Party Conference in January, and the I.L.P. Conference next Easter. We Socialists can trust the rank and file of the Labour Party, and, should the worse come to the worst, we have the divine right of revolt, and our irresistible faith in the ultimate victory of our propaganda. We have not by any means outlived the I.L.P. policy. It has only completed its first great stage. Now that the Miners' Federation of Great Britain has decided to join the Labour Party, the political separation of the great Trade Unions from Toryism and Liberalism is complete. The slippery monstrosity known as Liberal-Labourism is not only scotched, but killed. There is not a Liberal-Labour Trade Union in the country. Both Tories and Liberals are expressly excluded from taking any organic part in the political work of the Trade Unions, while we Socialists are expressly invited to form part of the Trade Union organisation. This means that the Socialists are asked to become the political guides and teachers of the organised workers of the country. The strategical position in politics has been placed by the workers in our hands. Are we going to abandon it to the Radicals? Lloyd George and Winston Churchill are scheming for the formation of a Radical-Labour Party. The withdrawal of the Socialists from the Labour Party would give these astute gentlemen the very opportunity they want. Shall we allow them to outflank us? Not likely. We want all our best thinkers and orators—and the gods have blest us abundantly—to strengthen the influence

of Socialism in the councils of the Labour Party. As the result of the decision of the Miners' Federation a number of Liberal-Labour leaders, who have been convinced against their will, and are of the same opinion still, come into the Party and will endeavour to give the Party's policy a Liberal bias. They must be check-mated. Socialism, enthusiastic, unyielding Socialism, must dominate the policy. Will the Social Democrats help us? The circumstances are favourable for their affiliation. The Hull resolution proves that the rank and file of the Trades Unions stand for Socialism. The Labour Party has now a recognised status in the International Socialist Congress. Here is the ground thoroughly prepared for Socialism, and it only remains to vigorously scatter the seed and husband the crop. The Labour Party must be Socialist if its work in British politics is to be permanent. The withdrawal of the Socialists would mean the extinction of the Labour Party as a serious fighting force. No Socialist desires this. With all its defects, the Labour Party is the best weapon we have with which to smite the Philistines. Let us not throw it away—yet. Any proposal to set up a rival Socialist organisation can only weaken the chances of the reforms which we hope to bring about at the next Labour Conference, by throwing all loyal supporters of the Labour Party alliance into the arms of the National Executive and the Parliamentary members in order that the integrity of the Party may be preserved. The issues must be kept clear. The

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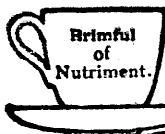
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issues that have to be settled are not whether Victor Grayson was right or wrong; whether the Labour Party was right or wrong in not supporting him; whether the petty personalities which have since been indulged in were justified or not. All these issues have been decided. A protest like Grayson's cannot be judged in the abstract: it can only be judged by tangible results. We of the rank and file have enthusiastically and finally endorsed Victor Grayson's protest because it has aroused the country as the country has never been aroused before on the terrible tragedy of unemployment. We have convicted him for that word "traitors," but we have as speedily pardoned him because he was cruelly provoked by the cynical attitude of the Labour Party towards him when he was doing a brave deed for the people. We have approved of the Labour Party for not getting themselves suspended with Grayson, because we hold, with them, that no single member can presume to settle their policy for them. But we have condemned them for not giving Grayson some moral support or sign of sympathy, and we execrate them for having led the Tory and Liberal hue and cry against him. The "sumptuous dinner" speech is too mean to call for serious attention. Mr. Snowden's greatest punishment for that speech will be his own remembrance of it during his better moments. The really important issues for conference are the bye-election policy, the action of certain members who have spoken in compromising circumstances for Government measures, the tame tactics of the Labour Party in the Unemployed debate, and the position of the National Executive. It is of vital importance that the National Executive should reflect the wholesome fighting instincts of the national movement, and not the intriguing spirit of the Parliamentary members. Members of Parliament must not be eligible for election to that body. And the Executive's power of veto must be curbed. ELLIS LLOYD.

* * *

COLERIDGE AT HIGHGATE.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

In reply to J. B. Doveton, the incident he mentions occurred, according to "Old and New London," vol. v, p. 472, in Well Walk, Hampstead. I give the quotation: "Samuel Taylor Coleridge would sometimes come over across the green fields, by way of Millfield Lane, from Highgate, to have a chat with Keats on his seat at the end of Well Walk; and when he last shook hands with him here, he turned to Leigh Hunt and whispered, 'There is death in that hand.'" E. TRECHMANN.

CONCERNING THE NEW AGE.

I AM indebted to numerous readers of THE NEW AGE for suggestions for improving the circulation of the paper. With the help of our readers the circulation has increased by several thousands within the last few weeks; and last week's issue amounted to 21,205. Even then, however, complaints from all parts of the country have reached me of the continued difficulty in procuring copies. One correspondent informs me that he applied in vain to no less than fifty newsagents in Glasgow for a copy on Friday and Saturday, and doubtless dozens of towns were in the same plight. The only remedy for this is to insist on newsagents stocking THE NEW AGE in sufficient quantities. No amount of work on my part can be effective unless readers themselves see that their local agents are kept up to the mark.

In the matter of advertisements, I beg to enlist the help of readers. It is important that in replying to advertisements the name of THE NEW AGE should be mentioned. Needless to say, also, the more replies our advertisers receive, the more likely are they to continue advertising in THE NEW AGE.

Finally, I may be allowed to make the following suggestions for those who are anxious that THE NEW AGE should succeed:—

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