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A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART

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CONTENTS.

[We regret to have to announce to our readers that the required number of shares for the formation of the New Age Limited Company has not yet been taken, some 500 £1 shares being still needed. Only this current week remains in which applications can be made. We are still hopeful that our professed admirers may prove their sincerity before it is too late.]

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.

The L.C.C. is not willing to provide hungry children with meals out of the rates. It has no objection to spending the rate-payers' money upon investigations into the percentage of starvation of the children or the degree of the parents' responsibility, because this money is paid over to well-fed persons of the middle-class. Last year four special investigators were appointed to make "an exhaustive inquiry" into the circumstances of each individual family in 12 selected schools of the children who were receiving meals—meals for which the L.C.C., it must be remembered, was not paying. Their report, No. 1,203, has just been published. It is admitted that in the 12 schools, out of 3,334 school children whose circumstances were investigated, "2,630 might be considered as necessitous," whilst only 2,581 children were being fed at the schools concerned. The first point, then, is that fewer children were being fed than the L.C.C.'s special investigators found to be "necessitous." The next point which we draw attention to is the admission by these special investigators that the feeding was bad. They state: "To the purely physical side of the feeding question our enquiry has not been specially directed. Reports have been submitted to the Sub-Committee which show the poor accommodation and the inferior quality of the meals often provided for the children. If this is considered with the fact that the highest average number of meals per child per month was 4.4 in the Council schools, little noticeable improvement in the physical condition of the child can be expected." After this admission that they have not directed special attention "to the purely physical side of the feeding question" it is a gross impertinence for the investigators to even allude to "causes other than underfeeding which make a child unable to profit by the instruction given." We are well aware that the whole condition of the children must be allowed, but this is no reason to prevent the feeding of children by hinting at other possible requirements.

Mr. E. A. H. Jay, Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Underfed Children, draws attention to the statement that out of 1,218 families no less than 544 are described by the organisers as "intemperate and wasteful parents," and to their suggestion that the number of necessitous children from this class may be reduced "by regular sympathetic home visiting." Would Mr. Jay feed or starve the children of intemperate or wasteful parents," and to the suggestion that the number of act. If the L.C.C. considers the children culpable, let them have the courage of this opinion and find some easier method of death than starvation. However, let us examine an example of these intemperate and wasteful parents, Class IV. The first case is that of a widow with three children, whose gross earnings are 5s. and rent 2s. 6d.; there is a net income of 2s. 6d. to provide for one adult and three children. Eleven different investigating bodies have enquired into the circumstances of this wretched widow; church, mission, benevolent society, County Council, etc., etc. Some think she drinks; others suspect drink, others find no evidence of drink. The investigators remark: "Woman impressed us unfavourably. Condition of home: Poor, dirty." We wonder what kind of place the investigators would have with an income of 2s. 6d. for four persons! Is it not sickening to think of eleven official kinds of people badgering this widow? We should not be surprised if she did take to drink. But the evidence on this head is unreliable, and we suppose the investigators regard her as wasteful. The following is an example to show that meals were not always wanted. The net income of a family is 17s., to provide for two adults and three children. The investigators report: "Man ill six months last year, all right some times. Is paying up debt; girl had dinners when her father last ill; does not need them now, and will write to head-teacher (She had not thought of stopping dinners until I asked her if they were needed.) She owes a little rent and payment for boy." Here is obviously a family, to the non-Charity Organisation Society's eye, where the children are being underfed in an attempt to recover a position lost through illness. Here is a case which requires help to tide over the present difficulty. But enough of report. We are sick unto death of reading these Views of Investigators. Our own trained eyes have seen the underfed children in the schools. There is a chance of making some of them into decent human beings—a year or two later and the opportunity is lost. Meanwhile Mr. Robinson, the Chairman of the L.C.C., appeals to a charity whilst the people of London have clearly made their wishes known—that the children must be fed by putting the Provision of Meals Act into force.

* * *

Parliament was usefully engaged on Thursday night in dropping the Education Bill and passing the third reading of the White Phosphorus Matches Prohibition

Bill. Some opposition was shown from the Tory benches. The Earl of Ronaldshay stating that "nine out of ten factories employing white phosphorus had for the past five years been absolutely free from cases of necrosis poisoning." Mr. Gladstone very properly replied that, "If only one case of that disease had occurred during recent years he thought that this Bill would have been justified." We hope the Home Secretary's phrase will be remembered when we who are more interested in the preservation of men than of industries shall insist on legislation that shall totally banish the term Occupation Diseases. In this match case legislation was fairly simple, because non-poisonous yellow phosphorus serves the same purpose as the poisonous white phosphorus. Quite recently Dr. Sinclair, Second Medical Officer to the G.P.O., has stated that out of 18,000 persons employed in the telegraphist department nearly 500 are affected by telegraphist's cramp, a disease practically incurable, and one which prevents them earning their living. The disease is doubtless largely due to the high pressure of work and to the hours not being sufficiently elastic. The cruelties our industrial system inflicts upon thousands and thousands are apt to be kept out of sight when laudators descant on the benefits machinery have brought the world. The prohibition of white phosphorus should be followed by the prohibition of lead in the manufacture of china and earthenware. Lead poisoning has not been abolished in the potteries; the disease manifests itself in a host of ways, perhaps most terribly in the form of lead-palsy, with the paralysis of the victim's hands. In this instance legislation should be easy, because the beautiful glaze which is desired on china can now be obtained by the use of fritted lead, when the lead is fused with a kind of glass, and is non-poisonous. Pending legislation, those who have conscientious objections to the assassination or permanent disabling of their fellow men may be reminded that leadless glaze is now manufactured on a commercial scale, costing no more than ordinary man-destroying china. Were the demand greater we are sure that it would be stocked everywhere; at present we believe that only Messrs. Franks and Co., of Bayswater, have anything like a complete stock of leadless china in London.

* * *

Another Education Bill has come and gone; we do not know if they will go on for ever, but it looks unconscionably like it. We disliked the Education Bill, we dislike the Government, but we dislike still more the chicanery and shuffling by which the Archbishop of Canterbury, true priest that he is, wriggled out of his position, when he found that compromise was unpopular in the Church and when he had probably received a pretty broad hint from the Tory leaders that he need be in no hurry to deal with the Government at this juncture. When the Bill and the correspondence between Dr. Davidson and Mr. Asquith were published, it was perfectly evident that it was desired to reduce contracting out to a minimum (a minimum to which we strenuously objected). The actual payment to the schools contracting out had not been fixed, but the Government's intentions were clear enough. Had the Government granted the Archbishop's demand for 57s. per pupil instead of the 50s. offered, contracting out would have become the rule and not the exception. This Dr. Davidson knew as well as ourselves, and this was the pretext that served him. If this was the morality that the Church party is desirous of imparting, we have an additional reason for rejoicing at the loss of the Bill, with its right of entry on two days in the week. We have hitherto favoured the right of entry provided it were granted to all bodies desiring to impart religious or ethical instruction. Should we now say that the Church of to-day does not fulfil these conditions?

* * *

Attempting to hurry through one of Bloomsbury's dingy streets we were held up last Wednesday by a procession of gorgeous automobiles, by relays of gallant horses, proud powdered coachmen, and genial chauffeurs waited without. Ladies enveloped in furs scurried through the dingy passages of the Passmore Edwards Settlement. Such a gathering of wealth in such quarters could be only upon charity bent. An authoritative policeman informed us the ladies had come to help the unemployed; he would be glad to be relieved of the hateful duty of patrolling the hunger-marchers. We are afraid that our kindly policeman will be disappointed. The keynote of the meeting was that no material aid was to be given without such elaborate precautions as would absolutely prevent any pence going astray. The Hon. Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton said: "None of the helpers should give money at all; it spoiled all prospect of friendly relationship." (Thankful are we not to be of her poor relations.) A clergyman alluded "to the class of men who had succeeded in getting work, but only after the comforts and conveniences of home had gone to the pawnshop. The sympathy and friendship which he hoped the League would render would be absolutely invaluable in such cases." We can bear our personal tribute of testimony to the benevolence of pawnbrokers, but we learn for the first time that sympathy and friendship will redeem the pawned comforts of the home. We suppose the ladies of the Personal Service League will wheedle the pawnbrokers into foregoing both capital and interest; no wonder their husbands are such successful business men. Another hon. lady advised the helpers never to ride to a house where the family was to be visited. Over-feeding is the vice of the plutocracy and the advice was sound; but we assure the helpers that the sight of a lordly motor car, or of a gay barouche and restive horses does our slum eyes more good than any amount of sympathy. Helpers were also advised not to make the initial visit unaccompanied by an officer of experience and tact. "Reader, do not be frightened at the hard words, imposition, imposture—give and ask no questions. Rake not into the bowels of unwelcome truth, to save a half-penny. It is good to believe." We prefer this old-time, inefficient, absurd, uneconomical, personal charity of Elia.

* * *

Bread Street, in the City of London, December 9th, 1608. We like these centenaries and tercentenaries and all the ways of fêting the mighty dead. We dislike the half-hearted, mean-spirited way in which these days are commemorated in our busy mercantile age. We want public holidays when all should be well paid to do nothing of economic value—when, say, we might for a brief pause think and talk and hear Milton. In our restless attempts to live we have forgotten that life has a grandeur and purpose of its own. For our purposes in these columns we may not even remember that Milton was a poet; we have to recall him as politician who, whilst fighting for political liberty, was not quite unmindful that certain social reforms were ripe in his day for solution — reforms which we have not yet attained. We scarcely imagine that it would advantage us greatly were Milton living at this hour, for the tyrannies beneath which we groan would not be removed by the execution of a King or by another Eikonoklastes, though we may cull here and there a passage which bears quite directly upon our own times. Those who dislike their isolation as Socialists from the current trend of English life may recall: "I never knew that time in England, when men of truest religion were not counted sectaries; but wisdom now, valour, justice, constancy, prudence united and embodied to defend religion and our liberties, both by word and deed, against tyranny, is counted schism and faction. Thus in a graceless age things of highest praise and imitation under a right name, to make them infamous and hateful to the people are miscalled. Certainly, if ignorance and perverseness will needs be national and universal, then they who adhere to wisdom and to truth are not therefore to be blamed for being so few as to seem a sect or faction." And elsewhere. Ponder these lines: "But now, to a besotted and degenerate baseness of spirit, except some few who yet retain in them the old English fortitude and love of freedom, and have testified it by their matchless deeds, the rest, unbastardised from the ancient nobleness of their ancestors, are ready to fall flat, and give

adoration to the image and memory of this man, who hath offered at more cunning fetishes to undermine our liberties, and put tyranny into our art, than any British King before him."

* * *

Surprise has been manifested in many quarters at the lull in the Russian Revolutionary movement. Whilst everyone knows that it is only temporary, it is but natural that a reaction should follow the colossal labours of the active parties during the past few years. Moreover, the Revolutionists have lost an enormous number of their adherents by murder, imprisonment, banishment, and emigration. Thus the Parti Socialist Polonais (P.P.S.) which is, as it states, one of the smallest of the revolutionary bodies, has lost over 100 members in its conflict with Tsardom ; a list which the Party says is quite incomplete. Amongst these victims 39 were hanged, one shot, 13 killed fighting, three or four assassinated by Tsarists, two by bandits, one by the gaolers, three committed suicide in order to escape torture and captivity. Probably a far larger number have perished whose deaths remain unknown to their comrades. "The Worker," the organ of the party, considers that Russian Militarism is aiding the Polish Revolutionary movement. The recruits are advised "to become good marksmen, to know how to spoil and to repair guns, to understand the artillery, to become spies, and to find out all the weak places of the army, how to take the barracks and the sentinels by surprise. Their mission is to become useful instructors for the force of revolution." A special gazette, "Do Szeregu," is circulated among the Polish soldiers. All success to whatsoever shall destroy that enemy of the Russian and Polish peoples, that friend of our King and latest ally of our Liberal Government—the Tsar.

* * *

We are told that "40,000 persons stood bare-headed in a storm of sleet and snow, in Fort Greene, Brooklyn," when a monument was dedicated to the memory of the 12,000 martyrs who were murdered in the "floating hells" of the British in the Wallabout Bay during the war for American independence. We suppose very few Englishmen are acquainted with the details of this martyrdom of 1775-8 ; which reflects seriously upon the British Government of the time. However, our interest in the affair is of another character. Half the cost of the monument was subscribed by the U.S. Government, so that the ceremonies were of a national character, and President Taft delivered the oration. After the usual references to the war of Secession, he concluded :—

"This noble memorial is dedicated as a reminder to living Americans of the gratitude due to unknown sufferers in our country's cause, and as an inspiration to future unselfish and unheralded sacrifice to maintain our institutions of liberty and civilisation."

* * *

This was on November 14 last. The "Richmond Planet" of the same date opens its article on a recent legal decision by stating : "The Supreme Court of the United States has handed down another one of its decisions showing its antipathy to the coloured people of this country and emphasising the fact that none of us may expect to hope for justice within its confines." The State of Kentucky had passed a law in 1904 prohibiting white and black children from attending the same schools. Berea College contended that no State of the Union could enforce such legislation. The Supreme Court of Kentucky held it valid on the ground that "the white and black races are naturally antagonistic, and that enforced separation of the two is in the line of the preservation of the peace." This is a judgment confirmed by the Supreme Court of the United States. Justice Harlan, who dissented from the majority of the judges, asked :—

"Have we become so inoculated with prejudice of race that an American Government, professedly based on the principles of freedom and charged with the protection of all citizens alike, can make distinction between such citizens in the matter of their voluntary association for innocent purposes simply because of their respective races?"

The answer was that President Taft is paid to talk about "maintaining our institutions of liberty and civilisation," and the Judges of the Supreme Court are paid to see that they are maintained only for some white people. A very nice division of labour.

* * *

The Report of the Select Committee on the House of Lords has been issued. The character of the reforms is best judged by the recommendation with regard to India :—

"Native representation presents formidable, and perhaps insurmountable difficulties, but they think that the presence within the House of ex-Viceroys and of other qualified persons connected with the administration of India, will always ensure the full consideration in the House of Lords of all questions affecting the interests of the Indian Empire."

Similarly, of course, the land is best served by having landlords, labour by having brewers and money-lenders to represent these interests. There is only one reform of the House of Lords that interests us.

[Next Week: "An Open Letter to Mr. H. G. Wells." By Hilaire Belloc, M.P.]

On Guard.

WOMEN of the forward movement, you are aware that the matter of indecent assault upon you by Liberal stewards has now become common town talk. Your reticence, perhaps never a wise policy, continued, may constitute a danger to new recruits who enter the struggle utterly unprepared for violence of this description.

That you can and will adopt extreme measures to protect yourselves from future outrage at the hands of the prurient youths engaged by your cowardly enemies, is not all sufficient. Modesty must not prevent you from publishing throughout your ranks the abominable villainy practised at the Albert Hall. You know, that, for such publication, newspapers are not necessary.

It is the duty of every woman who is already informed, to communicate the whole truth of the atrocities to which her comrades were subjected ; it is the duty of every woman in the movement to learn this truth.

Sterner measures than those already taken to defeat the lewd attempts, now perilous to conceal, must be resorted to. A whip is no protection to a half-stunned woman. It must be made hazardous for these bullies even to approach you.

It is well known among you that the followers and attendants of Lloyd George are most to be feared. But the evil increases, and no woman, henceforth, should trust to the barely-civilised instincts of the men employed on behalf of the Cabinet Ministers.

Rape is irrevocable. Any means taken to prevent it are justified.

It is imperative that you do not under-estimate the brutal and obscene character of your opponents. Trust to no defence but that of absolute inviolacy. Allow no man to handle you but at his peril.

And let the reminder that such protection against your debased and unclean enemies has become necessary, nerve you to wrest from them the power to liberate and purify the spirit of your country.

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The Labour Yule-tide.

By Victor Grayson, M.P.

I HAVE just read with a poignant thrill of relief that the overworked House of Commons will not have to meet at 10 a.m. on Saturday to continue the deferred debate of the alleged Education Bill. Meantime members will refresh their jaded minds with a "Poisons and Pharmacy Bill." The Licensing Bill is out of the way—very much out of the way. The bulk of an emergency session has been criminally, I had almost written consciously, wasted. But the Liberal Government have at least secured the credit of "good intentions." Indeed, their career up to now has left them enough of the latter commodity amply to pave the highway to their imminent destination. Now, having done something to ingratiate the teetotal fanatic, they enter upon the futile and time-wasting task of balancing the greedy demands of the sectarian soul-snatchers at the expense of the inoffensive child. The "Daily News" informs us that the Labour members evinced a "keen interest in the crisis which has arisen over the Education Bill." Christmas is a time to bury hatchets and smoke pipes of peace. But Christmas is also a season that vividly obtrudes the gloomy horror and misery of the under-dogs of civilisation. There will be thousands of little children throughout this Yule-tide of cheer sitting in hovels before fireless grates. The bitter irony of poverty will leave a keener sting for the workless and outcasts of our social system. And the Labour Party evinces the "keenest interest in the crisis that has arisen with regard to the Education Bill." The "Labour Leader's" Parliamentary correspondent supposes regretfully that "we must now give up all hope of a big Unemployed Bill next spring." "The Poor Law Commission," he continues, "cannot report before the end of the year, and . . . . . it would be too much to expect the officials and draughtsmen to reform the Poor Law and lay the foundations of a new social system all in the space of a few weeks." And the Government must pass a Welsh Disestablishment Bill. And Mr. John Burns must get through his Housing and Town Planning Bill. And the Archbishop of Canterbury insists on his 64s. And the Labour Party evince a "keen interest in the crisis, etc." Alas! for human hopes. I do not want to carp or criticise at this festive season. But if I could induce some god or fairy to send the Labour Party an appropriate Christmas present, I should beg on their behalf a sense of proportion and perspective. I verily believe that every day squandered in useless debate on useless measures is a "massacre of the innocents." I further believe—and this is the greatest thing that Socialism has taught me—that the question of the famished and starving child, the workless men and women, is more important than any other question on the Government's agenda.

Have our Socialist Parliamentarians been chloroformed? Have the rich, alluring notes of the siren's song drowned the groans of their suffering class? While they co-operate or acquiesce in the capitalists' conspiracy to tame and fool the people they must be held jointly responsible for the condition of the people. I say this as a Socialist member of the I.L.P., and I am answered by hysterical shrieks of "unity." Unity of what? And of whom? How long will people be the slaves of phrases? One may halt a while on a journey to help a lame brother over the stile. But if the lame brother presumes to set the pace for the able-bodied man, one may safely prophesy a parting. Socialists want what all the Labour Party wants. Whether inside or outside that organisation, a Socialist Party would co-operate loyally and energetically to ameliorate wage-slavery. There need be no enmity, no hostility. Merely the privilege of going on. With the kindest and the most fraternal emotions possible, I wish the Labour Party a happy and a particularly thoughtful Christmas.

Science In Modern Life

Prepared under the Editorship of Prof. J. R. Ainsworth Davis, M.A., with the co-operation of the following eleven eminent Specialists :—

A. C. D. Crommelin, B.A., F.R.A.S., of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich.
O. T. Jones, M.A., F.G.S., of H.M. Geological Survey.
J. P. Millington, M.A., B.Sc., formerly Scholar of Christ's College, Cambridge.
J. H. Shaxby, B.Sc., Lecturer in Physics in University College, Cardiff.
H. J. Fleure, D.Sc., Lecturer in Geology and Geography in University College, Aberystwyth.
H. Spencer Harrison, D.Sc., formerly Lecturer in Zoology in University College, Cardiff.
J. M. F. Drummond, M.A., Lecturer in Botany in the Armstrong College, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.
J. Travis Jenkins, D.Sc. Ph.D., Scientific Superintendent of the Lancashire and Western Sea-Fisheries Committee.
James Wilson, M.A., B.Sc., Professor of Agriculture in the Royal College of Science, Dublin.
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The First Socialist Cabinet.

January 1912.

THESE last three years, since 1908, have been a time worth living for those who delight to feel the full pulse of life; they have been days of palpitating hearts and vibrating nerves for all who were born with sickly souls. We find ourselves the winners of a victory which three years ago seemed beyond the realms of the possible; and yet, when it is won, it seems to have been so infinitely easy to gain. There is no need to conceal the truth any longer: and the truth is this. We have got a Socialist Government at last, because we quite suddenly determined to be brave men instead of weak cowards. We had been vainly imagining that we were going to make the people understand the full meaning of the vast ideal of Socialism, by working in all kinds of indirect ways; by subtle political alliances with men who were not Socialists; by wire-pulling devices which we thought would move the dummy marionettes of capitalist Cabinets; by doing this, that, and the other thing, except preaching Socialism, which we thought would get people to vote for our candidates.

We imagined, in short, that we were going to bring Socialism about by some clever kind of political conjuring trick which was so neat that people would never see how the goldfish got into the bowl, or how the lady managed to pass to the other cabinet. We knew that all the other parties, Tories and Whigs and Radicals, having a political case which did not bear the full daylight, were therefore obliged to resort to all manner of stage deceptions which would deceive the audience. We were so faint-heart that we forgot that we had a political case which would bear any sort of criticism whatsoever, which was so unshakeable that there was no necessity to perform all the theatrical buffoonery of our opponents. We were, indeed, the most broken-down set of believers that any respectable creed ever gathered together.

Then, quite suddenly, we found our courage. Every member of this first Socialist Cabinet holds office because he one day decided that he would be a brave man instead of a coward. Some decided more quickly than others, but the courage to ride full tilt for Socialism against the enemy is the title-deed of all.

This is how it all came to pass. The terrible condition of poverty which followed the trade depression of the autumn of 1908 became intolerable to the sufferers themselves, and a hideous nightmare to every one with a fragment of culture and a glimmer of decent imagination. Things became so bad that to consent to their continuance was to rule oneself outside the bound of elementary humanity. That something had to be done was the opinion of all educated people, except the gentlemen who alone could do anything, namely, the members of His Majesty's Government. In the face of a country filled with the workless, the starving, the homeless, and the unclothed, this distorted image of Liberalism deliberately wasted its time in playing with a Licensing Bill which it knew the Lords would reject; which would have done little else than ruin a few brewers without advancing the cause of temperance one jot: and then in playing with its fourth Education Bill, which had nothing to do with education, and merely attended to the bickering of an infinitesimal number of sectarians who should have been completely ignored as beneath the dignity of a discussion in the Houses of Parliament.

But the total inaction of the Liberal Government was not unexpected. Reformers turned to the new party which had gone to the House of Commons for the particular purpose of defending the poor. Surely the Labour Party would do something? To the indescribable astonishment of everyone, the Labour Party, after a few hours' debate on the question of the Unemployed, which failed to win a fragment of real help from the Cabinet, quietly settled down to discuss a sham Licensing Bill and a worthless Education Bill, and the rest of the futile measures which take up the time of a Government which does not really mean to do serious work.

The position became ridiculous. The Government brought in Bills which it was afraid to ask the country to support when the Lords rejected them. The Labour Party sat silent, except for a few questions on details which the Ministers were delighted to answer, because it took off the attention from things that really mattered. Then, during 1909, the Government saw that it could not continue the monumental work of doing nothing-at-all much longer. So it went to the country with the cry of "Down with the Lords," in the faint hope that it would make the people forget that the last parrot-cry of "Free Trade" had become rather stale. But the people were too pressed by poverty to listen to parrot-cries much longer. They wanted food, and did not mind whether the Lords threw out the Licensing Bill or whether the Archbishop and Dr. Clifford could not come to terms on the Education Bill.

The working classes, when they did not abstain altogether, voted for Tariff Reform as the only constructive policy which might get them work, and the Conservatives were returned to power by a small majority. But the chief fact in the General Election at the end of 1909 was the utter annihilation of the Labour Party. The workers turned in hopeless despair from a party which had failed to gain them the slightest relief from their poverty; and, when beaten in the Commons (as was only natural) had taken its beating without a murmur. Further, the party refused to declare for any policy beyond the vague "claims of Labour." Now, the Trade Unionists saw that Trade Unionism had failed. They were hopelessly beaten whenever they came out on strike; the Anti-Taff Vale Act had been passed, and they were still subject to low wages, long hours, and starvation. During the spring of 1909 the Liberals had hurried through an Act to reverse the Osborne decision (which had made illegal the use of Union funds for political purposes), and not a man was one penny the better. So, since the Labour Party had nothing to suggest but a vague Trade Union labour programme, it was little wonder the workers would not listen.

Then, at last, the Socialists saw the folly of their position. They had an unanswerable case for Socialism as the only solution of poverty and disorder. It was a creed which would appeal to the pockets of every poor man, and to the conscience of every properly educated rich one. And they were throwing away the advantages of a perfect case in order to argue for a weak programme which had already been tried and found utterly wanting. With the Labour Party lying beaten on the ground, the Socialists of all sects came to a rapid determination. They said they would stand for Socialism, at last; that they would not pretend to believe that there was any use in preaching anything else. The I.L.P., the S.D.P., and the Fabian Society joined forces for the support of political candidates. Two years of tariff manipulating by the Tories convinced the workers that Tariff Reform was another broken reed. The Trade Union leaders, most of whom were already convinced Socialists, at last told the truth to their followers: that only a Socialist Party could save them. Mr. Bernard Shaw toured the country, and in a series of masterly speeches showed the middle classes who possessed under £2,000 a year that they had everything to gain by being relieved from the crushing weight of the great landlords and financiers. The small Tory majority had disappeared by January, 1912, and there was a General Election. The Socialists of this country at last had the honesty and the courage —shall we say, the common sense—to declare for Socialism because all other reforms are entirely useless, and convict their advocates of foolishness. And the reward of common sense is this Socialist Cabinet.

G. R. S. TAYLOR.

An Encylopædia of Reform.

THE habit of buying books on the instalment system is one that grows insidiously upon you ; and many a poor student, fighting an uphill fight against early disadvantages, presently finds his shelves overladen with a serried waste of mountainous, inaccessible lore, who never would have bartered so many simple and desirable meals for so much pompous and undesirable lumber had it not been for the crafty advertisements of unscrupulous boomsters which somehow contrived to instil him with panic at the thought that he might be letting slip a priceless opportunity of his youth. But opportunities, despite the opportunists, are often things that it is wiser to miss than to seize. For there seems to be a devilish incumbency imposed upon all right-thinking folk, having obtained their opportunity, to use it. And the conscientious use of an opportunity is bound to develop into a bore and a nuisance until it ceases to be a duty, and then it becomes at once a pleasure and a privilege.

I have in my time bought many books, and have them yet, which I would be pleased to exchange for their weight in good tobacco. This is not because I have read them all, and so have no further use for them. On the contrary, I have always a use and a place on my shelves for any book of whatsoever kind that I have been able to read. It is because I have not, cannot, and never shall, read these books that I am so willing to part from them. There they are! self-educators of every description. Gazetteers and atlases, volumes of statistics and books of reference crammed with important information that no self-respecting person can afford to confess ignorance of, selections from the very best authors (in twenty massive volumes), and dictionaries and encyclopædias and anthologies galore, with text-books and primers and manuals and all the rest of that vulgar clamjamfry of learning with which the average ambitious youth delights to surround himself. These books in bulk have cost me more money than I have ever handled in one sum in my life ; but, beyond that they have certain sentimental associations and that they provide an indifferent substitute for far less expensive and far more decorative furniture, I am free to confess that the majority of them are not of so much worth to me as this morning's newspaper. This, of course, is entirely my own fault. I was in too great a hurry to be born, and so appeared in this giddy sphere twenty years too soon. If I had not been so impatient I might now have been making a better start toward amassing a library by planking down my first five shillings on account of the purchase price of this "New Encyclopædia of Social Reform,"* and thereby saving myself considerable unnecessary outlay upon pseudo-sociological and other literature. As it is, however, I have got the complete work for nothing . . . . and should like to add, for the sake of the epigram, that I am proportionally grateful, only that would not be true, since I prize these two handy and handsome tomes, and as a rule the things that we get for nothing we do not prize.

But what am I to say about this book? I cannot say, as the informed novel-reader said of the dictionary, that it seems to lack any sustained interest. The interest is thoroughly well sustained from beginning to end, and the plot (if I may so term it) is so neatly and featly dove-tailed that opening the book anywhere and plunging into any chapter you will be insensibly led on by the cross-references—which in this case are not so

* "The New International Encyclopædia of Social Reform." Two vols., crown 8vo., 1,455 pp. 35s. net. (The New Age Press).

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For this is no narrow-minded or esoteric compilation. It is primarily concerned with the problems of social reform, as its title says; but it does not seek to foist any empirical solution upon the guileless and unsophisticated under a thin disguise of academism. It states the case from every conceivable point of view, and submits all the established facts and all the known theories and conclusions appertaining in any way to the vital main issues, to your impartial consideration. Men and women of every shade of opinion have contributed to, or have revised, or are quoted in it. As a means of propaganda—not only to the Socialist, but to every kind of politician—it is the best and heftiest weapon I have ever had put into my hand. And it is something more. It is a storehouse of trustworthy and authentic evidences from which the disciple of any cult, the apostle of any cause, the student and the expert, the pundit and the enthusiast alike, may draw that best inspiration of all which is rooted in a sound and thorough knowledge of his subject.

It is, therefore, not an easy book to appraise in a brief review. Indeed, it would be impossible for any one man to adjudicate fairly on its merits. Its range is so vast and its information so intimate and particular on such an inexhaustible variety of themes that only a committee composed of representatives of all the arts and crafts and sciences, all the leaders of thought, and all the captains of industry would be competent to pronounce a final and authoritative verdict upon it. But I believe that it would pass even that august test of excellence. And not merely because I have found that, in those few matters of which I may claim to have some first-hand experience, it is always exactly right and strictly accurate, besides being illuminative and suggestive; but because I have had an earlier edition of this same work in my possession for some months past, and it has never once betrayed my confidence in its impregnable, unimpugnable virtue, or the confidence of any friend who has had occasion to consult it.

Some readers of THE NEW AGE may remember that some time ago I was clamouring for a Dictionary of Socialism. I said that such a dictionary, if it were to be of real service, would have to be thoroughly well done; that it would entail much labour and considerable expense; that there would have to be a wholehearted and efficient co-operation and co-ordination of the best forces to make the enterprise entirely successful, and that anything less than a reputable success would be the worst kind of failure. That it might grow out of the smallest and most modest beginnings, starting as a little primer, at sixpence or threepence, or even a penny, containing only a few of the commonest words and phrases, with their meanings . . . out of which would grow a slender brochure at a shilling or half-a-crown, and out of that the finished work: a decent, portly volume. Well, and here we have not that volume, but something much better: a production of a scope and capacity far more generous and comprehensive and of a tone far more eclectic and catholic in every way; and, moreover, a production against which the reproach of prejudice and bias cannot possibly be hurled, as it might have been, and would have been, against such a frankly partisan piece of work as that my fancy projected. In short, it is all that it claims to be and rather more, for it is an entertainment as well. So that I am wholly sincere when I aver in conclusion that I have never praised any book with a clearer conscience, nor have I ever awaited the thanks of any who may become purchasers of it on my recommendation with a serener assurance of their gratitude.

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THEATRICAL ANNOUNCEMENTS.—Owing to the unfortunate collapse of all productions of an intellectual and moral nature which have lately been running at the Westminster Theatre, the management has decided to try a lighter vein of melodramatic comedy. The new piece will be named, "Down with the Lords"; but I understand that, in spite of the title, there is nothing in it that need offend the tenderest political feelings: indeed, the play has no political meaning of any kind whatsoever. To avoid misunderstandings, the title may be changed to "Throwing Dust in their Eyes," or "The Adventures of a Red-Herring."

* * *

My friend, the dismal rook, said he overheard some remarks the other day. It appears that his eye caught a scheme-in-three-colours, sitting at the door of the Inn of St. Clements; and out of the ultra-violet rays of the twentieth-century rainbow came a tragic murmur: "THE NEW AGE seldom writes on the Woman question now." But what, indeed, can it say? The women have proved their case over and over again. If the Noah's ark people on the other side would say anything worth answering, then it would be different. But no one can make the anti-Suffragists look sillier than they make themselves.

* * *

By the bye, that reminds Peter Pan. There are some women, who ought to know better, who are going to make themselves very ridiculous and undignified before these words get into print. They are going to the Albert Hall to meekly cluster at the feet of a member of a Liberal Government which has insulted them and defied them ever since it took office. Mr. Lloyd George will then be trumpeted forth as a reformed sinner; and the Cabinet, which stands exactly where it was before, will shelter itself behind his white robes. Long life to the women of the three-tinted-rainbow who refuse to betray their cause by such an ignominious surrender. It never pays to grovel in this world; or at least, it can be left to beggars. The W.S.P.U. have abolished the bended-knee as a political attitude for brave people. Only the Labour Party begs nowadays.

* * *

It is full time that we sent a deputation to investigate the methods of the Persians. I always thought they had one of those quaint Eastern Governments after the manner of the alluring, but unreliable, political system conducted by Pooh Bah in the "Mikado." But this is wrong, it seems: they have got far beyond our stumbling steps. At least, this is the proclamation that the Shah sent forth the other day: "We, always desirous of the welfare of our subjects, entirely abolish the Constitution, and will henceforward rule in strict accordance with Koranic principles and dispense universal justice."

* * *

This idea of abolishing the Constitution and dispensing justice instead, is quite a happy thought. It would never occur to Mr. Asquith to abolish any of the pretty little rules which we sing patriotic songs about. Why, even the Labour Party had learnt them all off by heart, and it would cause fearful confusion to abolish them. I'm not quite sure what exactly "Koranic principles" are; but they sound pleasant (with a flavouring of palm groves and dates). In any case, I'm certain they will be an improvement on the British Constitution—which is really very stodgy. By the bye, the Shah has changed his mind, and has determined to stick to the Constitution (instead of justice) after all.

* * *

The "Spectator," one is not surprised, is torn about the Licensing Bill; as the outcome of its meditations, it stands by "the cause of Temperance, in which we are most earnestly interested." It did not quite know whether the Licensing Bill made for temperance or not; but to make matters sure, it advised the Lords to give it a second reading. The "Spectator" is always on the side of temperate action, which is the pretty way of doing nothing at all. It would rather see the nation reeking with poverty and misery than risk one new remedy which has not received the blessings of our grandfathers. The "Spectator" (may it rest in peace) stands firm for every reform which was proved useless in the days of the Pyramids.

* * *

I came across such a strange little journal lately. It is the official organ of the "National Rifle Association for Miniature Shooting." It has columns about ladies' rifles and school competitions; and it seems that 25 yards is considered quite a long way to hit. Altogether, the art of learning to kill people is treated in the most delicate manner possible. Humbug! If you want to learn the butchering trade, don't pretend you're studying needlework or solo whist. Do the thing with real zest. Why, even, have a lay-target? Draw lots for being the "running man"—that would be a robust pastime for Saturday afternoons, and each bull's eye would be one amateur-hooligan less.

* * *

The idea of being an Archbishop at forty-four has appealed to the imagination of the people. That excellent paper "Public Opinion" suggests Dr. Gordon Lang as a suitable text for a debate, "How Men Succeed." Poor fellow! Why worry out the cause of this sad end to his career? What matters it whether he ascribes it to non-smoking, or to early rising, or to any other sober pastimes. Who ever heard of an Archbishop doing and saying anything that need concern practical men? I wave him farewell as he passes into a dummy world of dummy conventions and dummy thoughts. Died at only 44! To be an archdummy—a relic of worn-out things.

* * *

It is not a bad principle to say exactly what one thinks: it saves a deal of brain waste. A little journal was sent to me the other day which apparently reduces this principle to a system of ethics. It protects the interests of the workers of the catering trade in the briskest possible manner. One misguided gentleman is informed that he has hereditary ties with the Prince of Darkness; a registry-office keeper, it seems, has told "a confounded lie," and if his clients are "his equals in honesty, God help anyone who engages them." It is delicately suggested that if an assistant is struck by the head waiter it is well to retaliate with a soup plate. Now there are times when I should like to say and do just that sort of thing. The world would spin round much more smoothly if everyone spoke his mind—and threw the plate.

PETER PAN.

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On Miracles:
A Retort on Mr. Chesterton.
By G. Bernard Shaw.

IN the course of his encounter with Mr. Belfort Bax, Mr. Chesterton takes the opportunity to tread on the tail of my coat. Lest the humorous ingenuity of the attack should be lost on the careless reader, let me quote it. "Ask Bernard Shaw," says Mr. Chesterton, "to speak on any other subject, and he explodes with epigrammatic sagacity: ask him why he denies miracles, and his answer is a curious and dreary compound of a Hyde Park Secularist and a Broad Church Bishop." The humour of this lies in the fact that nobody ever asks me why I deny miracles, because I never do deny them, but, on the contrary, spend my life largely affirming them. And I do not see why a compound of a Hyde Park Secularist and a Broad Church Bishop need be dreary or even curious: the Victorian Broad Church Bishops who had a dash of the Hyde Park Secularist in them were particularly lively Bishops; and the combination has not become conventional, though I quite agree that the type is obsolescing. But I have never in my life heard either a Broad Church Bishop or a Hyde Park Secularist put forward my view of miracles. I will now proceed to lay down the law on the subject of miracles; and I defy Mr. Chesterton to braze his cheerful countenance to the extremity of telling me that it is a relic of that Victorian past which he imagines, but which I remember.

The world is full of miracles. Consciousness, for instance, is a complete miracle. Birth is a miracle; life is a miracle; and death was a miracle until quite recently, when Weismann made out a very plausible case for regarding it as a rather late product of natural selection. Anyhow, there are lots of miracles about; and the man who denies their existence is always a man who is simply wrong in his definition of a miracle. By a miracle he means only something that he is not accustomed to and did not expect.

Miracles can be divided into two main classes: (1) Miraculous events as to the actual occurrence of which there is no question and no doubt. (2) Miraculous events of which the occurrence is not generally admitted. For instance, it is alleged of a certain Lazarus that he achieved the miracle of living; and nobody doubts or denies this. It is further alleged that Lazarus rose from the dead at the command of Jesus. Though this was a very much simpler feat than to get born and grow up, nobody believes that he actually did it except people who would believe anything.

The reason of this is obvious enough. None of us has ever seen a man raised from the dead except on the banks of the Serpentine by a policeman skilled in the art of inducing artificial respiration; and even this exception we try to get out of by the manifestly futile contention that the resurrected one was not dead —that he was only drowned. Still, the distinction between a familiar miracle and an unprecedented one accounts roughly for a good deal of the flat fact that we are credulous as to some miracles and incredulous as to others. But it does not account for all of it. There are certain kinds of miracles that so please our imaginations or promise us relief or profit of some sort that we believe them in spite of experience. Doctors, like witches, profess to perform all the miracles attributed to founders of religions; and though they fail daily, people are actually sent to prison for doubting such professions.

Finally, one observes that the moment you get beyond the range of those miracles which everybody has seen performed often enough to have lost all sense of their being miracles, credulity and incredulity are entirely temperamental and dogmatic. It was my grasp of this fact that enabled me to deflate Mr. Chesterton recently at Clifford's Inn. Like the old-fashioned Secularist, he started arguing about miracles. He argued, in effect, that it is ridiculous for us, gorged as we are daily by unquestionable miracles, to make a difficulty about believing in this or that event merely because it is a miracle. And he was quite right. If you believe that the sun will rise to-morrow morning, you give up all right to deny that I can turn a dog into a cat merely on the ground that such a metamorphosis is a miracle. But that does not alter the fact that everybody believes that the sun will rise to-morrow, and that nobody believes that I can turn a dog into a cat. I quite grant that the Victorian Secularist who tries to make out that the one event is a miracle and the other is not, can be controversially spifflicated by Mr. Chesterton, who is, nevertheless, not a bit more credulous than Tyndall or Leslie Stephen. But Mr. Chesterton, overshooting his conclusion with his usual impetuosity, not only devastated the gasping Rationalists and Materialists in the audience by demonstrating this, but went on to imply that since he might as well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb, he was prepared to swallow all the miracles of religious legend, holding himself up as one who had risen into a mystic sphere in which vulgar incredulity as to miracles had fallen off him as a garment.

I ruined this transfiguration in a very simple manner. I am by this time a sufficiently good judge of men to be able to guess the place at which they will draw the line between their dogmatic credulity and their dogmatic incredulity. I took a particular miracle, one just as well vouched for as any other particular miracle, and not a bit more miraculous than dozens of miracles in which Mr. Chesterton and I believe, but one in which, nevertheless, I dogmatically do not believe and in which I knew that Mr. Chesterton did not believe. I asked him did he believe in that miracle. He could easily have floored me by telling a direct lie and saying he did. But it was miraculously impossible for him to do so, as I knew it would be. He made a gallant attempt to shake my teeth out of his calf, so to speak, by saying that there were just as good reasons for his believing in this particular miracle as for his believing in many other things which I and everybody else in the room believed in as well. But I knew too much about miracles to be shaken off. I kept repeating, both when I was in order and out of order, the flat question as to whether he believed or did not believe in that particular miracle. He could not say that he believed in it. Nobody believed in it. Nobody believed that he could believe in it. And the impression produced was—most unfairly and erroneously—that Mr. Chesterton's argument had fallen to pieces.

A point to be observed about miracles is that mankind may be divided into people who, like Hume, consider than any "natural" explanation of an event is to be preferred to the no-explanation that it is miracluous, and the other sort of people who have the opposite preference, and think it much more likely that the spirit of their late grandmother is rapping on the table than that I am tapping my boot against the leg of my chair, as I generally am on such occasions. These marvellers will not believe in a religion unless its apostles entertain them with conjuring tricks: the other sort will not believe in religion at all because concessions have been made by all religions to the other party. And of course these two sorts of people are mostly the same sort. Professor Tyndall would not believe in spontaneous generation on any terms; but he made no bones about attributing to every atom a positive and negative magnetic pole, and a consequent self-arrangement of atoms into crystals, and mountains, and sunsets, and vertebrate animals, stopping short quite unaccountably of cherubim and seraphim, who, if they exist, may surely be as atomic and magnetic as anybody else. Other learned doctors are quite ready to believe that when St. Paul's head was chopped off it bounded away, leaving a new spring of fresh water to mark the place of each ricochet; but they

will not believe the simplest fact of natural history discovered by Darwin.

Let us confess, then, that the man who argues that miracles must be either credible or incredible, and that if some miracles are credible (as they undoubtedly are), then all miracles must be credible, is the most hopelessly unreal kind of logician. The plain facts are that some miracles are credible and some are incredible, and that every different sort of man draws the line in a different place. Therefore there is nothing to be got out of miracles, either one way or the other, by special pleaders for or against any particular religion.

Further, it is inevitable that a man's quality shall be judged by the situation of the boundary between his credulity and his incredulity. We cannot help saying concerning any given miracle, either "the man who believes this would believe anything," meaning, "the man who believes this must be a silly fool," or "the man who will not believe this will not believe anything," meaning, "the man who cannot feel the truth of this must be a damned fool." (Need I say that I am using the word damned literally and not abusively?) But these sayings are inevitable only because it is inevitable that men should express their opinions. Each miracle remains a separate matter of opinion after all; and every brace of miracles is like the two women grinding at the mill: one shall be taken and the other left by that capricious human appetite which we call faith. When I was taken to the pantomime at a very early age, I believed piously in the fairy queen and ecstatically in the clown; but I did not believe in the clown *because* I believed in the fairy queen, nor would I have forsaken her had I found the clown out. I no longer believe in either of them in that particular way. And these are not the only opinions I have changed. I have gained beliefs and lost beliefs; but I never took on a new belief merely because I already entertained beliefs just as incredible; and I never threw off a belief merely because I had already thrown off others just as credible. That is not the way the human imagination works.

Such is my position about miracles. I offer it as completely up-to-date, although it was probably held by Adam, or would have been if Adam had had my opportunities of observation. And I challenge Mr. Chesterton to name any Victorian Secularist or Broad Church Bishop who anticipated me in it. Not that it would be any the worse for having been so anticipated; but, as a matter of fact, both Secularists and Broad Church Bishops always struck me as resolutely blinding themselves to it because they had jumped to the conclusion that you could not discredit any miracle without discrediting all miracles, and that if you admitted the possibility of one miracle, you were bound to swallow all the rest, not noticing, apparently, that whether you were bound to or not, you just didn't.

Smart-Paradox Spoof.

By E. Belfort Bax.

"MAN is the measure of all things," said Protagoras. "I (G. K. C.) am the measure of all things," says my esteemed opponent in last week's NEW AGE. He says it, not indeed precisely in those words, but by suitable circumlocutions. Mr. Chesterton, in fact, seems to be an incarnation of Goethe's "Student" in the second part of "Faust." This youthful and childlike arrogance would be only too delightful if one could persuade oneself to regard it as really naïve, and not as part of the stage-business of the calling of smart-paradoxy. Mr. Chesterton "had no idea how utterly and finally dead is the whole nineteenth century attack on Christianity." I think I have read the same, or similar, statements before from the same pen. I suppose the idea is that if you only repeat an assertion often enough you will make it true, just as the Christian Scientists think that if you keep on repeating you haven't the toothache when you have you will sooner or later cure the toothache. And yet Mr. Chesterton is very severe on categorical propositions (excuse the long words, Mr. C. !), styled by him "assertions," when they come from some benighted Rationalist. I could reply to Mr. C. with perfect truth that I had hardly realised how "utterly and finally dead" Christianity was until I had witnessed Mr. Chesterton's attempts at galvanising its corpse—or shall I say, mummy? But I don't know that these personal avowals on either side help the issue very much.

Let us now take Mr. Chesterton's main point. In the ebullience, real or assumed, of youth, Mr. Chesterton is continually girding at all points of view that in his opinion don't represent the present season's "novelty" in ideas. The mention of anything "Early Victorian" being true makes him fairly dance with contempt and indignation. The red rag to the bull is nothing to it. It is especially the Rationalism of the nineteenth century that is his "bogey." This it is which he is continually assuring the world is obsolete, belated, dead. As I pointed out in my original criticism, those personal assurances on the part of Mr. Chesterton, even though they amount to affidavits, are not precisely convincing. But granting for the sake of argument, in Mr. C.'s statements a certain plausibility, what at most do they amount to? I may premise that, in spite of Mr. C.'s assumption that my criticism of his book was a special defence of what he calls the "nineteenth century attack on Christianity" being unfounded (since I hardly touched the subject from this point of view), I am prepared to take him on this his own ground.

The nineteenth century Rationalism, then, largely took the form of an assault on Christian dogma. In conjunction with other forces, it, as most persons not specially committed to Christian dogma admit, killed Christian dogma as a central living faith seriously entertained by men. Dogmatic Christianity is now in its Catholic form confined to an ever-decreasing area of peasant populations, and in its Protestant form mainly to a decreasing section of the commercial middle-class. The inutility of flogging a dead or moribund horse might account for any deadness in the attack upon it, if such there were. But nineteenth century Rationalism, even as represented by the much-despised Secularist lecturer, the "Hall of Science," the Broad Church parson, or any of the Early or Middle Victorian worthies which are Mr. C.'s special aversion, is in principle (as opposed to temporary and local adjuncts) in no sense dead, even though we may hear less of it than formerly. The explanation, which is obvious, never seems to have occurred to my dear, though grievously mistaken, critic. When a child is learning to walk certain elementary laws of balance have to be kept prominently before his mind. Afterwards they become part and parcel of his mental constitution. The same, mutatis mutandi, with bicycle riding, pianoforte playing, etc. In learning a language certain rules of grammar have to be ever present in the memory. When we are familiar with the language they pass into the background of the unconscious or the subconscious as belonging no longer to the surface of the mental life. And so with other things. But this does not mean that the rules in question are dead, exploded, or obsolete fallacies. On the contrary, they would assert themselves as very much alive indeed if they were ignored as though no longer of any account. So it is with the truths of nineteenth century Materialism or Rationalism. They are as much truths to-day as ever they were, only they have for most of us become platitudes —*i.e.*, their truth has in its principle become hyper-truth, truism, and therefore banal and no longer interesting to us. Truth, in order to interest us, must be new and not absurdly and exaggeratedly true. Now the truth of "early victorian" Rationalism has become part of the mental constitution of the present age, which no serious person (Mr. C., of course, excepted) thinks of disputing save by way of joke. Mr. Chesterton complains in effect that Shaw, when he denies miracles, talks plain sense, and does not "sparkle with

epigrammatic sagacity"—in other words, he does not talk smart-paradox, but is, I suppose, "early victorian." (The law of gravitation, by the way, I have the impression, is "early georgian," the circulation of the blood "early charlesian, while a few trifles like the principles of mechanics, not to mention others, are still "earlier"!) Chesterton forgets that Shaw is older than he is and knows perhaps the limits of his métier better. One does not spoof the first law of motion, or smart-paradox the multiplication table, because it would be silly, but if called upon one states their formulæ in plain English.

No, Mr. Chesterton! The mere reactionism which goes behind established positions leads nowhither! I grant you that you may build infinite degrees of further truth upon these established commonplaces, but this presupposes your acceptance of them in principle, and will never be the outcome of any futile tilting at them. Stale thought that has become commonplace may be taken up into a higher thought-unity, but does not therefore die. On the contrary, it thereby puts on the vesture of immortality. The truth of the nineteenth century Materialism remains, penetrating modern thought—although some of the formulæ used to express it in the "early victorian" period when it was heretical, bright, and fresh, may be for us now no longer adequate.

I have dealt somewhat at length with this point as Mr. Chesterton, like certain other of the younger generation of smart writers, is continually identifying the eccentric workings of his own individual mind with those of the "Zeitgeist." As before said, whether this is genuine self-illusion or mere bluff intended to impose on the crowd, I don't know. Certain it is that, rightly or wrongly, saving the pose of a limited number of decadent young men, the modern mind shows not the slightest symptom of reacting to any form of dogmatic supernatural belief, Catholic or other. If Mr. Chesterton chooses to bury his head in the sand of his own imaginings, of course no one can help him.

I now come to the accusation of using "polysyllable words." As regards this I have only to say that I object to all forms of literary affectation, but I contend there lives as much cant in the "simple language" talk of the present day as in all the long words of all the pedants put together. In this matter I am prepared to accept words of one syllable, if that be desired, where such can express the thought intended, and words of five syllables when such can do this better. Mr. Chesterton seems to think there is a magic in short words. I can only say I find no magic in them any more than in long ones. While fully prepared to admit that there may be affectation and pedantry in the use of long words, I contend that the danger to-day lies rather in the opposite direction. There are certain abstract and also complex concepts and relations which cannot be adequately expressed in the language of the infant school or the street, and in attempting to force them into this language a writer only produces misconception and confusion. If a man is too lazy to master the requisite terminology it were best he left highly abstract subjects (e.g., metaphysic) alone. By all means let Mr. Chesterton pursue his cult of short words and sentences wherever humanly possible, in practical matters, etc., though even here the danger of the opposite course is not so great as he makes out. To take his own illustration, given in "Orthodoxy," of Mr. Gladstone's Bill with its "indeterminate sentence." The bamboozlement of the man-in-the-street in the paragraph coined by G. K. C. is not due to any long words it may contain, but to the fact that the average person is unfamiliar with the phrase "indeterminate sentence," which may mean almost anything, but in the language of the Bill before Parliament has a very precise and very objectionable significance. The good English colloquial phrase "stretchable quod is a good thing" would probably bamboozle the unsophisticated quite as much as the highly academic form of words invented in scorn by Mr. Chesterton. If a man is once familiar with words it matters not intrinsically whether they be long or short.

Mr. Chesterton has evidently not given his attention to Metaphysic, his utterances on the subject clearly bearing witness to the fact. I should have thought, however, that even a non-philosopher (in the technical sense) would have seen that the definition of truth Mr. C. finds "shallow" is the deepest and most ultimate that anyone can formulate, and would hardly have discovered any humour in opposing to it what any reasonable man, one would think, must have seen, was a piece of childish tautology.

There are more points I should like to have dealt with in Mr. Chesterton's article, but I fear I have already over-run the constable in the matter of space, so must reserve them for a future occasion. One word of criticism in conclusion as to Mr. Chesterton's title. Why should long words be *solemner* than short ones? I hardly see, moreover, how a man can be precisely a "solemn spoofer." He may be a solemn humbug if you like, but a "solemn spoofer" rather suggests iced cream served hot, does it not?

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Fritz Thaulow and Oscar Wilde at Dieppe, 1897.

[Translated with the author's kind permission from the Norwegian of Christian Krogh.]

FROM early morning till seven at night Fritz Thaulow sat painting, painting. Even when talking with him in his studio one never saw his face, but only his back. The conversation turned mainly on his new method of painting, of which I had seen some examples in the last Salon. This method was called in Paris the Thaulow process. However, he had no intention of giving the secret away, and though I observed him closely behind a mask of assumed indifference, I could not by merely watching him paint discover the secret myself. At last I gave it up, and was leaving the room when he called me back and told me all about his method.

But, he said, that's not what I'm doing now. Far from it. I'm doing something much finer, much more delicate. What do you say to tubes of glass?—But that secret I'll never give away.

After some time I heard him calling all over the house for me. After all, he might tell me, he said, because the method was far too complicated for me to follow. It proved, in fact, difficult—far too difficult for me . . .

For several days he had been talking of inviting two young French painters who were working in the neighbourhood. I had seen these young fellows. They looked bright and pleasant enough, and also penniless. I particularly noticed that one of them never wore stockings.

Great arrangements were made for the dinner. The menu was carefully studied, and the wine-list well conned. There was no need to do this, I thought. Those brigands would be just as delighted with Chianti or cider.

I was still more surprised on finding that Thaulow, a little before dinner, had changed his grey velvet knee-breeches that bore the marks of painting and cycling for a pair of dove-grey striped trousers, white vest, long dress coat, and smart tie. So I went in and rubbed off one of my paint-spots.

But I understood it all when I came back. For to my amazement, Thaulow, who was evidently enjoying his little joke, introduced me, not to the young French painters, but to a tall, elegant gentleman of striking physiognomy—Mr. Oscar Wilde!

At dinner the conversation turned upon the Queen of England's Jubilee.

"I suppose it's really because she represents the greatness of England that the enthusiasm is so enormous," said Thaulow.

"Not at all; it's because of her personality. She is really a personality. She's a woman, a thorough woman, and superlatively aristocratic.

"Have you ever met her?"

"Yes, in a big garden party given by the Prince of Wales. I shall never forget her. She walked through the garden on the Prince's arm. She has the most exquisite bearing: thus—(he made waving motions in the air with his hands to indicate what he meant. He very often used his hands in this way to express his ideas.) She looked like a ruby mounted in jet. She is very small, and she moved thus—(here he imitated her walk with his hand on the table cloth.) Everybody moved aside as she approached. By the rules of Court etiquette no one is allowed to look at her face in front, but only in profile. This makes it rather difficult, for you have to take care when her eye rests on you. Then you must bow and move towards her. She gives her hand like this. (Here he lifted his delicate, aristocratic hand; and it struck me that he himself bore a resemblance to Queen Victoria.) She has the most beautiful hands and the most beautiful wrists. I stood there with Bastien Lepage. He was simply wild with enthusiasm. 'I must paint this woman,' he said. 'If I may paint her, I'll swear never to paint another woman in my life.' I promised to ask the Prince of Wales. The Prince replied that it was impossible. Bastien Lepage was inconsolable.

"She has the most delicate feeling and the rarest tact. Once she was going to open Parliament. There's a very ancient rule that on State occasions the Queen must not venture out unless accompanied by her chief lady-in-waiting. The chief lady must also be the first duchess in the land. At that time it was the Duchess of Sutherland.

"All the Court functionaries stood in the hall whispering to each other that the Duchess had not yet arrived. They were horrified. It was only a very few minutes to the time fixed for starting; and that, you know, is always to the second. Still the Duchess did not arrive. Another minute passed. Then they got a shock; the Queen herself appeared at the top of the stairs. What was to be done? Who dared tell her the incredible thing that the Duchess had not arrived? The Queen came to the very bottom of the stairs. She looked calmly round and asked, 'Where is the Duchess?' For a moment or two no one dared answer. At last one of the ladies advanced, 'Your Majesty, the Duchess has not arrived.' What would happen? The Queen did not move. She only folded her hands, those beautiful hands. She remained standing and waiting. Profound silence reigned. All eyes were rivetted on the entrance. Five minutes passed. No Duchess. Ten minutes. A carriage was heard. It is the Duchess, a young and very beautiful lady. She sees the Queen standing in waiting. She approaches with bowed head, stammering broken words. What would happen? Disgrace? Dismissal? 'It appears to me,' said the Queen, 'that your watch does not go well. Allow me." She lifted with both hands, those beautiful hands, a priceless chain over her head, and hung it round the neck of the kneeling Duchess. On the chain was suspended the Queen's watch, set with diamonds forming her name."

"It must be intolerable to live under such etiquette," said Thaulow.

"Oh, they all become slaves, all of them. They don't live their own lives; they live other people's lives. The first and only question for them every morning is: How is Her Majesty to-day, happy or sad? The question begins right down below, and climbs the stairs until it reaches the attendants surrounding Her Majesty's bedchamber. The lady-in-waiting who can give any information acquires an enormous prestige. And as the answer returns, sounding through all the rooms downstairs, the expression on all faces becomes either happy or sad. Before the answer arrives the faces have no expression at all. A courtier's face has absolutely no expression in the morning till the bulletin appears. They are slaves."

"How revolting!"

"Oh, but they get to like it. It becomes second nature to them. If an old courtier is dismissed from Her Majesty's service, he grows wretched. He often dies of it. You see he cannot breathe in any other air. Courtiers and actors all live other people's lives. And most people really do so more or less. Everybody has someone concerning whom he asks: Is Her Majesty happy to-day or peradventure sad?"

"The Royal Family, I suppose, is very popular in England; even the foreign section of it?"

"Not the Emperor of Germany. He doesn't care much for England or English ways. He was extremely annoyed because he wasn't allowed to wear a uniform at the garden-party. He has, you know, marvellous uniforms. When he turns out in one he creates a sensa-

tion. Well, he was informed that it was not the custom to attend a garden-party in uniform. He addressed himself to his uncle, the Prince of Wales. But he was told it was quite impossible. Then he appealed to his grandmother, the Queen. She replied, 'I have never heard of a uniform at a garden-party.' So he had to come in an ordinary black coat like everybody else. And nobody looked at him; and nobody asked who he was. But he made up for it in the evening at the Opera. There in his box he looked magnificent in his gold and white, and everybody's eyes were fixed on him the whole evening."

"Well, he's quite an interesting man, quite amusing; not like the others."

"I don't know if he's anything in himself. But there have been two Royal personages really interesting—Rudolph of Austria and Ludwig of Bavaria. The one was murdered by his lover's brother. The other killed his doctor and then himself. They didn't live other people's lives."

"Don't you find that all actors are slaves? Sarah Bernhardt, for instance?"

"Oh, no, not Sarah. Sarah is a splendid exception in that, as in everything else. She is a great woman as well as a great genius."

"Strange that she can keep young so long."

"Oh, that's due to her caprices. She says herself, 'You never grow old so long as you indulge your caprices. When you cease, you grow old immediately.'"

"You have a famous actress in England now—Ellen Terry. Is she as great as Sarah Bernhardt?"

"No, she is only great as a woman. She is more of a woman than anyone I have ever seen, except Queen Victoria."

"Don't you think Watts the greatest English painter?"

"No, Whistler, far and away. Have you seen his portrait of Sarasate, and have you seen Sarasate? The portrait is much better than Sarasate. Sarasate was immensely flattered by the furore his portrait produced. He stayed the whole time in the room where it hung. But he looked shockingly ordinary by the side of it. I met him there one day, and I said to him, 'For God's sake, don't stay in this room. You must never come into this room.' And I led him out."

"What do you think of our friend the young poet, with whom I met you the other day?"

"Oh, he is very talented. I'm a great admirer of his."

"It's a pity he drinks too much absinthe."

Oscar Wilde shrugged his shoulders.

"If he didn't drink, he would be somebody else. Il faut accepter la personalité comme elle est. Il ne faut jamais regretter qu'un poete est soûl, il faut regretter que les soûls ne soient pas toujours poetes."

"Well, anyhow, the worst thing he can drink is absinthe—it's absolutely destructive."

"Absinthe," answered Wilde, "has a wonderful colour, la coleur verte. Il faut maintenant boire des choses vertes. A glass of absinthe is as poetical as anything in the world. Quelle difference y a-t-il entre un verre d'absinthe et un coucher de soleil?"

"By the way, have you got into your villa?" asked Thaulow.

"Yes, I gave a banquet there yesterday in honour of the Queen's Jubilee. I had the place lit up with myriads of coloured lamps and decorated with English flags. I also hired a band to play 'God Save the Queen.'"

"Have you got a good valet?"

"I had one. He was very clever. But he became impossible. It was my own fault: I'm very unhappy about it. I gave him a blue uniform; a thing I ought not to have done. Of course he got conceited about it at once. He went to a ball, and made quite a hit with his blue uniform. Naturally he wanted to go to dances every evening. Then, of course, he wanted to sleep in the mornings. And I had to wait and wait for my hot water. One mornng I got up myself and took him hot water. That helped for one day, but no more. Now he is dismissed and I have found another one. He is to have a black uniform, and that has given me an idea. The next book I write shall be about the effect on men of the colour blue. For instance, take Mr. Thaulow. He's all blue—blue character, blue temperament. And to-day he's bluer than ever."

Thaulow looked incredulous.

"Good gracious! are you all mad with this nonsense? May I ask if, like my wife, you think Friday is yellow?"

"Think," he cried, with a look of astonishment. "Can anybody doubt for an instant that Friday is yellow?"

No one ventured to deny it. Even Thaulow only muttered something to himself.

Later on, a well-known young American painter, a mutual friend of Thaulow and Wilde, paid a visit. He made a hard, dry impression, and seemed to take no interest in anything, not even in his art. When he had gone, one of the ladies remarked that he was not a human being, but merely an American patent, "une invention americaine de fer."

"No," answered Oscar Wilde, "no, he's not that. He's quite dead. And the dead ought to be good enough to keep to their graves. If they do come out, it should be by moonlight, and on the sea-shore with lanterns in their hands. But the dead ought never to go visiting or go to the cafés."

Thaulow asked Wilde if he was beginning any new book.

"Yes," he said, "I'm writing an essay to be called, 'A Defence of Drunkenness.'"

Thaulow looked disapprovingly.

"Good gracious, my dear Wilde, why always such provoking titles?"

"Why? London must be shocked at least twice a year."

"Then you don't always mean what you write?"

"Oh, yes; the soul is never liberated except by drunkenness in one form or another. Here in a small place like Dieppe your soul can listen to the words and harmonies and behold the colours of the Great Silence. And that intoxicates. But one is not always at Dieppe. And it is difficult to find the Great Silence. But a waiter with a tray will always find it for you. Knock; and the door will always open, the door of le paradis artificiel."

"What do you think of the horrid weather Felix Faure had going into Paris?" interrupted Thaulow.

"Oh, it always does that under a frock-coated Republic. During the Empire it never rained when the Empress drove through the Champs Elysees."

METAMORPHOSIS.

The foul Apollonian enchanter
Has laid upon me his dark finger:
Know ye not—ceaselessly bleating—
Me, my companions?
See ye not, under these forehead locks,
Fire of the eyes of Chloe?
Hath not my mouth aught familiar,
Bleeding to utter its secret?
Pass ye not by! Shall Selene
Gaze on me, beaten, encysted
Thus in this bovine?
Loose me, ye daughters, now leaping,
Beating these hoofs on your haunches:
Thrust me back, tear from this carcase
Wool, skin, horns—all that disguises!
Shriek out, ye nymphs, your wild laughter,
Seeing this blood blush the thicket,
And the wool of this hide, on the bramble
Float like a flake of the winter.
Tear me, ye tender nurses!
With beautiful hands break asunder—
Room, room for Chloe, Bacchante,
To hurl her white limbs ere the Sun set!

BEATRICE TINA.

Friedrich Nietzsche and the Critics.

FRAU ELIZABETH FÖRSTER-NIETZSCHE publishes these letters to J. B. Widmann as a typical example of her brother's impartial attitude to his critics.

A review of "Beyond Good and Evil," in the "Berner Bund" of September, 1886, was extremely pleasing to Nietzsche. The book was said to be dangerous in the same sense that one regards dynamite as dangerous. An intellectual explosive may serve quite as useful a purpose as a more material one. It was nevertheless advisable when such stuff was handled to label it dynamite.

In the spring, on his return to Sils-Maria, he wrote to Widmann, the reviewer: "Last summer you made me appear an object of horror. One day in the café here I found the worthy inhabitants of Sils had become alarmed and thoughtful about their regular summer visitor—they had all read the 'Bund'. . . . My own impression was that I had there seen something very charmingly and kindly said about myself. One or two expressions, which were of course quite natural from the editor of a democratic paper, I have either paid no attention to or have forgotten. I must gratefully declare, now that a year has gone by, that your review was by far the most discerning that this unsympathetic book has yet received. The poets are ever the seers; an enigma like my book will be only finally solved and deciphered by a poet rather than by any so-called philosopher and academician."

On his return to Sils, Nietzsche was glad to see the "Berner Bund" again, which he always read with pleasure, more especially the articles of Karl Spitteler. To his letter he received a kindly reply from Widmann about which he wrote to Gast: "Dr. Widmann, of the 'Bund,' has written me, quite enthusiastic, likewise Brahms, with whom he is staying ('very keen about "Beyond Good," means to take this "joyous philosophy" to heart')."

On September 11th he again writes to J. B. Widmann: "I beg you to give my sincere compliments to your colleague Prof. Spitteler. I have just read his article on modern orchestration. What knowledge, tact, independence of judgment; what esprit, what an artist-temperament! There is but one thing that hinders me from praising his taste in rebus musicis et musicantibus—his happens to be exactly my own taste. I recalled a few thoughtful articles of his that I read last winter in Nice. . . . Is not there some way of collecting these Æsthetica? It would make a book of a rare quality, fit for some persons of refined taste and other exclusives, of which there are not a few nowadays. Yesterday I was courteously invited by Herr Avenarius, of Dresden, to contribute to a new art journal; I took the liberty to suggest Herr Spitteler in my place."

There are two postscripts: one offering to send the second edition of the "Geburt der Tragödie." The other: "Would you perhaps be kind enough to hand something to Johannes Brahms in my name, provided he is still with you? namely, 'Hymnus an das Leben.' . . . . Really I am, as Wagner said, 'a shipwrecked musician'—(he is a 'shipwrecked grammarian')."

A few days later he writes: "About Herr Spitteler's work; such fine stuff should scarcely be imposed upon present-day Germans. All is far from well with the German spirit. When I personally have to make a journey to Germany I pluck up courage with some scientific aphorism, for instance:—

> For the rhinoceros to see,
> I must travel to Germany."

In the early part of January, 1888, an article of Spitteler's appeared in the "Bund" with a detailed review of Nietzsche's work. In the pleasure this gave him he overlooked, or felt no occasion to be annoyed with, many rather spiteful remarks which were scattered in the article. At least, so it would seem from the following letter to Widmann: "Mr. Spitteler's review of my literary output has given me great joy. What an alert intellect! One is quite pleased at his censure. For good reasons he confines himself almost entirely to the purely formal. He just brushes aside the real history behind the conception, the passion, the catastrophe, the movement towards an end, towards a destiny—all this I cannot praise sufficiently, here is true delicatezza. There are not wanting signs of undue haste. Obviously he has read the works for the first time (and not even always read them). This makes his judgment and the sureness of tread with which he reveals the form of the different books and epochs the more remarkable. I am dissatisfied that the 'Beyond' has not been taken into account. This cuts away the ground from under his feet when handling the last fettering 'Polemical Treatise' (Genealogy of Morals)."

"The difficulty of my works lies in this; they deal preponderantly with the rarer and newer conditions of super-normal spirits. This I do not say in praise, but it is a fact. I search for the signs of these conditions, still incomprehensible, and often scarcely apprehensible. Here, it appears to me, lies my ingenuity. Nothing is more foreign to me than the belief that 'style by itself brings joy,' which, if I rightly understand him, is Mr. Spitteler's view. Style is created in the first place by the object of the work. When this object changes I require, inexorably, that the entire procedure of the style should change with it. I did this, for instance, in 'Beyond,' the style of which has no resemblance to my earlier style: the aim, the main stress was altered. I have done the same thing again in my latest 'polemical treatise'; where, an Allegro feroce and the overbrimming passion nue, crue, verde, have replaced the refined neutrality and hesitating advance of the 'Beyond.' Possibly Herr Nietzsche is a greater artist than Herr Spitteler would have us believe."

Scarcely had this letter been despatched when an acquaintance drew Nietzsche's attention to the many disrespectful observations in Spitteler's article. Getting annoyed, he sent a post-card the same day countermanding the posting of the four numbers he had ordered. A few days later he received a letter from Gast which induced him to send another card to Widmann, with an abstract of Gast's remarks. Spitteler's review was criticised as a nonsensical mixture of real flair and superficiality. The article did not touch upon the philosophical trend of the work, but dealt almost wholly with its literary side. It did not penetrate into the new world.

It is interesting to learn from Frau Förster-Nietzsche that in this case as in others, although Nietzsche was readily moved to anger when influenced by others, he quite as readily forgot it all as soon as the immediate circumstance had passed. More especially when he recognised that a man of culture became interested in his own problems; this, as he often complained, was the rarest event. A few weeks later Spitteler, in a charming letter, excused himself. In March Nietzsche writes to Gast:—

"You will laugh at what I have succeeded in accomplishing. Without Spitteler's knowledge, but aware that no one else would do it for him, I have found a publisher for his big work on Æsthetika."

In June Nietzsche read in the "Bund" Spitteler's "delicate and beautiful article about Schubert." From Nice he writes to Gast begging him to send a copy of the "Hymnus an das Leben," and to inscribe: "To Carl Spitteler, in testimony of my real esteem.—Nietzsche."

*An abstract from an article in "Bohemia," September 27th, 1907.

THE NEW BEEF TEA.

In Fluid Ju-Vis (the New Beef Tea), you get about double value for money as compared with the usual Fluid Beef Extracts. Fluid Ju-Vis is equally nutritious, being prepared solely from Beef, with valuable vegetable additions. It makes delicious rich gravies, or a Cup of Strong Beef Tea for a penny. Try it. — 6½d. bottles of all grocers.

The Apostle to the Pagans.

A Story of Yule Tide.

By Holbrook Jackson.

"A BIT of fire's very nice," said Frank, hugging himself before the flaming hearth like a luxurious cat.

Outside it was leaden and raw, and a slab of damp mist hung over the fields like wet wool. The same insistent but elusive element clung to the bare hedgerows and the tree-tops, and in the half-lights of the December afternoon the countryside had the dreary effect of the scene of a fire the morning after, when the water-sodden ruins are still steaming.

"My one objection to summer is that fires are then impossible," said Merrion, by way of assent. Merrion was an alleged paradoxist, and everyone smiled.

"Do you know," said Hargreaves to nobody in particular, as he sat in the corner pressing his half-baked trousers against his legs, "Do you know, if I wanted an object of worship, I should worship fire."

"Here, I say!" said Frank admonishingly, for Frank, like most luxurious persons, was rather orthodox.

"Why not?" asked Merrion. "Fire is everything and everything is fire. Without the eternal conflagrations in the centre of the earth, and that eternal circle of flame caused by the fire-ball we call the sun, outside the earth—there would be no life at all. Fire is the only creator we know, and the only destroyer. Without light and warmth there is no growth—and light and warmth are the outward signs of the Almighty Fire. I worship power, and the greatest power is fire—it drives the motor of the world. It can as easily burn the orchid and the alligator into existence as it can reduce man and all his puny works to ashes. If it were not for fire——"

"Steady on, old chap!" This interjection seemed to come from all.

"I was only going to say that if it were not for fire we should have had no Christmas——"

"Let's leave religion out of it," said Frank. Merrion's invincible logic made his ideals wince.

"Will you let me tell you a story?" asked the fire-worshipper.

"Fire away!" said a voice.

"Once upon a time and a very long time ago, but not so very long after orthodox Rome had been moved to righteous indignation by the blasphemies of a sect of revivalists called Christians, who preached what was then (as it is now) a kind of new theology, a devotee named Glycon, moved by the fervour of his new-found faith, set forth to convert the Pagans of the North.

"Bearded was Glycon, and dour, as befitted the apostle of a gospel of joy; bare of foot also was he, and clad soberly in a loose robe of grey cloth. He carried naught with him save a long staff of birch, and with this he would mark the sign of the cross on the earth from time to time and always before addressing another person. So Glycon journeyed from the land of the olive and the pomegranate to carry the glad tidings to the heathen North.

"'Alleluia,' he cried as he passed through Alpine vales; 'Alleluia,' as he wended his way through great forests and verdant coppices; 'Alleluia, Alleluia,' in the wilderness, where the wolves shrank from him, and in the settlements, where the men laughed at him and the women sighed for lack of argument. 'Alleluia,' he cried in a loud voice as he entered the domain of men, 'Repent ye and rejoice, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, wherein no man nor woman nor child is heavy of heart or sad, Alleluia!'

"The simple pastoral folk were so ignorant that they did not know they were happy, and, despite their burdened lives, knew not that the Kingdom of Heaven was not here and now, and they clustered curiously about the strange teacher. 'Alleluia,' he cried to the ignorant peasants. 'Have ye not heard that the old Gods are no more, and that a new life is opened unto ye all, a life of gladness and great joy, because sinless? Alleluia, the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!'

"Glycon was a gentle creature, or the people would have driven him forth. So they laughed instead, and went about their ways husbanding the earth and hunting and propitiating their Gods as of old time. But here and there the good Glycon won followers, and under his guidance they peered into the mystery of life and saw more mystery; and they were filled with an unfamiliar kind of unrest which Glycon called 'peace'; and they acquired the power of contemplating their lives and of labelling this action as good and that as bad; and they talked much of their happiness . . . But only those who were sad of heart joined the good apostle.

"Glycon nevertheless pushed on, carrying the glad tidings into still wilder regions, where thinking and acting had not been separated from one another at all. Here the pagan folk tilled the field, hunted the boar and the bear and the savage wolves, tended the cattle, as simply and as satisfactorily as they engaged in the deeper recreations of love and worship. They would have none of Glycon's teaching, but they did not molest him. On the contrary, they even allowed him to abide in their midst, particularly as his wants were limited to a cave for sleeping purposes and a very little food. Glycon was something of a Mark Tapley, and in the unalloyed Paganism of these North-folk he found a Tapleian delight.

"But one morning in the fall of the year he saw that a great change had come over the people. He had gone out into a clear space that he knew of in a wood, where he had erected a rude cross, and there he had intended remaining all day in prayer, in celebration of the birthday of his Saviour—for the day was Christmas Day.

"But as he went forth to his lonely temple he met bands of merry folk chanting joyful songs and carrying garlands of holly and great branches of mistletoe. The maidens wore laurel in their hair and the young men carried branches of green pine. Everyone seemed astir, and radiant happiness shone on the faces of all. The hills echoed back their songs and their merry shoutings were thrown about the woods by invisible hands. All seemed wending their way to the centre of the village, and Glycon, filled with human curiosity, followed, and as he went along he sang aloud of the Nativity. 'Alleluia, I bring ye good tidings of great joy, for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord.'

"The people were in a good humour, and nodded their encouragement to the good prophet. Soon they came to the meeting-place where an altar had been erected and a great fire blazed. The priests of the people were there, and standing high above the throng they gave thanks to their gods for the bounty of the earth, and in that hour of the darkest winter day they rejoiced the more for out of its full darkness was the Sun born and the earth again replenished.

"When the priests had done, a great shout went up, and fires were kindled all over the village, and around each romped a mad rout of Pagans, laughing and singing in the joyful fellowship. Gifts were exchanged, and there was drinking and junketing. And foremost among the revellers was Glycon. The Pagans rejoiced because the good prophet had thrown off his sombre habit, and hailed him one of themselves, a brand from the burning, a convert to the only true faith. Shortly after the great festival of goodwill, Glycon returned to the land of the olive and the pomegranate filling his co-religionists with joy by his accounts of the miraculous conversion of the Pagans of the North to the true faith, on Christmas day."

Merrion stopped. "Go on," said a voice.

"That's all," said he.

"I call it highly blasphemous," said Frank.

"What I want to know," said Hargreaves, "is, where does the fire-worshipping come in?"

"It doesn't come in," said Merrion; "it's there all the time."

Two Shades of Eve.*

By Arnold Bennett.

I.

WE glided swiftly into the forest as into a tunnel. But after a while could be seen a silvered lane of stars overhead, a ceiling to the invisible double wall of trees. There were these stars, the rush of tonic wind in our faces, and the glare of the low-hung lanterns on the road that raced to meet us. The car swerved twice in its flight, the second time violently. We understood that there had been danger. As the engine stopped, a great cross loomed up above us, intercepting certain rays; it stood in the middle of the road, which, dividing, enveloped its base, as the current of a river strokes an island. The doctor leaned over from the driving-seat and peered behind. In avoiding the cross he had mistaken for part of the macadam an expanse of dust which rain and wind had caked; and on this treachery the wheels had skidded. "Ca aurait pu être une sale histoire!" he said briefly and drily. In the pause we pictured ourselves flung against the cross, dead or dying. I noticed that other roads joined ours at the cross, and that a large grassy space, circular, separated us from the trees. As soon as we had recovered a little from the disconcerting glimpse of the next world, the doctor got down and restarted the engine, and our road began to race forward to us again, under the narrow ceiling of stars. After monotonous miles, during which I pondered upon eternity, nature, the meaning of life, the precariousness of my earthly situation, and the incipient hole in my boot-sole—all the common night thoughts—we passed by a high obelisk (the primitive phallic symbol succeeding to the other), and turning to the right, followed an obscure gas-lit street of walls relieved by sculptured porticoes. Then came the vast and sombre courtyard of a vague palace, screened from us by a grille; we overlook a tramcar, a long, glazed box of electric light; and then we were suddenly in a bright and living town. We descended upon the terrace of a calm café, in front of which were ranged twin red-blossomed trees in green tubs, and a waiter in a large white apron and a tiny black jacket.

The lights of the town lit the earth to an elevation of about fifteen feet; above that was the primeval and mysterious darkness, hiding even the house-tops. Within the planes of radiance people moved to and fro, appearing and disappearing on their secret errands; and glittering tramcars continually threaded the Square attended by blue sparks. A monumental bull occupied a pedestal in the centre of the Square; parts of its body were lustrous, others intensely black, according to the incidence of the lights. My friends said it was the bull of Rosa Bonheur, the Amazon. Pointing to a dark void beyond the flanks of the bull, they said, too, that the palace was there, and spoke of the Council-Chamber of Napoleon, the cradle of the King of Rome, the boudoir of Marie Antoinette. I had to summon my faith in order to believe that I was in Fontainebleau, which hitherto had been to me but a romantic name. In the deep and half-fearful pleasure of realisation—"This also has happened to me!"—I was aware of the thrill which has shaken me on many similar occasions, each however unique: as when I first stopped on a foreign shore; when I first saw the Alps, the Pyrenees; when I first strolled on the grands boulevards; when I first staked a coin at Monte Carlo; when I walked over the French frontiers and read on a thing like a mile-post the sacred name "Italia"; and, most marvellous, when I stood alone in the Sahara and saw the vermilions and ochres of the Aurés Mountains. This thrill, ever returning, is the reward of a perfect ingenuousness.

I was shown a map, and as I studied it, the strangeness of the town's situation seduced me more than the thought of its history. For the town, with its lights, cars, cafés, shops, halls, palaces, theatres, hotels, and sponging-houses, was lost in the midst of the great forest. Impossible to enter it, or to leave it, without winding through those dark woods! On the map I could trace all the roads, a dozen like ours, converging on the town. I had a vision of them, palely stretching through the interminable and sinister labyrinth of unquiet trees, and gradually reaching the humanity of the town. And I had a vision of the recesses of the forest, where the deer wandered or couched. All around, on the rim of the forest, were significant names: the Moret and the Grez and the Franchard of Stevenson; Barbizon; the Nemours of Balzac; Larchant. Nor did I forget the forest scene of George Moore's "Mildred Lawson."

After we had sat half an hour in front of glasses, we rushed back through the forest to the house on its confines whence we had come. The fascination of the town did not cease to draw me until, years later, I yielded and went definitely to live in it.

II.

On the night of the Feast of Saint Louis the gardens of the palace are not locked as on other nights. The gardens are within the park, and the park is within the forest. I walked on that hot, clear night amid the parterres of flowers; and across shining water, over the regular tops of clipped trees, I saw the long façades and the courts of the palace: pale walls of stone surmounted by steep slated roofs, and high red chimneys cut out against the glittering sky. An architecture whose character is set by the exaggerated slope of its immense roofs, which dwarf the walls they should only protect! All the interest of the style is in these eventful roofs, chequered continually by the facings of upright dormers, pierced by little ovals, and continually interrupted by the perpendicularity of huge chimneys. The palace seems to live chiefly in its roof, and to be top-heavy. It is a forest of brick chimneys growing out of stone. Millions upon millions of red bricks had been raised and piled in elegant forms solely that the smoke of fires below might escape above the roof ridge: fires that in theory heated rooms, but which had never heated aught but their own chimneys: inefficient and beautiful chimneys of picturesque, ineffectual hearths! Tin pipes and cowls, such as sprout thickly on the roofs of Paris and London, would have been cheaper and better. (It is always thus to practical matters that my mind runs.) In these monstrous and innumerable chimneys one saw eccentricity causing an absurd expense of means for a trifling end: sure mask of a debased style!

With malicious sadness I reflected that in most of those chimneys smoke would never ascend again. I thought of the hundreds of rooms, designed before architects understood the art of planning, crowded with gilt and mahogany furniture, smothered in hangings, tapestries, and carpets, sparkling with crystal where cold gaiety is reflected in the polish of oak floors! And not a room but conjures up the splendour of the monarchs and the misery of the people of France! Not an object that is associated with the real welfare of the folk, the makers of the country! A museum now—the palace, the gardens, and the fountained vistas of lake and canal—or shall I not say a mausoleum?—whose title to fame, in the esteem of the open-mouthed, is that here Napoleon, the supreme scourge of families and costly spreader of ruin, wrote an illegible abdication. The document of abdication, which is, after all, only a facsimile, and the greedy carp in the lake—these two phenomena divide the eyes of the open-mouthed. And not all the starers that come from the quarters of the world are more than sufficient to dot very sparsely the interminable polished floors and the great spaces of the garden. The fantastic monument is preserved ostensibly as one of the glories of France! (*Gloire*, thou art French! Fontainebleau, Pasteur, the Eiffel Tower, Victor Hugo, the Paris, Lyons, and Mediterranean Railway—each has been termed a *gloire* of France!) But the true reason of the monument's preservation is that it is too big to destroy. The later age has not the force nor the courage to raze it and parcel it and sell it, and give to the poor. It is a defiance to the later age of the age departed. Like a gigantic idol, it is kept gilded and tidy at terrific expense by a cult which tempers fear with disdain.

* From "The Nights of the Forest of Fontainebleau," unpublished.

A Swan Song.

Among the lily leaves the swan,
The pale, cold lily leaves, the swan,
With mirrored neck, a silver streak,
Tipped with a tarnished copper beak,
Toward the dark arch floats slowly on ;
The water is deep and black beneath the arches.
The fishes quiver in the pool
Under the lily shadow cool,
And ripples gilded by the whin,
Painted, too, with a gloom of green,
Mingled with lilac blue and mauve,
Dropped from an overhanging grove ;
White rose of flame the swan beneath the arches.

And, Earth ! my heart is weary this hot noon
Of bearing life, your strange and secret gift.
Lying upon this bank, I hear the rune
Of springtime music, with my soul adrift
Upon its stagnant waters, wondering why
Thus rudderless I float askirt a shore,
A drear savannah, Death.
With ardent eye,
Inflamed with dreams of death and ancient lore,
The wild swan watched and waited for the end ;
Two hundred years of life its white wings bore.
And I in weary truth my song would blend,—
O heart of sombre lilies, why not now?—
A broken music, with the swan's full tone ;—
For are you not alone?—

The sorrow of the woods is on your brow.

* * * * *

Hark ! what wild melody, what bird sings deep
In the dim, silent wood? Sad sob and start
Of pain, deep-rooted,—good it is to sleep.

The sorrow of the woods is in your heart.

The roses burst to flower and hide the spike ;
—O and the bloom of lilac blue and mauve ;—
And Life has laughter when Death stands to strike,
And rend the web of wisdom which Life wove.
The wind will blow, and all the lilac bloom
Will strow the earth, wan blue and mauve ; the swan
Is singing, hark ! its only song—of doom,
Of Life and Death, eternal antiphon.

—The gorse is golden ; its roots are deep
In the subtle earth, 'mid slopes of quicken
That rustles down to the stones all lichen
Covered and green from my lake of sleep ;
The saps of Life are strong, and creep,
With the joy that is in the eagle's sweep,
In eager ferment through bush and tree,
While my wings and hot heart pine and sicken
With death of the life that was good to me.

Year after year my life has unrolled
Of the mist-mersed, endless scroll of time ;
Two centuries long, the annual chime
Of daffodil gold with the red-brown gold
Of corn I have seen, and the heather-wold
Turn russet in autumn and bare in the cold
Of winter to sleep till the call of spring ;
Ageworn heart who hast loved in thy prime,
This is thy song of death I sing.

This, the first melody from my throat,
And last, brings a joy that kills regret ;
My memory dims, the past I forget
As the song thrills through me, note after note ;
Soon will you see my body afloat,
Inert and white, a lifeless mote,
And the Naiades flock where the neck is flung
To claim my soul at my beak all wet,—
Now that my only song is sung.

—The sorrow of the earth is in my soul.

F. S. FLINT.

An Eight o'clock Fancy.

By W. R. Titterton.

"IT is time to get up," said the alarm clock.

"Not yet ! " I cried, "I've just got a dream coming on."

"All right, I'll put myself back."

And so I dreamed.

* * * * * * * * *

A great, bare, shadowy hillside, windswept. All the grass and the two trees and a lost horse and I and the clouds blown one way,—streaming out eastwards with strong endeavour to the rising sun. I have fiercer desire than the other parts of the landscape, and I shoot into the sunlight breathlessly. As I go, the ground rises and the grass dies. Now I am over rock, scarred by lightning. Curiously fluid rock, that forms into phantasmic faces, by flashes blurred and distinct, as it sweeps up into a wall on either side. One face I know. This keeps with me, at first alternating with others ; then alone, getting more human and less rocky by subtle changes. There is a break in the wall, and the face disappears through it. I, too, pass through the gap and drift on, still hemmed in with rock—now empty of faces. The verge of a precipice stops me dead. A voice from the depths calls, "Help ! "

The cliff is perpendicular, almost smooth. Here and there a jagged point. From one of them depends a woman by a tangle of her hair.

It is the owner of the face.

"Quick !—if you are a man ! "

"I have that honour, madam" (with a bow), "but you must wait till I have made a rope. I have no flies' feet, and I dread the vertical."

I take off my shirt, and a rope is fashioned ; the stuff twists into strands at the touch of my fingers. One end I fasten round my waist ; then I lie on the edge of the cliff. Instantly a hand comes out and grasps it. I test the hold with a strong jerk. It seems safe, but you must always mistrust these sudden appearances ; so I take a turn round an aspiring promontory—and let myself down.

"Good morning, madam. Miss Prendergast, I believe? "

The lady seems somewhat exhausted. Her eyes are closed, her face is very white.

"I haven't the pleasure," she says wearily, half opening her eyes.

"My name is Titterton ; you may remember meeting me at the Fabians."

"Ah ! to be sure. At Stewart's lecture on the 'Ethical Basis of High Kicking.' How are you, Mr. Titterton? "

"Exceedingly well. And you, madam? You appear to have aged a little."

"Yes ! " sighs the lady. "A long course of Jesterton. And then—this fall from the cliff ! "

"Since when have you been here? "

"What is the date? "

"The 24th."

"Of what? "

"January."

"1907? "

"No, eight."

"Dear me ! I had no idea it was so long. What a ridiculous position ! "

She weeps.

"Come, madam, compose yourself. Be brave ! Remember Job ! "

She smiles through her tears.

"Now, tell me, when did you fall?"

"A year and six weeks come Wednesday," she whispered, still slightly convulsive.

I hung appalled.

"You are probably regarded as dead?"

She nods. A newspaper that fluttered down from the path a few days ago contained her obituary notice. . . . (I press her hand silently. Silently she returns the pressure, blushing) . . . Ah! A thought strikes me.

"Food, what have you done for food?"

"Sir!" (she stiffens) "I am a Vegetarian."

I bow contrition, and the rope parts. As I fall I clutch at Miss Prendergast, and her rock breaks off short . . .

We drop steadily for several days. The scenery is monotonous, nothing but rock, though it is interesting to observe the strata. Just as we are at the Old Devonian we stop on a small platform paved with mosaic.

"Thank heavens, we are there!" she gasps, "I am quite giddy."

I hand her a Plasmon biscuit. She takes it gratefully.

"Is it my giddiness, or is the platform really moving?"

She was right, our resting-place is slowly turning on a horizontal axis. In a few minutes we shall slip off.

"Another long fall!" I remark testily.

"NO ! LOOK!"

Miss Prendergast points to a widening gap revealed by the turning stone.

"Good!" I cry. "Come!"

We crawl into the hole.

The cave appears to be funnel-shaped, and rushes off ahead into unwalled darkness. I take a candle from my pocket and light it. We walk slowly . . A long silence, only disturbed by the faint dripping of unseen water . . . I take her hand.

"This solitude brings us very close together."

"Hush! Mr. Titterton, you mustn't say that *now*."

We are in a vast hall, apparently without limits. Our entrance passage is lost in the darkness. At the farthest flicker of the candle-light water falls gleaming.

"Let us sit!" I whisper, "this place oppresses me."

She agrees. We sit, and for a long time remain silent . . .

Splash! Hiss! Confound it! The candle is out. Darkness rushes in upon us. Miss Prendergast huddles up to me. I take her in my arms. My lips seek hers. The water plays Lohengrin's Wedding March very softly and slightly flat. Another long silence . . . A very, very long silence . . .

She starts to her feet with a small shriek.

"What was that?"

"Something touched my face, or it was the light."

We look up.

A star peers at us fiercely bright. Some specks grow on it, and a voice trickles down :—

"An' this, leddies an' gentlemen, is the world-renowned 'Shaft o' the Deil,' which extends tae Hes Mahjesty's ain appairtments. A drappit stane wull awauken deevilish lauchter."

We move from under.

A minute elapses—followed by a small tinkle—that is a huge clatter—that is the thunder of intermittent artillery—that is the crash and splinter of stone upon the floor beside us. The place is filled with echoes. As it dies we yell.

"Guid guide us!—and did ye hearr yon?" (The voice is obviously startled.) "Et's Clootie's ainsel', A'm thinkin'. A'm no' that weel the day. We'll—we'll be gaun hame."

"We're not devils"—hoarse with anger; "we are Fabians."

"Ef yeer no' deils, whaut tha deil are ye daein' doon theer?"

I explain the predicament.

"Tae think o't, Mr. Titterton. Et's an awfu' tale yer tellin'! Aweel, aweel . . . Now, whaut wull we be daein' foor ye? A maun get a rope, an', guid guide us, there's no sich a theng foor a guid fifteen mile. Ye'll ha'e to mak' the necht o't. We'll e'en howk ye oot the morrn's morrn. Guid necht tae ye!"

"Good night!"

The star clears for a moment. Barely have we settled ourselves to slumber when . . .

"Och, A'd nigh foorgotten. Ye'll excuse me, noo, but Jock Ramsey, what owns yon rope, he's unco streckt wi's releegion. Wud ye tell me, noo, an' tak' nae affront. . . . A'm nae waunt'n tae speer—but A maun . . . Weel, et's just thes . . . Are ye marrit? Here's Mr. St. Bernard George an' Yerl Brussells wha'll weetnuss yer worrds. Noo, thenk, mahn! Ye ken Scots law. Are ye marrit?"

Here Miss Prendergast seizes the helm and screams, "Yes!"

"It winna dae, mahdam, the gentleman maunt say't himsel. Think o' th' weddin's there'd be ef the lassies cud dae the shoutin'."

In pity for her embarrassment I take the plunge.

"Gentlemen and my lord! allow me to introduce you to my wife."

The starry tourists acknowledge the pleasure, and recommended me, the first to read Nietzsche on Bridges and Shaw on Baby Culture, the second to study the unbuckling-of-bridal laws in the United States . . . . "And England," he adds sadly.

Again the star clears . . . We are alone . . . The star gradually darkens . . . . . .

"Yer guid sleepers."

"Have you been calling long?"

"Twa hoors, maybe."

"I'm sorry!"

"Dinna fash yersel', mahn, et's jist naething. Moreby, et's the Sawbath. Noo, ha'e a care foor the rope."

The rope pats the ground. A blind crawl with incidental profanity, and I have it. I fasten the end round Mrs. Titterton's waist, and cry, "Haul!" . . .

Slowly she mounts—a black mass dwindling.

"Noo, steady!"

The star clears; she is up. I wait . . . the rope does not descend. I call . . . there is no answer . . .

"Eugenia!"

Silence.

"St. Bernard! . . . Lord! Lord!" . . . nothing but the faint dripping of water in the dark . . .

I wait . . . and . . . wait . . . and wait, but nobody ever comes for me . . .

* * * * * * * * *

"Are you ready?" says the alarm-clock.

"Jerusalem! yes."

"Good, then I will sing."

W. R. TITTERTON.

Delicious COFFEE
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THE NEW AGE PRESS, 140 FLEET STREET, LONDON.

The Cit Inspired.

By M. D. E.

"'Twas a bold act, Mr. Andriezs, and to think that so small a thing should be fraught with consequences so grave."

"Indeed, it was very brave of him, Miss."

"Do you know I can do nothing but think of that young man, Abraham Wundeljoff. Ah! he had no right to sacrifice himself for so worthless a sister." Mr. Andriezs reddened; the female alluded to had behaved improperly; and Mr. Andriezs was holding converse with the employer's daughter. "Yet the papers say that was the first great cause—in truth I can hardly believe it. Oh that I were a man. Wouldn't I rush over to Russia and help 'em."

"There is not the slightest chance of our side winning, Miss Thiselberg. The Russian army is very powerful and very big. They're too many."

"Too many," Miss Thiselberg snorted back defiantly. "Don't you remember Agincourt, and Crecy, and Charles the First? Then there's our own special hero Mac—Mac—."

"Maccabees," interposed Andriezs.

"Maccabees, yes, that's the man. Well, you know under him we conquered all the Greeks, though we were a mere handful."

"That's quite true, Miss, but you know things were different in those days."

From history they had got on to more personal ground; Mr. Andriezs couldn't help thinking that the young lady was well disposed towards him.

Going home from the party Joseph Andriezs felt somewhat uncomfortable. Never before had he talked so much with any young lady. Now the young lady was no ordinary young lady. And Joseph knew that Miss Margaret Thiselberg was the youngest of the daughters of the firm of H. Thiselberg and Co. The firm were drapers on a large scale. London was dotted in all quarters with their shops and signs. Joseph himself was earning in their establishment 15s. a week, and living on hopes—surely the meagrest diet ever invented by man. What wonder the girl loomed large in his eyes. What wonder that as Joseph lay the next morning 'twixt the sleeping and waking he was repeating to himself word for word the conversation. For that next day was a Sunday—that one day in the week when a draper's assistant enjoys his hours of idleness like a poet.

His heart was thumping against the sheets as the fair vision of the girl swam before him. She was neither customer, nor sister, nor shop assistant, and she had spoken to him so kindly and so gravely. Then he saw the flash in the grey eyes when she had exclaimed "that I were a man"; and to Joseph it seemed there was naught he would have left undone for the girl short of helping her to gratify that ambition. Most bitter and sweet thoughts were coursing side by side through his head. His face was all aflame. Drops of emotional water set themselves a-trickling down the cheeks so that the flushed face was cooled, but the water washed not away the vision of Margaret from his eyes. Memories of the long ago were being conjured up. Above all, one summer day sinking into the evening. Far across the meadows came the sweet ringing of the church bells. The air was heavy with its summer perfumes; the noisy humming of insect life; in those days he was no counter-jumper; a lad fresh from school and much given to dreaming. Again the scene shifted, and Joseph beheld certain scenes in Russia. The newspapers gave the vaguest of accounts, but Joseph's vision was not erring widely from the reality.

Wisdom had been once more justified of her children—that wisdom embodied in Proverb. The worm had turned at last, but it was no hydra-headed beast that had arisen to be the more speedily crushed. The Jews whom Russian Policy had confined within the narrowest area had broken into revolt. This was the story.

The Governor of the Province of Kherson thought well of the pretty Jewess, the sister of Abraham Wundeljoff. The girl's parents were dead. She lived with her brother, wrapt in his petty buying and selling, and so it came that the girl was dull and dispirited at home. Then in the public streets of Odessa Abraham shot the Governor dead. The girl, saddened and ashamed, pleaded hard for her brother. In vain. The man was executed. Then the Judge was found stabbed to the heart; and the pretty Jewess was taken lifeless out of the ornamental lake in the Park. The new Governor threatened more rigorous measures; mobs of Jews collected in the streets. The gendarmerie could not cope with them, and some military had been repulsed.

The Jews had seized some pieces of artillery, and before the gravity of the matter was known the garrison had been driven out of the town, leaving it in possession of a well-armed mob of Russian Jews. The men could handle their weapons, but they were totally undisciplined—without leaders. The shrieks of their women and children imploring desistance were their battle-cry and the music to which they paraded. Troops were concentrating, and in a few days Russia had promised that the excrescence on her soil should be wiped off. The cry of the Russian Jew was to figure for the last time in history.

Then Joseph thought of himself—the tschurr of the calico was in his ears, and he saw himself deftly packing parcels. "How long? how long?"—came a bitter cry from him. And he wished himself a Russian Jew.

With his semi-dreams blended again the stately image of Margaret, and Joseph bethought himself that he was in love. Margaret's mocking words came back to him. "It's very lucky," she had said, "that our people would have nothing to do with Russian bonds before this crisis." Then Margaret had told him how Anglo-Jewish philanthropists had bravely hurried over to Russia. They had counselled the rebels to surrender, and the Tsar they had begged for mercy. They had assured him it was all a mistake. The work of desperados—Atheists, Nihilists, Socialists—not really the Hebrews at all. But the desperados were wilful, and would not surrender; and the Rabbis sided with these desperados; and there were not any among the Russian Jews who were not desperados. The Nihilists in other parts of the country had not sided with them—"these filthy, money-grubbing Jews"—'twas no concern of theirs. The Anglo-Jewish philanthropists had very properly washed their hands of the whole affair. 'Twere unwise to raise a Judenhetze in this country; here where so many poor Jews had found shelter. Some said they should send money, for the rebels were starving. A discussion arose as to whether the ill-guided fellows were to be encouraged; "the discussion was continuing," Margaret had added, "and the rebels, awkwardly enough, are starving." Others said Russia would soon subdue the Jews, and as she would exile the whole lot, 'twere wiser to save the money to help the exiled. Sound common sense and these sane counsels, Margaret said, were thus prevailing, but she didn't think there would be much call on their pockets.

Joseph felt a sharp sting of pain. Yes, he would go to Russia; he would die there and never let Margaret know what his love for her had meant. Stay, ere he was killed he might send her some few words by a faithful friend. He also would not altogether die. Yes; for higher things than a draper's assistant he was meant.

Andriezs jumped out of bed, and began dressing in haste. He dipped his head in the cool, fresh water, and felt calmer. "Oh, how mean I am," he reflected; "to myself are my first thoughts ever given." He continued his dressing in more leisurely fashion; he joined the other assistants at breakfast. He joked, laughed, chatted with the best of them, and thought himself a hero—a martyr. The talk was of music-halls, the newest comic-songs, the serio-comic ladies, the barmaids; the girl John was seen with last night in Piccadilly. And the stories circulated. The laughter of young men resounded.

It was told how Joseph had not returned till past midnight; he was questioned as to his visit at the Hall. The Hall was the name somewhat sarcastically given to Mr. Thiselberg's private house in Maida Vale. Mrs. Thiselberg entertained her husband's work-people in batches once a year. On such ocasions, in imitation of the "tenantry festivities," the governess and such other of the servants as could be spared formed the company. Joseph had been of the batch the previous night; he had been for the first time introduced to his employer's family; the introduction had been accompanied by a testimonial to his honesty and general trustworthiness.

Joseph's long conversation with Miss Thiselberg had not been unnoticed by his fellow-guests.

Andriezs spent the Sunday in vain wanderings round the Maida Vale. He was discontented—with vague, diffused longings and sufferings. The Monday he was frock-coated, prim and sharp as usual. After 9 his evenings were free, and on Thursdays the afternoon was his. The evenings were spent in the Vale. Joseph began to feel rather happy. He went to the library and asked for Shakespeare's works. Poetry is the only reading for your lover, and there is but one poet whose name is great enough to be known of all men. Joseph thought he detected a falling off in his appetite—he was on the look out for such signs. He was convinced that he had an abstracted air and smiled complacently when Miss Haine said petulantly that she had called him twice and he had not answered.

On the Thursday afternoon Joseph went forth. There in the High Road was the Divinity (as he called her after his readings), she who had esteemed him for what he wasn't, and knew him for other than a draper's assistant. The gods were good. Margaret saw him and nodded. Joseph sidled up to the girl, and told her the latest news about the Jews in Russia—news they had both read in the morning paper.

"Do you know," said Margaret, "I have been organising quite a volunteer force? Several of my friends are going out. Oh, how I would like to go as hospital nurse. I am so glad I can do something, little though it be, for my people."

"My people"—the words came so sweetly and withal with such a pretty touch of pride. "Mr. Levine," Margaret went on, "has been helping me so much—giving me all the——."

"Mr. Levine"?

"Yes, the gentleman I am engaged to; we're to get married in three or four weeks, you know."

"My congratulations, Miss Thiselberg," Joseph gasped. "Have you collected much money for the people?"

"Not very much. People are not very charitable when there are no big subscribers to start with, are they?"

After Joseph had said "No," they shook hands and parted. He was more than ever resolved to show her what Love might do; she should know it only when he was dead. The noble fellow!

* * *

Joseph Andriezs found himself in a pickle. Be as economical as you like in the matter of neckties and trousers, I defy you to save much out of a 15s. salary. Now Joseph had determined on that Russian expedition. He had omitted the difficulties—the passports to be obtained—disguises to be effected. He thought himself useless unless he could bring the rebels a little money; at present he hadn't enough to pay the travelling expenses—third class. Joseph reflected and waited—Micawber-like. Then came the opportunity and sudden temptation. The counting-house was short-handed, he was temporarily placed there. At the luncheon hour he was in sole charge. He opened the till and took therefrom five notes of £10, £45 in gold, and £5 in silver. Then he buttoned his coat, took out his handkerchief, and cried a little. He went out to lunch and did not return. He left by the night mail from Charing Cross direct for Berlin via Brussels. As the train was running down to Dover Joseph had some misgivings. He began to doubt whether he had acted for the best. Then he commenced to draw upon a sheet of paper a list of arguments for and against the course he had taken.

FOR.

Can't otherwise get to Russia. Mr. Thiselberg will not miss a £100. Robbery in a cause like this is surely justifiable—I'm not taking the money for myself—but to help my poor co-religionists. Did not Margaret say that every man should join them? Have not my services been really underpaid in the past?

AGAINST.

Am I so anxious about the cause? Isn't it that I want to cut a fine figure in Margaret's opinion? Am I likely to go up one with her by robbing her father? If I die bravely on the battle-field, I can't repay the money. Shall I be of any use to these people? I don't know their language, nor have I ever fired a shot in my life.

Then Joseph fell into a reverie and wrote no more on the scrap of paper. Margaret he called the Inspirer of Great Deeds. He thought of his love for her; of her surprise on hearing of his brave death; of the words in which he would apprise her of his love, and of his death. He saw himself flourishing a gigantic sword, leading on hordes of wild men. Then he saw the Russians scattered as the wind scattereth the pollen of the trees. He shouted aloud, "For Freedom—Victory—Victory." 'Twas well he was alone in the carriage.

Again rose the image of Margaret. He saw her shrouded in white—a red sash across her bosom—pointing the way to victory. He saw the tall stately figure, the grave grey eyes—the soft hair in careful negligence about the finely-poised head—he heard the sweet, musical intonation.

"Tickets, Sir; keep your seat for the boat."

Joseph got no further than Dover that night, and the next day he returned to London. He had forgotten the telegraphic service, and of the police system he knew nothing.

His late employer gave him a good character—no doubt the young man had been tempted by evil acquaintances. Mr. Vaughan took a lenient view of the case. Six weeks without hard labour.

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DRAMA.

"Deirdre" and "Electra" at the New Theatre.

THE most important dramatic event of the season thus far had place at the New Theatre last Friday afternoon. I mean the re-appearance of that great actress Mrs. Patrick Campbell and the presentation of two plays that were not vulgar and had at least some pretence to artistic form.

W. B. Yeats, the author of "Deirdre," is one of our foremost poets; Hugo von Hofmannsthal, the author of "Electra," is a distinguished German dramatist who has won a great success in Berlin with this particular play, and the two dramas give an interesting contrast of the treatment of somewhat similar materials in the delicate illusive manner of the Celt, and the heavy definite brutal manner of the German.

But Mr. Yeats is more than a poet, he is a conspirator. He is one of the archconspirators in the cleverest literary fake of modern times. When the Irish revivers began their propaganda no one was particularly interested in the heroic days of Cuchulain. But the Irish revivers put it to us that we ought to be, and they have actually succeeded in making us think so. The Celts have given modern English literature almost everything of value it possesses; their last insult was to give us their traditional tales. So that it is unnecessary to explain in detail who Deirdre was, and who her husband Naisi son of Usna, and who Conchubar mac Nessa the high King. The present play tells in verse of the return of Deirdre and Naisi at the invitation of Conchubar from their seven years' wanderings, of the treachery of Conchubar for the love of Deirdre, of the murder of Naisi, and the self-given death of Deirdre upon his body.

Mr. Yeats should find the one-act play a good form for his art, for his characters and emotions are static, they do not develop, they "are." Yet in "Deirdre" he has not surely grasped his form. The opening is too prolix. A one-act play must be all doing, there must be no narration, it is an episode, a moment, no more. If it finds it necessary to explain its genealogy, it must do so en passant, not in a prologue. Still the prologue here is not unskilfully managed. The colloquy of the three wandering musicians and Fergus, foster-father of the King, tells more than ancient history. Almost at once we are plunged in an atmosphere of impending doom. The suggestion of empty rooms behind the curtains, the hints of the minstrels, the passage of the Lybian warrior across the open doorway lead us inevitably to the declaration of the chief musician that Conchubar is preparing to receive, not a guest, but a bride. Thenceforward the action moves swiftly to the sound of death drums to its tragic close. Thenceforward, too, Deirdre is on the scene, and I am fascinated by the struggles of this white bird caught in the gins of fate; this little white bird that nestles in the heart and pipes complainingly; this wind blown out of the hills, this wind that is a cry. It is difficult for me to think of the rest of the play but in terms of Mrs. Patrick Campbell. I am listening all the while to the cadences of that flexible, sweet voice, thin but veiled, I am watching all the while those nervous, lithe, rhythmic movements that flutter and change with every cadence of the voice.

To say that Yeats's plays are inhuman is not to expose their defect but to define their quality. What we mean is that they are Celtic and not Saxon. They are like the far echo of a song. And one gets in some of them, as in this play, that sense of overhanging calamity which has been thought the peculiar property of Maeterlinck.

Maeterlinck is brought to mind, too, in considering "Electra." In Greek tragedy Destiny was always a person of the drama. Hofmannsthal, like Goethe in "Iphigenia," has modernised the Greek by leaving out Destiny, in contra-distinction to the Belgian dramatist who has left out everything else. The hate of Electra strikes rawly upon you, there are no gods left to let or stay, there is nothing in earth or heaven but this hate. In this drama there is brutality, there is love of hate for the hate's sake, of slaying for the slaying's sake, but there is strength in it. It is a study in one emotion, and Electra, that lamp of hate, is finely drawn. But here, too, as in "Deirdre," is a sense of remoteness, yet not in the same dimension; the figures move, not in ours, but in an underworld; the desires of Electra's younger sister for a sane, healthy life strike one with a sense of intolerable incongruity. For the actor it is a very difficult play; the long speeches would be impossible to an actress of less than Mrs. Campbell's tragic stature; and even she failed, as I shall afterwards show, to make the final scene believable.

The art of Mrs. Patrick Campbell has decided limitations. She is essentially an actress of poetic plays; she should not come nearer to realism than Lady Macbeth. She has much tragic power, and but little passion. The part of Electra is too brutal for her, the part of Deirdre too loving. At the end of a lurid pre-vision of the manner in which her mother and her mother's lover, the usurping King, shall die,—delivered with tremendous tragic force—she has to say, "And then the axe falls." Said gloatingly, with a licking of the lips, that would be horrible. As Mrs. Campbell says it it is empty bombast. And, when, as Deirdre, she tells her husband there is warm blood in her veins it strikes you as a revelation.

She is a spirit, an elemental She that haunts one. Her acting is magical; in every movement of her body and breath there is a charm to hold you. She glides in a thin mist aglow with the rays of the sunshine. Oh, fair vision! if I put out a hand to touch you, will you be gone? . . . And now her face is the face of a drowned swimmer afloat on the waves, and now she is white foam on black water, white foam that clamours and hisses and raves, that wails in the long back-wash of desolation. And now she is a fury, her eyes are fire; and her arms are whips, long, white whips that lash you, that dart forth and have claws. And her tongue is a whip that burns with the bite of acid, that plays round you like flame, that is a tempest and a crawling snake gnawing at the heart. And now she is a veiled statue silent before the whining fears of her mother, and now in a flash she has turned and sprung at her throat and is spitting fire.—Yes, spitting, for, to tell the truth, there is a little too much of the cat about her tragedy.

She is at her best when she is singing a song (if she is not always singing). In "Es Lebe das Leben," in "Pelleas and Melisande," in "Deirdre," in "Electra," it is always as a singer that she counts. Mr. Yeats on Friday called her acting of "Deirdre" "cynical." Let me borrow that word and apply it to her general style. But let her beware. Let her keep cynical, let her not become merely a solo-player on the voice. That beautiful voice must not be her destruction. She must not turn into a second-rate Sarah Bernhardt. She acts so much more finely and her voice is not so fine.

She has no tricks; her inflections of voice and limb are intuitive, absolute; they are not put on, they spring from an inner life; she is, in fact, an actress with a temperament—O rara avis among English actresses! As in all fine acting, she seems to be moving to the measure of a dance. (When will English players understand that a play is a work of art, and a work of art must be rhythmic?) And the queer thing is that in "Electra" she fails most decidedly in the only piece of set dancing she has to do. Electra has nerved her brother to slay the murderess of their father—(their mother Clytemnestra and her paramour)—and in the act of forcing herself into a wild dance of triumph she falls dead. It is almost an unjustifiable climax to a play. The literary idea is all right; she who was only hate, her hate is glutted, she dies like a blown-out candle. But how difficult to express in a set measure that mingling of extreme exultation and extreme fatigue! Done superbly by a perfect dancer, it might convince; but here it falls as flat as Mrs. Campbell.

Miss Florence Farr had a fine conception of a murderous, cowardly queen, but her movements were clumsy and her delivery disjointed and not always quite clear. Still, it was a fine performance. One gets a suggestion of restraint, of furnace fires banked under. Miss Sara Allgood, who was very good in "Deirdre"

in the mystical part of the chief musician, seemed crude and out of focus as Electra's sister.

I found the scenery of "Electra" from designs by Charles Ricketts a little commonplace. There is only one man for the staging of poetic plays, and his name is Gordon Craig.

It seems I have forgot to mention that "Electra" was translated by Arthur Symons. I do not know the German version, but the English seemed to fit the ideas very well, though I thought sometimes it was a little too mannered and exquisite for their crude brutality.

W. R. TITTERTON.

Recent Music.

Wynken, Blynken and Nod.

SIR CHARLES VILLIERS STANFORD is a most precocious child. For there are two Stanfords in one: the professor and the boy. The professor is the one who perpetrates a musical eloge on Watts, symphonies, string quartettes, masses, church "services," and other solemn pronouncements. The boy is the one who puts jolly tunes to the cavalier songs of Browning, and writes sea-songs and arranges exuberant Irish folk-songs. The other evening in the Bechstein Hall both were present in person. The late Lord Tennyson (one time Poet Laureate of England) supplied the inspiration for the music which went through various moods of academic culture and pristine innocence. The academician uttered profound thoughts on some verses from "In Memoriam" and the boy sang about the "City Child." This last poem is a particularly silly one, very sentimental and pretty, but the boy Stanford turned it into something quite pleasant and kind and exhilarating, just like the healthy flush on the face of a child that has been running hard up the hill, and is a little bit out of breath. And, mark you, it was the boy who was egotistical enough to edit the poem so much as to repeat the line "Far and far away, said the dainty little maiden" after the said poem was completed. The professor, with an acute sense of form, would never allow himself to "improve" the poet's verses in this fashion; but it was the boy who did it, for he didn't know it was a violation. And the result was charming and naïve to the last degree. If I were a professor, I should call this setting jejune, but as I do not believe in professors at all, I merely suggest that it can pass very well.

* * *

I have just discovered Roger Quilter. This, I know, is a sublime impertinence on my part, for he has been discovered before. Two or three years ago I certainly heard settings he made of three Shakespeare lyrics, and for a time I could think of nothing else. My obsession has, however, been revived during the last week or so, for somebody has been singing Mr. Quilter's music to me (the music he made to Herrick's cycle of devotions to Julia), and Mr. Gervase Elwes has just done his newest set of Elizabethan lyrics at the Bechstein Hall—the same evening that the Stanfords were playing.

I have often expressed the entirely obvious truth that between Purcell and our own day there has been no remarkable music written in England. Those of the very few men who do write good music in England to-day naturally employ a modern idiom, and occasionally run to death some fashionable discord. With all due apologies, however, to contemporary civilisation, I beg to insist that Mr. Quilter has stepped out of the seventeenth century. If he would he could not hide the fact from us, although he does not speak too elaborately in the manner of our very precise ancestors. But his attitude is, as far as one can judge, quite the same; he has the same delicate appreciation of choice verse, the same exquisite scorn of our very modern and banal little anarchisms. He is complete and self-sufficient in the conceits of his legitimate period. Nothing more artificial—even from Herrick's point of view—could be found than Mr. Quilter's setting of the divine lyric to Julia's hair. It is mystical, atmospheric, quaint (archaistic — but, even so, most completely and deliciously artificial and (with all these qualifications and reservations) one of the most beautiful songs written by an Englishman in the last three hundred years. Mr. Quilter says he feels an element of seriousness in these lyrics of Robert Herrick. We never thought that Herrick belonged to the fantastic Puritan period, but rather to the later and less Presbyterian period of the Restoration. And we feel that Mr. Herrick would not pass Mr. Quilter his snuff-box if he thought otherwise.

* * *

There was a time when I believed Mr. Cyril Scott's work was quite precious—in the Wildéan meaning of that word; to-day I feel inclined to believe that it is quite inexpensive—in the literal meaning of that word. There is an occasional austerity, an almost snobbish austerity, about Mr. Scott's music that reminds one of a certain punctilious hero correcting the little mutinies of his cravat. But it is only momentary, for Mr. Scott cannot retain that pose for more than seven minutes without losing our attention; he has to stimulate our sated nerves with fresh devices, more patent and more obvious, and one soon thinks of him as of a showman who announces "positively the most amazing and eccentric act now being performed on any stage." Whether or not it is the most amazing act in the world doesn't matter; the point for us is that it is the most amazing thing that particular showman can present, and we go there to be thrilled. If we are entertained, all is well; but if our attention flags and we end by being bored, then that showman has not succeeded in doing anything amazing. There is, of course, the latent possibility that he has succeeded in amazing himself, and in this last hypothesis Mr. Scott's programme at the Bechstein Hall may really have been justified.

Can he really amuse people by his songs? Can he, apart from tea-cups and the incidental accompaniments of frilled shirts and Directoire gowns, really compel the mental application of an audience? I think he can—of a few—for a time. Mr. Scott's ability is unquestioned; he is notorious for his facile heresies; he is famous for his polite repudiations. But—and even an artist climbs a height somebody is bound to see. And when Mr. Cyril Scott attempts to scale the dangerous heights of Clarence Mangan's great poem, "My Dark Rosaleen," he is done for. In pianoforte and orchestral music he may find his real métier, and to some extent he has done so; and the other day Mr. Elwes sang a splendid serenade of his. But in this passionate Irish poem he flounders and stumbles most ignominiously; his music to it is a passionate indictment of nothing in particular. Better far had he tried some verse of the late Mr. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, an American poet whose work has a considerable reputation in England. He might have found in "Evangeline," for instance, some lines to suit his pictorial ability. I deeply question, however, whether Longfellow would, after all, make any real appeal to Mr. Scott's temperament; he might feel that he was not esoteric enough, his verse perhaps somewhat direct, and his thoughts just a little obvious. On the other hand, with Ernest Dowson's verse I have a faint suspicion he is not in close sympathy either. How could he be, and at the same time sing his lines like this:—

If we must part,
Then let it be like thi-iss,
Not heart in heart,
Nor with the useless anguish of a ki-iss.

Similarly, in "My Dark Rosaleen," Mr. Scott is perverse enough to make his music vibrate like this:—

"Your holy, de-el-elicate white hands."

I leave further criticism to those who will go and hear this composer's work sometimes. He has a great gift, and has, apart from undiscernments like these, written much choice music.

I wrote once in this paper that you must go to France if you want to hear verse set with any reverence. Now, I am not sure that you may not find it as well done in the Bow Empire or the "Middlesex," Drury Lane.

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Books and Persons.

(AN OCCASIONAL CAUSERIE.)

IN a recent number of the "Athenæum" appeared a letter from Mr. E. H. Cooper, novelist and writer for children, protesting against the publication of the Queen's Gift-Book and the royally-commanded cheap edition of Queen Victoria's Letters during the autumn season; and requesting their Majesties to forbear next year from injuring the general business of books as they have injured it this year. That some semi-official importance is attached to Mr. Cooper's statements is obvious from the fact that the "Athenæum" (which is the organ of the trade as well as of learning) thought well to print his letter. But Mr. Cooper undoubtedly exaggerates. He states that the two books in question "have ruined the present publishing season rather more effectively than a Pan-European war could have done." Briefly, this is ridiculous. He says further: "Men and women who could trust to a sale of 5,000 or 6,000 copies of a novel, equally with authors who can command much larger sales, find that this year the sale of their annual novel has reached a tenth part of the usual figures." This also is ridiculous. The general view is that, while the season has been scarcely up to the average for fiction, it has not been below the average on the whole. But Mr. Cooper is nothing if not sweeping. A few days later he wrote to the "Westminster Gazette" about the House of Lords, and said: "I am open to wager a considerable sum that if the Government fights a General Election next year they will win back all their lost by-elections and get an increased majority besides." Such rashness proves that grammar is not Mr. Cooper's only weak point.

* * *

It is a pity that Mr. Cooper's protest was not made with more moderation, for it was a protest worth making. The books of the two Queens have not ruined the season, nor have they reduced the sales of popular novels by 90 per cent.; but they have upset trade quite unnecessarily. The issue of "Queen Victoria's Letters" at six shillings was a worthy idea, but its execution was thoughtlessly timed. The volumes would have sold almost equally well at another period of the year. As for "Queen Alexandra's Gift-Book," I personally have an objection to the sale of books for charity, just as I have an objection to all indirect taxation and to the paying of rates out of gas profits. In such enterprises as the vast, frenzied pushing and booming of the "Gift-Book," the people who really pay are just the people who get no credit whatever. The public who buy get rich value for their outlay; the chief pushers and boomsters get an advertisement after their own hearts; and the folk who genuinely but unwillingly contribute, without any return of any kind, are authors whose market is disturbed and booksellers who, partly intimidated and partly from good nature, handle the favoured book on wholesale terms barely profitable. I will have none of Mr. Cooper's 90 per cent.; but I daresay that I have lost at the very least £10 owing to the "Gift-Book." That is to say, I have furnished £10 to the Unemployed Fund. I share Mr. Cooper's resentment. I do not want to give £10 to any fund whatever, and to force me to pay it to the Unemployed Fund, of all funds, is to insult my most sacred convictions. £10 wants earning. And the fact that £10 wants earning should be brought to the attention of Windsor and Greeba Castles.

* * *

Still, I am not depressed about the general cause of serious literature. Serious literature is kept alive by a few authors who, not owning motor-cars nor entertaining parties to dinner at the Carlton, find it possible and agreeable to maintain life and decency on the money paid down by very small bands of truly bookish readers. And these readers are not likely to deprive themselves completely of literature for ever in order to possess a collection of royal photographs. The injury to serious literature is slight and purely temporary.

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I have a bomb to explode this week, and the echoes of its explosion will be heard afar. Every connoisseur of high-class realism in fiction, if asked to name a few supreme examples of that branch of art, would assuredly include Tolstoy's "Death of Ivan Ilyitch" in the first half-dozen. I have always regarded it as inferior to nothing whatever, and I should not have dreamed of doubting the exactitude of its documentation. Well, I received the other day the following letter about it from one of my doctors. (A novelist, in his calling, never knows when he may need a doctor, and I keep on terms of intimacy with several.): "The medical part of the 'Death of Ivan Ilyitch' is very largely a fake. One can make neither head nor tail of it. And, anyway, I know Ivan did not die of either kidney disease or appendicitis—the only two things that are seriously suggested. There are two things which figure largely in that fearsome death which are impossible—and I do not speak of impossibilities lightly. First, Ivan's favourite occupation of a night took the form of raising his feet on to the shoulders of his manservant and apparently sleeping for hours in that position. This would put such a strain on his knees (to say nothing of the driving of all the blood in his legs into his abdomen—which would be a very evil thing) that I would bet all I've got that six Sandows could not accomplish it. Secondly, at the end of his illness, when he is worn out and dying, he screams for two hours so that he can be heard through three doors (in the beginning of the tale two doors). This is a blank lie. No person who had had an exhausting illness like that could ever do more than talk faintly, and precious little of that, either! Moreover, Mr. Tolstoy didn't even trouble to read up the effects of continued opium. I am almost inclined to think the beggar died of opium poisoning. Nothing that ever happened in heaven, earth, or hell was like that illness. I have always heard this story spoken of as an extreme instance of realism. It is purely a work of imagination, and, taking it at that, a damned fine piece of work. You must make some allowances for me, for I can tell you that, so far as I know, there is nothing in literature where suffering and sorrow are concerned that is a patch on the real article. I have seen a lot in my time, and I know what the real thing is." Perhaps some champion of Tolstoy will come forward.

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"Young Love goes singing to the slender moon,
And the pale witch and sly
From the blue casement of her distant sky
Watches Young Love a-singing.

And when his heart is like a jewel lost
In the immeasurable ocean of desire,
The pale slim witch and sly
Draws in her golden head,
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and panic that led the sailors of the 'Potemkin' to surrender."

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The second part of the work is commenced with Feldmann's escape from prison. Here is seen the deep sense of comradeship that pervades the ranks of the revolutionists. His escape is finally made by the help of a Jewish soldier. "B.'s conviction that it was possible to convert a sentinel to our views during his eight hours' duty rested on his faith in the Hebrews. 'As soon as there's a Hebrew on duty on that post, you'll get away; don't doubt it. Ah! the Hebrews! they're a golden people." Nor was his faith misplaced. This also leads to some reflections, as does the fact that the author was a young student. Fancy an English student in any advanced movement leading any revolution; he may run to fireworks and Guy Fawkes riots. Why is the English student so absolutely devoid of ideas, indifferent to the broad views, combined with real culture, that obtains among students on the Continent? The translation is by Constance Garnett; no further word of praise is required.

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Even this book cannot conceal from us that Rousseau was a great man, although it manages to inform us that M. Lemaître is something other. These lectures may have been worth giving as a college course, but they were not worth republishing; and there is really no excuse for this rendering into an Anglo-French jargon.

M. Lemaître has no new facts to tell us, whilst his criticism is as stale as it is ill-considered. We are very sorry that the French Academician re-read Rousseau "while I sought for reasons to condemn him—and, oh! I found such in great abundance." He could have been so much bettter employed. No doubt it is only kind of M. Lemaître to admit: "Then, what then was in him of candour and sincere piety touches me in spite of myself; and I recognised anew that this man, from whom one may think so many public ills had sprung . . . had no doubt been a sinner, and finally a madman, but in no way a bad man, and that, above all, he had been most unhappy." Recognising what there is in M. Lemaître of patronage and foolishness, does one not long to throw the book—it is tolerably heavy—at the author's head?

Of the "Contrat Social," M. Lemaître says: "Equality is not a right or a fact in Nature, since even Rousseau did not find it among primitive men." This is a mere parrot cry which has been heard, especially on this side of the Channel, and seems but to show how superficial the critics are. Rousseau contends that men possess the desire for equality; it is the end to which we look forward. If the inequality of the world in which we live seems to us an injustice; the desire for equality is a mystery. Since men feel this desire, it exists in Nature, unless you regard mankind as outside Nature. You may not account for it, but you must accept it, even if Rousseau alone had felt its necessity.

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standing that great art does not depend on individual impulse so entirely as one might hastily imagine; but that it is part of a still greater force which develops and grows, as it were, irresistibly, and disregardless of the individual and his personal fancies. As Socialists we welcome another exposition of the successful results of the collective method. Mr. J. W. Cruickshank contributes an interesting introduction to this altogether valuable work. It is illustrated by 65 full-page reproductions from photographs of the pictures which Mr. Allen selected to demonstrate his theories.

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

VOLTAIRE.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

"There has fallen of late upon the Press a mixture of convention and terror which makes it impossible to print even simple truths." So wrote your esteemed correspondent. Even with the most Liberal Press you are not a persona grata in an attempt to inquire a little after truth. In fact, simple relations of facts concerning London, Rhodesia, or India are dreaded like some pernicious casuistry which might compel a painful conviction. A man inflicted with the pursuit of truth is recommended to quarantine until the dangerous crisis has been tided over. The present writer is induced to this cynicism by an unexpected rebuff from the editor of a popular weekly, who poses at present as the great Cham of literary culture and criticism. A few comments on, and a few submissive inquiries about Voltaire provoked this monumental aloofness and terror. "Medusa with Gorgonian terror" guards that shrine whence the purest streams of criticism flow. Amid the dazzling splendours of the place, Voltaire naturally should have adopted a more modest demeanour. To jerk such a man without copious warning on to the stage was certainly an outrage. The shades of this insignificant Frenchman seem still to disturb the honest men of our age. Surely this is the century of obsessions and nervous disease.

With our newer science, with the profound peace and mutual toleration which brood over our educational and religious debating societies, with our well-balanced deification of truth and hatred of hypocrisy, can we not afford to despise the Frenchman who disgraced his friends and the eighteenth century? As Milton sang, "Long is the way, and hard, that out of Hell leads up to Light." We have stormed the ramparts of oppression. We have waded through the Serbonian bog of cruelty and superstition, and to-day every editor is justified in standing "like Teneriffe or Atlas, unremoved," when darkness threatens, or any ancient conviction attempts to raise its battered head. Our spirit must accord with its century. Letters on simplified spelling, or spirit painting, or hallucinations must be printed and discussed. They are all important. Is not this the era of hard work—of self-renunciation, which the greatest Russian novelist said constitutes the solution of life? To illustrate a principle one often has to drag the mean from obscurity. One really regrets to make use of Voltaire, when men of real genius exist. Yet for the nonce—Evil at times, no doubt, is compelled to borrow a ray of

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light from Virtue for its own triumph. Note how this petty, malicious Frenchman aspires to fame: "You have done a great work for posterity." "Yes, madame, I have planted 4,000 feet of trees in my park." (A fact.) Did not this Voltaire spend the most arduous years of his life trying to vindicate the atrocious Lally and the miserable Calas? Was not his deathbed rendered infamous by that thrill of unrepentant joy on hearing of his success in the former case? Do not all thinking people of these times attribute the political ravings of Mr. John Burns to his perusal of "Charles XII"—a sickly pamphlet by this same Voltaire? Did not the contemporary French genius of Crebillon and Pompignan wither at the approach of this starveling writer? No, Editors are right. "Ecrasez l'infame"—this man must be destroyed. A library containing translations from this writer stands on perishable foundations. Woe to our children lest they be bewitched by the malign sorcery of this fellow. Yet our means of self-defence keep pace with our progress. A lucid philosophy has swept away the terrors of the past. For no superstition, no falsehood, no barbarous tradition can endure the touch of celestial temper. A Marquis de Pompignan will be reinstated—the Pantheon will yawn for Freron and La Harpe. Has not Troy been doubted? Has not Julius Cæsar been proved a myth, and Bonaparte a chimera? For how long did the wretched Shakespeare rob the noble Bacon of his just inheritance? Arguing from strict historical analogy, why can we not prove that Voltaire never existed, or purloined all his ideas from the immortal Fenelon, whose reputation is regarded as above suspicion?

Surely such possibilities should prove a better sedative than those drugs used by irritable minds, haunted by the fears that a base personality in literature engenders. Finally, all those nervously constituted can enamour themselves of the prospect of seeing the pusillanimous Voltaire consigned to a lower deep, "to which the present hell he suffers seems a heaven." A. M. M.

* * *

WANTED—AN S.R.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

An S.R.C. is more than wanted—it is an imperative necessity; i.e., if Socialism as a political factor is to secure due recognition.

The recent disturbance in the House culminating in the expulsion of Victor Grayson will bring about one good result (if no more) if it precipitates the formation of an S.R.C. mentioned in your recent article.

The Labour Party's attitude on that memorable occasion was admittedly cowardly, or if not that, the most charitable stricture is that it was politically indiscreet—from their point of view only.

Which brings us to an examination of the Labour Party's credentials. What do they represent? Labour! Then that is elementally "class" representation, the pitting of one class against another. Do Socialists believe in that? Surely not. The Socialist hopes to benefit all classes—even the idle rich. Difficult of demonstration as this point might be, it is the Socialist ideal. As Victor Grayson rightly observes in his recent "Challenge to the Labour Party," "Labourism, at its best, stands for the amelioration of the workers' lot under Capitalism. Socialism stands for the abolition of Capitalism."

How long are we to temporise with Labourites, who modify their Socialism as circumstances dictate? Why not declare our Socialism, whole-heartedly and uncompromisingly; unashamed of our creed, and unabashed by its immense, even revolutionary, possibilities?

The doubt is whether the amalgamation of the existing Socialist organisations—whose very multiplicity and divergent views engender distrust—would better enable us to do this. It is certain, however, that a consolidation or concentration of societies and of persons unaffectedly Socialistic is desirable in order that we may more effectively promulgate those views which we so sincerely believe, and render possible their translation into our daily life and service.

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