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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

EVERYBODY knows that by public and private confession all the political leaders stand convicted of not knowing what to do about Unemployment. Mr. Asquith does not know, or he would long ago have applied the cure. Neither does Mr. Balfour, still less Mr. Austen Chamberlain. All these great men confess themselves completely at a loss to understand the causes or to discover the remedies for the greatest social disease that exists. For them Unemployment is in the last resort an "act of God," a mysterious effect of some mysterious cause, due possibly to defects in men—drink, idleness, atheism, or the like—something, in short, which the greatest of statesmen, themselves to wit, can only hope to mitigate, never to eradicate or heal.

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Now it is precisely this "incurable" disease that the Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission boldly proclaims curable. We quote the startling words that the blind may see and the deaf hear: "We have to report that in our judgment it is now administratively possible, if it is sincerely wished to do so, to remedy most of the evils of Unemployment." This extraordinary sentence—the most inspiring sentence ever uttered on the subject of Unemployment—was repeated even more emphatically by Mr. Sidney Webb at the St. James's Hall on Friday evening. From the "Times" report (and the sentence should have been illuminated), Mr. Webb declared. "Unemployment could be remedied at once, in a single Session of Parliament, without a revolution in any sense, at the cost of only one or two millions." We do not know what our readers think of that; but we regard the statement as serious in the highest degree. If the Minority Commissioners and Mr. Webb are mistaken, if they are proclaiming a quack remedy, they deserve to be isolated from society as dangerous lunatics. If, on the other hand, they are right, as we believe they are, then it is high time that Mr. Asquith and Mr. Balfour were informed of the discovery and ordered to apply it or resign. For Unemployment stands at the head of the five fatal diseases of civilisation: Unemployment, poverty, consumption, syphilis, and cancer.

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Mr. Bernard Shaw at the same meeting disposed of three ancient prejudices against the Unemployed: the touching belief still lingering in C.O.S. minds and salving public conscience, that Unemployment is the fault of the unemployed; the ostrich-headed belief that the Unemployed cost nothing when they are kept off the rates; and the old anti-social belief that artisans, unlike soldiers and sailors, should be paid only when they are working.

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This last abominable practice is obsolete even among the coolies of Ceylon Only this week a correspondent sends us one of the recent Ordinances drawn up for coolie-labour. It runs: "Where wages are payable at a daily rate, the monthly wages shall be computed according to the number of days on which the labourer was able and willing to work, whether the employer was or was not able to provide him with work." Our demand is simply that our own workmen shall be treated at least as well as coolies in Ceylon.

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We are glad to see that the Labour Party is emulating the Importunate Widow. There is nothing like importunity for a small party in Parliament. If the Government cannot be scared or forced they must be worried into doing something. On Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, the Local Government Board and Mr. Burns were subjected to a severe cross-examination at the hands of Messrs. Clynes, Macdonald, and Keir Hardie. Mr. Balfour had already deplored the lack of any large intelligent plan in the mind of the Government [he might have added his own mind either] for dealing with Unemployment; and it remained for the Labour Party to point to actual defects in the administration of such Acts as had been passed; of which the most considerable was Mr. Gerald Balfour's Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905.

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Under this Act it is plain that Labour Exchanges, precisely such as are now paraded in promissory form in the King's Speech, were actually made mandatory on all County Councils. Yet Mr. Burns had to confess that until a few weeks ago no applications to form such committees were received by the Local Government Board; nor had he lifted a finger to compel Councils to form them. Apparently Mr. Burns prefers lecturing the Unemployed on their extravagance to getting them work; thus he secures the praise of the "Spectator." As a result, however, of his negligence every experiment in training the unemployed on Farm Colonies and the like has been not merely handicapped, but positively frustrated by the absence of a market for such labour when trained. The experiment at Hollesley Bay, for example, might easily have been successful had the machinery existed for drafting its trained members to

places where they were needed. As it was, the harassed Superintendent could do nothing better in the absence of Mr. Burns's assistance than advertise his men in the rural papers!

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Mr. Burns prided himself further on having dished the Labour men by pricking the formidable bubble of Unemployment when it threatened to become coloured with blood. No doubt, as we have said before, Mr. Burns has been largely responsible for the absence of Unemployed riots this winter. We freely admit his claim if he values it after examination. For at what cost has he suppressed them? Possibly, if not probably, at the cost of a series of unemployed riots starting from next winter or the winter after. His policy of persuading municipal authorities to anticipate loans for works due some years hence is based on a mere gamble in futures. It is as criminal in a public man to gamble thus as to embezzle public funds. Plainly, what is anticipated now will not be available later; and if it should happen that trade depression continues, or is repeated, the expedients of this winter will actually intensify the misery of next. We are not above suspecting Mr. Burns, however, of being quite willing to sow the wind on condition that a Protectionist Government may reap the whirlwind. Poor Mr. Balfour probably foresees the crop of trouble he may expect to reap from Mr. Burns's sowing. Hence his disclaimer that Tariff Reform is a remedy for Unemployment.

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That Mr. Burns has grasped the nettle of the problem with a strong hand we totally deny. There is less wailing in our streets, and there have been no broken bottles; but the sties of workhouses are crammed all the fuller with the débris of industrial strife. On Saturday, February 20, there were 132,745 paupers receiving relief in London alone; 3,688 in excess of the number for the corresponding week of last year. We have no hesitation in saying that Mr. Burns is to be thanked for the excess. He has, as he promised, muddled through; to the accompanying strains of the "Spectator's" flutes; but the cost in life has been Napoleonic. Now that he has failed to create what it was his bounden duty to create, namely, a network of Labour Exchanges from John o' Groats to Land's End, his precious party flaunts the measure as a novel contribution to the problem. Really it is the severest criticism of Mr. Burns conceivable: or only equalled by the decision to remove the proposed machinery from the Local Government Board and to hand it over to the more energetic Mr. Churchill.

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But their bloated majority has really corrupted most of the members of the Cabinet. If Mr. Burns has utterly failed to apply an Act of 1905, and Mr. Haldane has frankly commended Lord Rothschild for a patent act of arbitrary injustice, Mr. McKenna has needed to be sharply reminded of a decision made by the House of Commons so long ago as 1891. On Feb. 13, 1891, it was resolved: "That, in the opinion of this House, it is the duty of the Government in all Government contracts to make provision against the evil recently disclosed before the Sweating Committee, to insert such conditions as may prevent the abuse arising from subletting, and to make every effort to secure the payment of such wages as are generally accepted as current in each trade for competent workers." Involved as the language is, we should have thought that even an ex-Minister of Education was capable of understanding its meaning: and that no doubt could exist that the decision applied to foreign as well as to home contracts. In fact, since a Liberal Government is barred by theory from Tariff Reform, it might have luxuriated in a little benevolent protection, and have excluded just those foreign imports, especially those purchased by the Government, on whose manufacture sweated wages were paid. During the whole of this week, however, Mr. McKenna, on behalf of the Admiralty, has been playing a bewildering and thimble-rigging game of bluff on the subject of this clause in Admiralty contracts. Finally he was driven, much against his will, to admit that the Admiralty did not insist on a fair wages clause except in contracts with British subjects. Foreign contractors might pay anything or nothing in wages, and still be accepted by the Admiralty on condition that their tenders were, like Shakespeare's rascals' foreheads, villainously low. We care nothing about granite one way or the other. Norwegian granite may be as good, it may be better, than British granite for Admiralty purposes: one of the bastard patriotic papers recently built its new offices entirely of Norwegian granite. The point, however, is that Mr. McKenna had no better defence for his omission to insist on a fair wages clause in foreign contracts than first to shuffle and then to shout across to the Tories: You did the same when you were in office.

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For the last half year the earnings of the nineteen principal railway companies have declined 2 per cent. That is not much in comparison with the decline of 12½ per cent. on the American railways. But it is enough to set railway directors' wits to work to discover the cause and the remedy. The causes are many, but the immediate remedy is simple: to amalgamate undertakings, to reduce mutual competition, and to centralise control. Extended far enough, that course would end inevitably in a gigantic trust; but in this country such a private autocracy is unlikely to succeed if publicly formed. Things, however, are moving in that direction. At present there is a Bill before Parliament for the amalgamation in a working union of the Great Northern, Great Central, and Great Eastern Railways. In reply to an anxious deputation on the subject, Mr. Churchill urged that such amalgamation should be sympathetically considered. We should be delighted if we had any guarantee, first, that Parliament had the will to control such amalgamations, and, secondly, if we believed Parliament clear-sighted enough to be prepared to complete amalgamation by nationalisation. At present we see nobody but Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Churchill himself capable of entertaining either idea for two minutes. Whatever amalgamations take place, we may be certain that the present industrial murder of British industry by railway rates will continue unchecked, since the profits accrue to members of the House as directors and shareholders.

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How rapidly we are not progressing may be seen from the simple recollection of the fact that Gladstone specifically provided for Railway Nationalisation as long ago as in 1844. His provision for the State-purchase of the railways has been adopted by Switzerland and other countries, but, of course, not by England. He proposed that the basis of payment should be 25 years' purchase of the annual average profit of any given line in the three previous years. Mr. Emil Davies, the well-known writer on Railway Nationalisation, recently suggested to the Fabian Society that a beginning of State-purchase should be made with the three South-Eastern lines. Everthing is in favour of such a suggestion. Mr. Haldane is shortly commandeering that region for his anti-invasion manœuvres, and would probably be considerably relieved if the railway lines were in his hands. He might even invent another little scare to facilitate the scheme: or employ the "Daily Mail" to boom it. The annual profit of the three lines is only some three million pounds, and they could, therefore, be bought for something under eighty millions.

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The Railway Conciliation Boards which were established by Mr. Lloyd George fifteen months ago have just been reported on by the Board of Trade. We were disposed at the time to deprecate the enthusiasm with which the first Wages Boards in this country were everywhere received; and we see no reason in the Report to regret it. There have been no strikes: which is all the public and politicians cared about: and by splendid exertions the Railwaymen's Union has kept its head above water. But we cannot gather that wages have more than microscopically mounted, in spite of the ill-natured complaints of the directors of

the Great Western. There have been many cases of victimisation of men, but on too petty a scale to attract attention outside the Union. The "Times" is delighted, of course; but we shall be interested to hear what the men think.

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Wherever the prospects of industrial dispute threaten to become portentous we may be sure that similar machinery will be invented. It is not only individuals who fly to chloral. There have long been signs that the gigantic boom in cotton manufacture which began in 1904 has collapsed, and Lancashire will follow the rest of England into the trough of depression. Anything more inconceivably silly than the haste with which immediately after the spring of 1905 Lancashire manufacturers began erecting new looms and spindles can scarcely be imagined. No fewer than ten million new spindles and 120,000 new weaving looms were run up as if the whole world were suddenly become wealthy enough to live on cotton goods, and contented enough to live on them for ever. As a matter of fact, there is enough plant in Lancashire at this moment to cotton-clothe the whole world without overtime. By the end of 1907, however, the effective demand had reached its height, and thereafter down to the present, spindles and looms have been plied with decreasing speed.

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With the ever-growing, ever-spreading impoverishment of cotton-buyers all over the world, the Lancashire mill-owners and operatives have now to face the prospect of a continued falling in the demand for their activity. The questions of wages, easily settled when the mills are busy, pop up their revolting heads so soon as the mills grow quiet. And this accounts for the important joint meeting of masters and union officials with Mr. Churchill on Thursday, when it was unanimously resolved to establish a Joint Committee to devise a scheme for the future automatic regulation of wages in the cotton industry. We shall, as before in the case of the Railway Board, abstain from lyrics.

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By the way, the facts contained in the above paragraphs enable us very definitely to challenge the leading anti-Socialists on another of their arguments against Socialism. In his "Problems and Perils of Socialism," Mr. St. Loe Strachey writes: "The ultimate cause of poverty is scarcity, and the only way to combat scarcity is by increased production." Mr. Balfour takes up the argument, and declares that the real problem of society is not the distribution of wealth but its increased production. Well, here we have a complete reply. Lancashire has increased her productive power to such a point that her looms can now supply cotton goods sufficient for all the world. Yet at this moment her spindles and looms are falling idle while still millions of people have no cotton goods to bless themselves with. The "Times" correspondent declares that "the main factor is over-production," Mr. Strachey and Mr. Balfour contend that it is under-production. Which is right? Of course, both theories are demonstrably nonsense. It is neither a case of over-production nor of under-production; but of under-consumption due to the idiotic distribution of wealth resulting from private possession of the means of production. We defy Mr. Strachey or Mr. Balfour to get over it.

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The pressure of a constantly increasing national expenditure threatens to thrust greatness on each successive Chancellor, unless he happens to be a Mr. Austen Chamberlain. If Mr. Lloyd George is not unwilling there is plenty of reputation for him to make this year. In fourteen years the cost of the Navy has almost doubled, the Army Estimates have gone up by nine millions, while Social Reform, as is proper, adds annually its Shavian appendix of expense. Useless now to talk of Retrenchment. The old Radical watchword is dead. There will be no Peace if Reform is to be preceded by Retrenchment. For the country is equally in favour of an expensive Army, an expensive Navy, and expensive Social Reforms. Where is the money to come from? Broadening the basis of taxation will not do, since two million families are already reduced to living on £1 a week. Taxing bachelors will not do, as Mr. Shaw says, since most bachelors have only income enough for one or less. Tariff Reform is no remedy, and Free Trade is a blown egg.

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There is, however, a land of Goshen flowing with milk and honey towards which we may hope, from a hint dropped this week, Mr. Lloyd George has lifted up his eyes. It is the unearned income of the super-wealthy. The thin edge of the wedge between earned and unearned incomes was inserted by Mr. Asquith in the form of a threepenny-bit in 1907. Let Mr. Lloyd George hammer upon that wedge! At the special Conference on Taxation at Portsmouth the Labour Party recommended a super-tax on large incomes, special taxation of State-conferred monopolies, increased estate and legacy duties, and the taxation of land values. Of them all we like the first best, since it promises most. Besides, such a tax would conform to the best canons. Mr. J. A. Hobson, in the February "International," writes: "Unearned income alone possesses a true ability to pay . . . . a tax on wages is invalid because it is a tax upon a necessary cost of production." There are some 14,000 persons in Britain with each an income of over £5,000 a year. When soup was mentioned the Mock-Turtle was distressed

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If Mr. Haldane made nothing else clear in his speech on the Army, he left us in no doubt that the two chief recruiting sergeants are now starvation and ignorance, commonly called unemployment and the "Daily Mail." Plutarch tells us that Caius Marius came to a bad end, who was the first to raise a levy among the poor and the slaves. Mr. Haldane disposed of some other fictions also, of interest to Citizen Army advocates. An army of home defence was not, he said, to be conceived as "squatting on the sea-shore with bayonets fixed," waiting for the brothers of our German waiters and stockbrokers. No, an army of home defence must be an army of defence, and therefore ready to make itself at home on the Khyber Pass or on the plains of Belgium. He had only a feeble reply to make to the charge of abetting private conscription in the case of Lord Rothschild's employees—Rothschildren of the Empire as we may call them; and a feeble reply was all that was possible. Mr. Ward complained that promotions from the ranks were fewer than ever. So they are; the eight hundred officers annually needed are now almost entirely raised on unearned incomes. But it appears that officers must be gentlemen, if nothing else. In a forthcoming book, Sir Francis Vane records the reply of a young Dragoon captain whom he asked during the Boer War to accompany him on some reconnoitring, reminding him at the same time of what Germans did: "My dear fellow, the Germans are different; they are professional soldiers." At a certain concert given in Pretoria the notice on the door was: "Officers and civilians only admitted. Soldiers not allowed."

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It seems from the discussion of the India Councils Bill in the House of Lords that there is an even more dangerous person than the man on the spot, namely, the man who has been on the spot. Not one of the ex-Viceroys who spoke and voted against Lord Morley's proposal to associate Indians with their own provincial government would have tolerated their own speeches had they been in office. We can imagine Lord Curzon's state of mind, had he been Viceroy now, at having his advice to Lord Morley repudiated by the House of Lords. But Lord Curzon claims regal, as late he claimed vice-regal powers. For once since his elevation to the Peerage we are driven to sympathise with Lord Morley and to realise the difficulty of his task. He is, however, much too complaisant with the extinct potentates. Knowing as he did the peril in which they were placing India, and being, as he is, responsible to England for India, it was his duty to protest more strenuously and, if need be, in the imperative. As it is, he has allowed the dead bureaucrats to score a victory over the living at the expense both of England and India.

On the Brink.

As the snows are melting on the Balkan mountains, as the trees and flowers are beginning to leaf and bud, so the human forces of death and destruction are gathering in a mighty and criminal effort to plunge Europe into what may be an interminable struggle. That the situation in the Balkans has reached a stage at which war may break out at any moment cannot be disputed; and it is our duty to point out the essential facts which have created this deplorable situation.

The aim of Russian foreign policy in the Near East is Constantinople; Austria's goal is Salonica. The Reform movement in Turkey and the development of the Balkan States have rendered these ambitions of Russia and Austria extremely unlikely of fulfilment without a European war. Both Russia and Austria are seeking to entangle each other, the Balkan States, and Turkey, in such a conflict that the weaker States must be ruined, politically, and commercially.

The document known as "The Will of Peter the Great," which is a striking revelation of Russian foreign policy, contains these two remarkable passages: "Interest the House of Austria in the expulsion of the Turk from Europe, and under this pretext maintain a permanent army and establish dockyards on the shores of the Black Sea, and thus, by ever moving forward, we will eventually reach Constantinople." Then: "Encourage Austria in her favourite idea of national predominance, profit by the slightest ascendency gained over her to entangle her in disastrous wars, so that she may be gradually weakened; even help her sometimes; but incessantly stir up against her the enmity of the whole of Europe."

The Viennese financial and commercial houses in the last twelve months have exhibited the greatest activity with regard to the extension of the main line of the Orient Railways from Vienna to Salonica. The completion of this railway and its control by Austria would give Austria economic predominance in the Balkan States, and would be a long step towards "the expulsion of the Turk from Europe," because Salonica would rapidly become an "Austrianised" town. If Austria were successful in the execution of this scheme, Russia's plan against Constantinople would be jeopardised, for this reason. Once Austria obtained a de facto, if not a de jure, control of Salonica, her interest, would be, as is England's interest, to maintain the Turk at Constantinople as a temporary bulwark between herself and Russia. England's Imperial interest is to support the Turkish occupation of Salonica and Constantinople, on the principle that commanding ports in the Mediterranean such as these should be held either by England or by a neutral weak Power like Turkey.

The other countries directly involved are Servia, Montenegro, Roumania, and Bulgaria. Broadly speaking, these States have two common enemies, Russia and Austria. England and Italy are friendly; while France is in the position of a looker-on. The Balkan States have enmities and jealousies which weaken them in the face of their formidable opponents. Russia is an enemy to their independence from the national or Panslav aspect. At the moment, the jealousy of the Pan-Slavs is pushing Russia into intervention on behalf of Servia against the economic bondage which Austria is seeking to impose on the Serbs. But, if war ensues, the Servians will be between the Austrian devil and the Russian deep sea; for whichever of these Powers occupies Servian territory will not surrender that territory, unless driven out by a Turco-Balkan combination by land with the aid of Britain and Italy by sea.

The series of State papers known as "The Portfolio," published in the forties, gave a very full history of the Austrian and Russian intrigues in Servia and against the Turks. For instance, we may mention "The Memoir of the Serbian Government: on the subject of the distrust expressed to the French Ambassador, by the Ambassador of England and the Internuncio of Austria in regard to the Slaavs," which is dated, in the Translation, "Belgrade, Feb. 22nd, 1844," and begins thus: "A series of plots and clandestine intrigues on the part of Russia and Austria, has aroused the Slaavs from their apathy and political lethargy," etc.

In the midst of this turmoil, the wisdom of the policy recommended by the famous Pole, Prince Czartoryski, has gained the confirmation of time, though, unfortunately not yet, the confirmation of practice. He urged the European Powers "to adjust the flag of European Slavism, supported by civilisation and liberty, and oppose it to that of the Asiatic Panslavism of St. Petersburg and the decaying Teutonism of Vienna." The preservation of the Balkan nationalities is the best method of checking Russian and Austrian Imperialism.

There is one topic which should be put in its proper light, and that is the attitude of Servia. The Servians, it is true, have been provocative in one sense; on the other hand, the Austrian annexation of Bosnia, transforming a permissive occupation into a de jure and de facto occupation, showed the Servian statesmen and people that the Austrian foreign policy, which was being attacked in the memorandum of 1844 by the Servian Government of that period, had culminated in the illegal seizure of the jumping ground (as Bosnia and Herzegovina is), for Salonica, and "a temporary administration of Servia." The Austrian Press has been advocating for some time past a "temporary occupation of Servia," which would have the permanence of "the temporary occupation" of Bosnia. Under these circumstances, and they cannot be refuted, it is sophistry for Austria to complain of the Servian war preparations. To talk of Servia going to war with Austria without cause or reason is as absurd as to say that the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony were unprovoked aggressors on a peaceful British Empire. President Kruger thought it better to try to choke the British lion before the Transvaal Republic was eaten; it would not have been much use attempting it when the meal was over and digested.

Servia is preparing for Austria, so that the Servian "morsel" may be a little less toothsome than Vienna anticipates. Moreover, Servia is not alone in her war preparations. Montenegro, under the convention with Servia, has been importing arms, largely from Italy. Roumania has been silently and steadily arming since the last days of November. Turkey and Bulgaria, though there have been incorrect reports of de-mobilisation, have brought their forces up to war strength. All these warlike movements must lie at the door of Austria. The annexation of Bosnia was the immediate cause of this inflammable situation; but it was the finishing touch to Austria's intrigues for many decades.

Could Austria and her statesmen do other than expect that their acts would transform the Balkan plains into an armed camp? Theirs is the responsibility, and with them has lain the means of relieving the tension for months past. They have not chosen to do so, and the only inference one can draw is that Vienna (and we must add Buda Pesth, for Hungary is an equal participant) wants war. Austria, again, is a traitor to Europe.

The peoples of the States concerned, as is usual in these catastrophes of commercial and Imperialist ambition, have little voice in the decision, momentous though it is to them. They are the puppets; but they should remember that their homes, lives, and liberties may be destroyed, while the Rothschilds, the Hapsburgs, and the Hohenzollerns will quaff deeply, and with enjoyment, from the rivers of blood which their murderous and despicable conspiracies may cause to flow. Yet no Rothschild ever broke a square inch of his skin in any worthy cause.

"STANHOPE OF CHESTER."

Studies in the Poor Law.

I. The Abolition of the Guardians.

IT is too much to hope that everyone who is concerned for the welfare of his country will make the twelve hundred pages of the great Poor Law Commissioners' Report his pocket companion during the next few months. We make no excuse for insisting again, as we did last week, that this volume of evidence on the state of British poverty, and recommendations for its remedy, should become the common rallying point of all serious reformers, until the main suggestions of the Report are translated into law. Since we fear that this momentous document will not receive the intimate and direct study it deserves, we propose to examine, in a series of articles, the chief of the new avenues of knowledge which the Commissioners have driven through the very trackless subjects of Destitution and physical and mental Misery, which are summed up under the title of the Problem of Poverty. Quite beyond the immediate discussion of the Poor law and its administration, the Commissioners' Report is a most valuable encyclopædia of sociology. It covers the field of social organisation to an extraordinary extent; and brings together the theory and practice of social problems as they have been rarely united before.

We are naturally more concerned with the recommendations of the Minority Report: because it has an obvious logical coherency which cannot be detected in the scattered wisdom to which the Majority so often find themselves committed. The Minority members have nothing of the nervous dread of truth which has so often made the Majority write with a shaking hand. Mrs. Webb and her colleagues meant to cure the sickness of Poverty at the root with scientific thoroughness; Lord George Hamilton and his fellow-signatories handle the patient with the sympathetic touch of an aged nurse who was brought up in days when medicine had too much to do with herbs and incantations. Nevertheless, the student should not miss one word of the Majority Report; not merely because it contains much that is wise, and also an invaluable statement of the statistical facts, but because it utters the last despairing cry of the Charity Organisation Society, a rather piteous appeal to England that it will make one more attempt to cure Poverty by the quack methods of sentimental charity, instead of turning towards the logical rules of scientific economy. But, as we have already admitted, even the disciples of sentimental charity have made many concessions to the demands of science, although it is too often with half-hearted reluctance.

A very marked illustration of this charge of timidity can be seen in the diverse ways of stating the initial recommendation which is the preliminary statement of both the Majority and the Minority Reports. They both recommend the abolition of the Boards of Guardians. In the case of the Minority, they really mean what they say: the Guardians are to go for ever. But the Majority have no sooner abolished the Boards than, apparently overcome by their own audacity, they immediately call them into being again under the new names of Public Assistance Authorities and Voluntary Aid Committees.

But we will confine ourselves throughout these articles to the complete logic of the Minority steps, rather than spend time on the half measures of the Majority. The Minority recommend the entire repeal of all the Poor Laws which have been enacted since the great monument of Elizabeth's reign, the Poor Law Act of 1601. In this wholesale sweeping-away of existing laws, the Boards of Guardians, the administering organs of the whole system, naturally are swept away with the rules and regulations they controlled. This clean sweep of the Guardians is typical of the thoroughness of the Minority Report. We call attention to it at the beginning of this survey because it is the keynote of all that follows.

The reason given by the Minority for this abolition of the Guardians is an illuminating essay in scientific politics. They have nothing to say against the men and women who have been struggling for all these years to administer the Poor Law, except the conclusive reason that they are entirely untrained for the job they have in hand. The briefest summary of the Minority's objection to the Guardians is that they are amateurs trying to do work which should be done by experts. Perhaps that is nowhere precisely stated in the Report, but it is the underlying note of the whole. The Minority are most careful to say that they respect the Guardians: "We know of no branch of the public service in which there is a larger proportion of zealous and devoted men and women than among the 24,000 Poor Law Guardians, who suffer unmerited unpopularity and disrepute from having to work an antiquated and impracticable system, imposed on them by Parliament and the Local Government Board."

The Guardians, a body of ordinary people drawn from all parts of society, meeting together once a fortnight as a rule, besides in smaller committees, are asked to conduct the most difficult business which comes under the head of government, whether central or local. They have to deal with the most complicated cases which come into the consulting-room of society. They are the cases which have defied remedy in any other way; which have gone from bad to worse, until they are at the critical point of destitution. They obviously need the most expert advice which is available.

In one case it may be industrial training that is needed; in others it is medical treatment that should be given. Sometimes it is the problem of educating children in the most modern manner which comes before the Guardians for their approval; at another time it may be necessary to organise the most suitable training for men who have become flabby and nerveless through continual idleness and neglect. Beyond the necessity of deciding general principles such as are involved in the above questions, there are all the cases of individual applications for relief which should only be granted after the most careful investigations conducted by a highly trained official whose education is broad enough to give him a grasp of the multitude of facts which should govern his decision.

All this varied work, each piece of which obviously calls for the attention of the most highly trained expert that can be discovered, is plumped down before the scratch collection of persons who make up a Board of Guardians. Each separate set of cases is not sufficiently large to justify the Board in engaging the trained official to advise them, or in building the necessary accommodation for the special use of the class which calls for special treatment. The work which falls under the Poor Law should be done by experts; it is, at present, being done by Boards which do not profess to be made up of aught but amateurs.

So the Commissioners have unanimously recommended that the amateur Guardians shall be abolished. It is one more blow to the ridiculous system which allows the intricate details of public business to be managed by untrained persons who cannot be expected to have either the knowledge or the time to devote to their task. In these later days of scientific local government the expert official must be foremost, or the work will remain undone or done badly. The basis of the reformed Poor Law is to be the abolition of the unskilled person. How he is to be replaced by the skilled person while allowing for ultimate obedience to the voice of modern democracy is the problem which the Minority Report sets itself to solve.

Are Women Anarchists?

THERE is a style of destructive criticism which used to be considered most powerfully malignant because it begins by praise of the enemy. The trick of it has been discovered some time since, and it is now merely employed as a facile and humorous proem by casual debaters. Thus: "Yor a genelman, arn'cher—y'own the street, don'cher!"

Notwithstanding that this sort of rhetoric would seem altogether fustianned, let me say that I have seen it quite lately going about in broadcloth. Mr. G. K. Chesterton was wearing it.

So far behind everything that he has lost sight of Progress altogether, and believes himself grandly leading, he continues to preface his reactionary diatribes against the women of the forward movement by a subtle discharge of flattery at—Woman. True, he implies that suffragists are not women at all; but, then, why drag in Woman? He dragged in recently what he apparently believes to be my true womanhood—my secretiveness, social diplomacy, anarchism, etc.—for a few complimentary paradoxes, before arraigning me as a shrieking and hysterical suffragist and a poisonous political possibility. It is as if one were to preface an onslaught upon Mr. Chesterton as a furiously jolly old Oriental by references to that noble animal: Man!

Readers of THE NEW AGE may remember that in replying to Mr. Cecil Chesterton's query why women want the vote, I said that I thought him too unsympathetic to be a likely confidant of the persecuted suffragettes. This remark of mine Mr. G. K. Chesterton, in the "Illustrated London News," denounced as political treason. He writes:—

> Our politics are far gone in degradation, but it is still thought necessary to keep up the pretence of courage and candour, of letting the enemy know our policy. Imagine Mr. Balfour asking the intentions of the Government, and imagine Mr. Asquith saying: "The Leader of the Opposition has not that true sympathy with my plans which I look for in a confidant." . . . That utterance proves either that women are generally, or that Miss Tina is specially, incapable of understanding the very idea of public life. . . . In corrupt and plutocratic times like ours, there are crowds of bad men who indulge in this political reticence, but no man has ever been so brazen as to avow that he hid his real policy up his sleeve.

For my part, I reply that a secret and sinister form of political intrigue was exactly what I suspected lurked behind Mr. Cecil Chesterton's request for a statement. Who will not agree with me that human nature, whether it be woman's or man's, detests most bitterly a betrayal? In the present case, the wolf in lamb's clothing was so sure he had the true sheep's head that he left his tail hanging out. Mr. Cecil Chesterton thought so meanly of the suffragists' intelligence that he presumed to deride the serious attitude of women towards the vote even while he sued for information. Of course, the fact is that he had not got among lambs at all but among creatures quite as wily as himself and, moreover, accustomed to confront the wolf in naturalibis; and some probably are still wondering why on earth he bothered to rig himself up like that. For a man to say, in effect: "Personally I'm in favour of the vote, but you women amuse me taking it so seriously, and anyway, what do you expect to get by it?" is too feebly hypocritical. That sort of thing is out of use even by Cabinet Ministers.

Mr. G. K. Chesterton's accusation of "political treason" is sheer bluff. Women are not even recognised in politics. Suffragettes are not sentenced as political prisoners, and they have no political assurance except that whatever they say will be received with laughter and impatiently dismissed. If the Premier treated Mr. Balfour as he has treated the suffragette leaders, the Opposition might be expected to retaliate much as the women are doing, with reserve of plans and obstinate battle for whatever weapon would quickest rid it of such tyranny.

One of Mr. G. K. Chesterton's "fundamental laws" is that Providence divided humanity into two sexes: anarchists and legalists. "Women are all anarchists," he says. We are to infer that men are all legalists. Anarchism would appear to be liberty to fib, sweedle and intrigue so long as it is only exercised in home and social matters. The desire of some modern women to get free of such "liberty" is regarded as an impertinent aspiration towards legalism. Woman, for her part, has discovered that she possesses naturally as much sense of equity as man, and is not more naturally prone to anarchism than the sex which has produced those models of secrecy and intrigue, the Jesuits, the Freemasons, and the Templars. Mr. Chesterton rather rashly draws attention to these bodies; as instances, however, of the legalism of the other men who did not belong to them and subsequently demolished them. "Healthy human Governments have . . . always hated secret societies merely because they were secret." Yet in the course of his mazy article he gives utterance to a complaint which I quote in all its wealth of sly innuendo, animadversion, and faint praise: "A woman can keep a secret well enough if she thinks it worth keeping. If she does not take great care to keep a secret of the Foreign Office or a secret of the Stock Exchange, it is because she does not think such secrets of any particular importance; and she may be right." Really, to be arraigned and condemned as a sex for secrecy, by a writer who betrays in every second line that practically all men's business depends upon the keeping of some secret or other! Mr. Chesterton concedes woman a position: "she may be right." Very well—I take it: Men may be wrong in their political "diplomacies" and their Stock Exchange fabrications. It is quite evident that the whole tinkering system of jurisprudence of which they are so inordinately vain, has not yet formulated a satisfactory marriage law, poor law, or land law; and the criminal law only proves its utter failure as a regenerative policy. Mr. Chesterton is sensitive to the consequence of woman's eye opened upon the masculine ideal of pure legalism; it will not stand examination as a working agency. The modern demand for divorce, old age pensions, small holdings, and the Borstal Schools testify to the folly of a permanent jurisprudence, constructed on only half of human nature.

The fact is that both men and women are at once legalistic and anarchistic. The knowledge how best to employ these qualities in human affairs is a matter of training. Women are determined to get this training, and they think it may quickest be gotten by the exercise of the vote. Mr. Chesterton remarks that the real question of the political power of the sexes has never been discussed at all. To me the real question of the political power of my own sex is: "Will it lead to progressive or to reactionary legislation?" And, since women have some knowledge of the horrific lessons of political history in the matter of man-made coercive measures, it is, at least, no foregone conclusion that they will continue a restrictive policy. If woman is the apostle of liberty she must also be the devotee of equality.

Of all writers, Mr. Chesterton appears to me the most anarchistic. His very style is free and roaming, with his real intention hidden in a maze of paradox. And he is right. Life is like that. But he has not the courage of his instincts. Now and again he is subverted by his artificial ideals. When he accuses me of being "a womanly woman, socially diplomatic," etc., I clap my hands. I am a devotee of the fan and kerchief. I adore selecting picnic-parties. I have never been cured of love-making. In all these things I am pre, mid, and post-Victorian, and eternally may I remain so. But when, further, he says: "Do cease shrieking for a vote—you don't ever want anything but to flirt a fan and arrange weddings," I reply, "You are jolly well misinformed about me." And this freedom of retort he says is not equality but privilege. I cannot argue with him on this point since his definition of equality evidently does not agree with mine, and we should never get any further. I simply say, "I want the vote."

BEATRICE TINA.

Unedited Opinions.

X.—A Mystical Interlude.

How would you describe your own philosophy?

As optimistic nihilism, I should say.

What kind of wonderful wildfowl is that?

You are right, it is a bird of the air, the bird of paradise; and its home is not on the earth. I despise the earth, but no more than I despise the moon and sun and stars. They are all to me infinitely worse than nothing. I would I could break the casket planets between my hands. They are empty, and it is their emptiness I desire. I would blow out the sun as a bubble, and the stars I would trample to golden dust. Then would come a great space filled with a great stillness. Have you heard the Persian mystical song? Roughly translated it is this:—

> "When will the Sun grow weary of watching
> The dance of the worlds about him?
> Like a Sultan of his odalisques
> He seems never to tire.
> But the odalisques tire . . . . O Lord the Sun,
> Have pity . . . . We are weary with dancing."

That, my dear friend is the voice of fatigue. There is no optimisim in that.

The Persian sentiment is not wholly mine. I am not weary, only unsatisfied. No thing satisfies, only nothing satisfies. I have the passion for Nothing.

You know that desire for Nothing is simply desire in vacuo. There can be no desire for Nothing, since Nothing is no object.

Say not so, for it is not true. Nothing is perfect object: it is objects that are fragments. Nor, alas! are they fragments that can ever make a whole . . . The creation of the world was a ghastly blunder.

Whose, you compel me to ask?

Our own. And I would undo that blunder by destroying the world.

By what means?

By death we all destroy this world. But only for a time. Imagination that created the world can alone destroy it for ever.

Then it is only in your mind that the world exists?

Deeper than that, or the task would be easy. Our mind and the world are one. To destroy the world we must destroy our mind.

That has been done, I fancy, too often.

Oh! by accident, yes, but how often by design and by will? Twice only in the tedious history of the world, we are told. It should have been a million times by this. Whoever knows the mind knows its malice: it is the means by which the first blunder is maintained. Reading the old mythology, I am not sure that Mind did not precede world, and thus become the parent blunder. What is the mind? A serpent coiled upon itself, with its tail in its mouth; and we, poor devils, within its dragon ring. Proof? Nothing simpler. Every articulable proposition is a product of mind. But the mind in which it is born is the mind in which it must die, propositions being phenomena, as unstable as objects. Oh! the transitory nature of sublunary delights has often been the subject of moral meditations. But the profounder observation concerns the transitory nature of all articulate ideas. Since, then, the Mind is both creator and destroyer of ideas, it follows surely that we are here slaves of a ring. Ideas rise, and we obey them; they disappear, and are no more. Further, they each lead to their opposite, as Plato observed, and as our modern paradoxists exemplify.

You refer to Chesterton in particular?

Chesterton has not the courage of his paradoxy. Born orthodox, he early embraced heterodoxy. When that proved useless, he flew to paradox, but he calls it orthodoxy. However, his style betrays him.

What means are there for destroying the mind in your sense?

Many are tried, but few are known. Paradoxy is one. Whoever rightly comprehends a paradox is not far short of freedom of the mind. Such an one can put on or take off the serpent-ring at will. And that, after all, is intellectual freedom. To be the slave of one's mind is not freedom; but to be its master . . . you know, curiously, Wells has had a vision of that. So has Shaw; only he insists on wearing the ring always, though voluntarily.

You mean that, though no slave to reason, he always reasons?

Precisely.

But there are other methods of surmounting the mind than Paradox. I should say Poetry is one of the best ways: it is the way of Beauty. And you observe that along with the rise of Paradox we have also a renaissance of Poetry. That was only to be expected. Both are aspects of Romance, and true Romance is mystical, super-rational. Shaw, who hates Romance, wears Reason as an amulet . . . Another way is Religion, which I only understand when it is called Love, and then only . . . Plato thought that the noblest way, and Plato was a Greek . . . And there are other ways.

But what relation, may I ask, have all these, or any of these, with your Optimistic Nihilism?

They are all means, my friend, to the same end.

You imply that Chesterton, Shaw, and the rest are birds of your feather?

Certainly, though some wear a disguise for themselves and some for others. But tell me, do you think that Chesterton, with his Paradoxy, or Shaw, with his Mysticism, or poets, with their O altitudino, know or even can imagine what they desire? You do not: and for the simple reason that they cannot. In them is a passionate desire to break bounds, to break all bounds. Bondage and slavery, whether human or divine, is intolerable to them. What matters it to them that the world is the will of God if the will of God is not their will? Down with tyranny, even though it be the tyranny of existence.

And what then?

Ah, that is where the optimism appears. Destroy the mind, men say, and there is nothing but a blank blackness. Cowards! Destroy the mind by will, and the blank is light, the light that was or ever the worlds were made. That is the faith of the divine in its immortal divinity. And thus sings the Oriental sage, in love with Nothing: "Not though kings offered me palaces of gold, not though the Rishis of the Sun gave me the Moon to be my plaything, not though the Four Lords enticed me with the mastery of the Milky Way, not for these things, nor for anything created, would I abandon my desire for the eternal void." And again: "Give me the magical word that opens the circle wherein I suffer. Put me beyond the ring of all the worlds, no more to me than a cluster of stones. For I go round and round, a light confined, a passion that is penned, and a heart of desire that must surely break the world or itself."

How like Nietzsche and his doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence!

Nietzsche as a poet learned more than Nietzsche as thinker could ever express. His doctrine, besides, is vulgarly Imperialist. Nietzsche was the German Eagle!

Well, I confess your ideas daze me. My head begins to recur violently.

I should like to have continued. Do you know the intimate relations the subject has with politics, for example . . .

A. R. ORAGE.

The Big Battalions.

LONDON was hot and dry, and would have been parched, cracked, and shrivelled had it been alive instead of dead. The masonry was so dry that the eye wearied of it before the feet wearied of the pavement, and both desired the rain that makes the city at one with Nature. The plane trees were like so many captives along the streets, shackled to the flagstones, pelted with dust, humiliated, all their rusticity ravished, though not forgotten. The very sky, lofty, blue, white-clouded, was parched, the blue and the white being soiled by a hot, yellowish grey scum that harmonised with gritty pavements and stark towers and spires. The fairest thing to be seen—away from the river—was the intense young green of the grass blades trying to grow up through the gratings which surround the trees of the streets. The grass was a prophet muttering wild ambiguous things, and since his voice was very small and came from underground, it was hard to hear him, even without understanding. Thousands tread down the grass, so that, except for a few hours of night, it can never emerge from the grating.

Some vast machinery plunged and thundered behind thin walls, but, though they trembled and grew hot, it burst not through. Even so the multitude in the streets, of men and horses and machines and carriages of all kinds, roared and moved swiftly and continually, encaged within walls that are invisible; and they also never burst through. Both are free to do what they are told. All of the crowd seem a little more securely imprisoned than him who watches, because he is aware of his bars; but they move on, or seem to do, on and on, round and round, as thoughtless as the belt of an engine.

There was not one face I knew; not one smiled; not one relaxed or contracted with a thought, an emotion, a fancy; but all were clear, hard, and fixed in a vice, so that though they were infinite in their variety—no two eyebrows set the same way, no two mouths in the same relation to the eyes—the variety seemed the product of a senseless ingenuity and immense leisure, as of a sublime philatelist. Hardly one spoke; only the women moved from left to right instead of straight on, and their voices were inaudible when their lips moved. The roar in which all played a part developed into a kind of silence which not any one of these millions could break: the sea does not absorb the little rivers more completely than this silence the voices of men and women, than this solitude their personalities. Now and then a face changed, an eyebrow was cocked or a mouth fell; but it meant less to me than the flutter as of a bird where drop by drop the rain drips from the beeches and gives a flash and a trembling to one leaf and then another in the undergrowth. There is a more than human force in the movement of the multitude, more than the sum of all the forces in the arched necks, the grinding chest muscles, and the firm feet of the horses, the grace of the bright women, the persistency of the tall men and thick men. They cannot stop. They look stupid or callous or blank or even cruel. They are going about another's business; they conceal their own, hiding it so that they forget (as a drunkard forgets where he has hidden his gold) where they have hidden it, hiding their souls under something stiffer and darker than the clothing of their bodies. It is hard to understand why they do not sometimes stop one another, to demand where the soul's business is hid, to snatch away the masks. It was intolerable that they were not known to me, that I was not known to them, that we should go on like waves of the sea, obeying whatever moon it is that sends us thundering on the unscaleable shores of night and day. Such force, such determination, as moved us along the burning streets might scale Olympus. Where was he who could lead the storming party?

Between a pack of cabs and a pack of 'buses there was a quiet space of fifty yards in length; for a little while it seemed that the waves were refusing their task. Here was not one black coat, not one horse, not one brightly-loaded 'bus; no haste.

In front marched a Russian son of man, with white black-bearded face, long black hair more like plumage than hair in its abundance and form, and he wore no hat. He walked straight as a soldier, but with long, slow steps, and his head hung so that his bare breast supported it, for he had no coat, and his shirt was half open. He had knee breeches, bare and very white legs, and shoes on his feet. His hands were behind his back, as if he was handcuffed. Two men walked beside him in other men's black clothes and black hats worn grey—two unnoticeable human beings, snub-nosed, with small, rough beards, dull eyes, shuffling gait. Two others followed them close, each carrying one of the poles of a small white banner inscribed with the words: "The Unemployed." These also were unnoticeable, thin, grey, bent, but young, their clothes, their faces, their hair, their hats almost the same dry colour as the road. It was impossible to say what their features were, because their heads hung down and their hats were drawn well on to their heads, and their eyes were unseen. They could not keep step, nor walk side by side, and their banner was always shaky and always awry. Next, in no order, came three others of the same kind, shambling like the rest, of middle height, moderately ill-dressed, moderately thin, their hands in their pockets. A cart came close behind, drawn by a fat grey donkey who needed no driving. He who rode in the cart had his back to the shafts, and, leaning forward on a tub into which money was expected to be thrown, he appeared to be talking to those who trailed at the back; for he waved an arm and wagged his yellow beard. He was fat, and dressed in a silk hat, frock coat, and striped trousers almost too ancient to be ridiculous had they not kept company with a jaunty pair of yellow boots. He was midway between a seaside minstrel and a minister, had not one gesture destroyed the resemblance by showing that he wore no socks. Round about this cart also were the words: "The Unemployed," repeated or crudely varied. Those whom he addressed were the fifteen or twenty who completed the procession, but seemed not to listen. They were all bent, young and middle-aged men, fair-haired, with unintentional beards, road coloured skins, and slightly darker clothes. Many wore overcoats, the collars turned up, and some had nothing under them except a shirt, and one not that. All with hands in pockets, one carrying a pipe, all silent and ashamed, struggling onward with bent knees. No two walked together: there was no approach to a row or a column in their arrangement; nor was there any pleasing irregularity as of plants grown from chance-scattered seed; by no means could they have been made to express more feebleness, more unbrotherliness, more lack of principle, purpose, or control. Each had the look of the meanest thief between his captors. Two blue, benevolent, impersonal policemen, large men, occasionally lifted their arms as if to help forward the contemptible procession; sometimes, with a quick motion of the hand, they caused the straggling rear to double their pace for a few yards by running with knees yet more bent and coat-tails flapping and hands still deep in pockets—only for a few yards—for their walking pace was their best, all having the same strength, the same middle height, the same stride, though no two could be seen keeping step.

The traffic thickened, and amidst the horses that nodded and trampled and the motor-cars that fumed and fretted, the procession was closed up into a grey block beyond the donkey cart. On one side of the donkey was the black-bearded man, his right arm now resting on the animal's neck; on the other side, the policemen; in front the standard-bearers hung down their heads and held up their poles. Often the only remnant visible was the raven crest of the leader.

The multitude on the pavement continued to press straight onward or to flit in and out of coloured shops. None looked at the standard, the dark man and his cloudy followers except a few of the smallest newspaper boys who had a few spare minutes, and rushed over to march with them in the hope of music and a speech or a conflict. The straight flower-girl flashed her eyes

as she stood on the kerb, her left arm curving with divine grace round the shawl-hidden child at her bosom, her left hand thrust out full of roses. The tender, well-dressed women leaning on the arms of their men smiled faintly, a little pitiful, but gladly conscious of their own security and pleasantness. Men with the historic sense glanced and noted the fact that there was a procession. One man, standing on the kerb, took a sovereign from his pocket, looked at it and then at the unemployed, made a little gesture of utter bewilderment and, dropping the coin down into the drain below, continued to watch. Comfortable clerks and others of the servile realised that here were the unemployed about whom the newspapers had said this and that—("a pressing question"—"a very complicated question not to be decided in a hurry"—"it is receiving the attention of some of the best intellects of the time"—"our special reporter is making a full investigation"—"who are the genuine and who are the impostors?"—"connected with Socialist intrigues")—and they repeated the word "Socialism" and smiled at the bare legs of the son of man and the yellow boots of the orator. Next day they would smile again with pride that they had seen the procession which ended in feeble, violent speeches against the Army and the Rich, in four arrests and an imprisonment. For they spoke in voices gentle with hunger. They were angry, and uttered curses. One waved an arm against a palace, an arm that could scarcely hold out a revolver even were all the kings sitting in a row to tempt him. In the crowd and disturbance the leader fell and fainted. They propped him in their arms and cleared a space about him. "Death of Nelson," suggested an onlooker, laughing, as he observed the attitude and the knee breeches. "If he had only a crown of thorns . . ." said another, pleased by the group. "Wants a bit of skilly and real hard work," said a third.

EDWARD THOMAS.

To All Children.*

This nineteen hundredth year and nine,
I that am called Charles Lounsbury,
Thinking on all this wealth of mine,
And how I'm lapped in luxury;
And yet have nothing else, pardie,
But what all creatures born may share;
In my right mind (if mine it be)
These dispositions do declare.

Of goods, as men count goods (although
They are but vain encumbrances)
Possessing naught, I'd have you know,
(Houses and books and such as these)
As I envisage my decease,
And how I needs must say good-bye
Ev'n to myself—the only lease
I hold, and that by charity—

Item, this tenement of clay
Unto the ashes I devise,
Praying the flames may purge away
All foulness, and that no man's eyes
By me be minded that there lies
Corruption underneath the sod,
Nor that contamination dyes
The daisies that his feet have trod.

Item, those shields of white and gold
I here bequeath to every child,
Inclusively, or young or old,
In first or second childhood styled,
To have so long as undefiled
They keep their childhood's term; and all
The garden flowers, and wood-flowers wild
And water-lilies magical.

And all the rights that do pertain,
And all the graces that are over
The buttercups and daisy-chain,
The meadow-grass and four-leaf clover;
The right of truant and of rover,
The sunshine's rare prerogative
To dance from Holyhead to Dover,
To play on dale and down,—I give.

Yet, as in Garth of Paradise
There fruited one forbidden tree,
So with one warning must I spice
With peril this my legacy;
Thistles and thorns that they let be
Fretted like any porcupine
With pricks and quills, whereof are free
Nor roses nor the eglantine.

For children needs must hate the thorn,
For it hath been accurst, 'tis said,
Since seven times by it was torn
The flesh about the Child's forehead:
But no man hath discovered
The thistle's sin, and yet, alas!
He's outcast, and the daily bread
Of none but of Burnel the Ass!

Likewise, to children I bequeathe,
From Windsor or from Whitechapel,
The aromatic airs that breathe
From ribbèd bank of brooks that well
Amid the orchard-grass; the smell
Of willows, too, that dip therein;
And golden sands that, I've heard tell,
For them the water-fairies spin.

To Cicely and to Marguerite,
To Lancelot, yes, and Vivian,
I leave the clouds that fleet
Above the tall tree-tops. My ban
Is laid on whatsoever man
For his sole use preserve or fence
Aught that when England first began
Girt her with Earth's munificence.

Only I lay upon my heirs
One charge, that all the long, long days
They spend in merriment; and theirs
I freely make the thousand ways
To play again the ancient plays—
To catch one's shadow,—race the wind,—
Till locks are golden as sun rays,
And every cheek is russet-skinn'd.

Item, the Night, her robe star-sown,
The Crescent-Moon her diadem,
I do devise them for their own,
Subject to this, that they contemn
No lover that shall ask of them
The boon of summer-scented lanes,
Arbours that jasmine-stars begem,
And all the nightingale's domains.

Item, to men I leave, in trust,
Commons and idle fields (whereby
I mean all such as may or must
Be left untill'd). They shall supply
To boys their playgrounds, nor deny
To them conjointly for their use,
Nor bid their happy ball-games fly
The covert and the park's abuse.

And when Old Winter, like a ghost,
Tricks river and pond in garments grim,
I will these Faun-like things to coast
The snow-clad mountain-sides, and skim
The very waters where they swim
In summer-tide, or tempt the fish
To leap towards the sapling slim,
The feather'd hook, the line, the dish!

I will the woods, that all too few
Alas! are left us,—wherein dance
The butterflies; or scamper through
The nut-brown squirrels, eye askance;
Home of strange sounds and sudden chance
Where shy beasts lair, and the birds noise;
The woods and their appurtenance,
The English woods to English boys

And lastly (for I long to sleep),
By each fireside, to boy and girl
I leave a place that they may peep
Wide-eyed at flames that flicker and whirl;
And that by mother's knees they curl
And spell from out the heart o' the coal
Its hid romance; but of the churl
Who shall forbid, pain rack the soul!

This nineteen hundredth year and nine,
I that am called Charles Lounsbury,
Disposing thus of what was mine,
And therefore light of heart, leave free
From let or hindrance, charge or fee,
The said things, now, henceforth, always,
To all that shall come after me,—
And unto God . . . . a holiday!

H. LIONEL ROGERS.

* *Vide* "Clarion" for Friday, February 5th, 1909. "A Quaint Will."

The First Impulse.

By Jules Lemaitre.

(Translated by E. Morse.)

TOURIRI was a rich citizen of Bagdad, famous for his virtues. Not only did he help the poor with money, even reducing his own luxury to increase his alms; but his patience was praiseworthy in listening to the sorrows and confidences of every sufferer and in comforting them with kind words, and by interposing on their behalf. He bore with resignation the sordid little annoyances which make the groundwork of all human life. He was really broad-minded, and never became angry if others did not agree with him; a rare and difficult virtue, for the secret desire of every man is that everyone else should be like him and yet inferior.

Married to a sour-tempered wife, he remained faithful to her and forgave all her ill humour, and was not vexed with her for being no longer young nor pretty. And, finally, having a knack of composing verses and of writing fables in a dramatic form for the theatre, he was pleased at the success of his rivals, and showed them this by sincere praise and by doing them all kinds of good offices.

Briefly, his life was one act of love, gentleness, loyalty, and disinterestedness, and he was regarded as a saint and a gentleman by all. And yet he had not that serenity which generally appears on the faces of saints. His features had a tortured expression like those of a man a prey to violent passions or to secret suffering; and often, just as he was going to act, he was seen to lower his eyes for a moment, either to recover himself or to prevent people from reading his gaze. But no one paid any heed to this.

. . . .

Not far from Bagdad lived an ascetic of the name of Maitreza, a worker of miracles, to whom many devout persons were used to make pilgrimages. Exempt from the ordinary conditions of human life, Maitreza was able to keep himself so still that the swallows built their nests on his shoulder. His beard, covered with the droppings from the birds, descended to his waist, and his body was like the wrinkled trunk of a tree. He had lived like this for 90 years, because it was his hobby.

One day he heard a pilgrim say: "Touriri seems in his goodness to be a re-incarnation of Ormuzd. There would really be no more suffering on the earth if such a man could do all he wished." The immobility of Maitreza seemed to become still more rigid. It was evident that the ascetic had entered into direct communication with Ormuzd. After a few minutes he said to the pilgrim: "I cannot induce Ormuzd to give Touriri the power of doing anything he may wish, for then he would be God himself. But Ormuzd permits that from to-morrow *every first desire* of this virtuous man in any circumstances of his life shall be at once realised." "Ah!" replied the pilgrim, "that comes to almost the same thing. Touriri's first wish on every occasion will be the same as his others, and so of course charitable and generous. Venerable Maitreza, you tell me of happiness for a great many people, and I thank you with all my heart."

If Maitreza's beard had not been so impenetrable, the pilgrim might have surprised the ghost of a smile on his stony lips. But almost immediately the ascetic relapsed into his profound reverie. The pilgrim returned to the city, rejoicing beforehand at the benefits which the miraculous power of the kindly Touriri would of course produce.

. . . .

Next morning, when Touriri awoke, he gazed at his wife, still asleep by his side; she, moved by a mysterious power, quickly got up, jumped out of the window, and broke her neck on the paved courtyard below.

When he left his house the beggars crowded round him. He did not say anything unkind to them, and even began as usual to feel in his purse, but suddenly all the beggars fell down dead.

On the public promenade, he met the lovely Madanika, one of the most famous courtesans in Bagdad. This virtuous man did not dissemble his wishes in regard to her. She took him home and was kind to him. After which, while she was relating her life to him, and assuring him that she was quite different from other women, she suddenly expired in Touriri's arms, although he continued to hold her for politeness. On leaving her, he was stopped at a cross-road by a crush of vehicles. He began to get impatient, when suddenly all the drivers, who were keeping him from passing, fell from their seats, and all the horses were hamstrung, as if by some invisible force.

He went to the theatre, and disputed there with the learned Cavilaka about a certain verse, which the latter attributed to Nisami, and which Touriri thought was by Saadi, the poet of the roses. Suddenly the savant sank down vomiting blood.

A comedy played that evening was a great success, and the public acclaimed it with vociferous applause. Just a moment before Touriri (who, as I just said, loved to dabble in the theatre) had decided to clap in his turn, the author of the play unexpectedly gave up the ghost.

Touriri went home horror-struck at all this massacre, and despairing of ever understanding it, killed himself by driving a dagger into his heart.

The ascetic Maitreza died the same night.

. . . .

Both were brought together before Ormuzd.

The ascetic thought:—

"I shall not be sorry to see this man treated as he deserves, for his false virtue was almost as much admired by the Persians as mine. And yet, when it was found out what he really was, he committed in the very same day innumerable sins and murders."

But Ormuzd, smiling at Touriri, said:—

"Virtuous Touriri, man of real goodness, my dear servant, enter into my rest."

"The jest is piquant," said the ascetic.

"I was never more serious in my life," replied Ormuzd. "You, Touriri, wished the annihilation of your wife because she was not sweet tempered, and no longer pretty; that of the beggars because they worried you, and were disagreeable to look at; that of your mistress because she was a fool; that of the drivers and their horses because they forced you to wait an annoying length of time; that of the learned Cavilaka because he did not agree with you; and that of the author of the play because he was more successful than you. All these wishes were perfectly natural. The murders with which Maitreza reproaches you were, in your case, the result of your first impulse, which no one can control. One always hates that which annoys one, and we always desire the annihilation of that which we hate. Nature is selfish, and selfishness is destruction. The most virtuous man begins by being a rascal at heart; and if power were given to a mortal to realise his first involuntary wish the world would soon be depopulated. This, Touriri, is what I wished people to understand by your example. I judge men on their second desire, for that only can they control. Without the mysterious gift, which, despite yourself, made that day full of murders, you would have continued to lead a life which would have benefited others. Therefore I must judge your will and not your nature. Your desire was kindly, and you always tried to correct your nature and to improve the mixed character of my work. That is why, dear collaborator, I open my paradise to you to-day."

"That is all very well," said Maitreza; "but what reward will you give to me then?"

"The same," said Ormuzd, "although you have not quite deserved it. You were a saint, but you ceased to be a man except in pride. You managed to stifle the first desire in yourself, but if every one lived like you, humanity would be more quickly annihilated than if they had the wonderful, weird power with which I afflicted my servant Touriri for one day. I like mankind to continue because they amuse me, and the spectacle is fine in parts. Your effects, wretched ascetic, were not quite without beauty, and I forgive you your monstrous error. To conclude, I receive Touriri into my bosom because I am just, and I admit you, Maitreza, because I am kind."

The Defeat of Charles Murray.

. . . . THE Socialist movement was only temporarily damped by the defeat and disintegration of the Labour Party in 1910, and the six years of Tory government which followed the overwhelming Liberal débacle of that year. Indeed, it is by no means certain that the Socialist propaganda did not gain rather than lose by the disaster. The moderate Labourites were drawn by community of misfortune back into the Liberal camp. The way was clear for a Socialist Party. True, there were now not more than half a dozen avowed Socialists left in the House, but these, in a position of greater independence, made far more stir than the 31 Labourites of the Parliament of 1906. Meanwhile Socialism was spreading rapidly throughout the country, and the membership of the I.L.P. and the S.D.P. branches was going up by leaps and bounds. The revival of Christianity, which on the Continent often acted as a check on the Socialist advance, here in England assisted it. The alliance effected by the Church Socialist League between Socialism and renascent Catholicism was everywhere bearing fruit. Auxiliaries from the Church of England, as well as from the Nonconformist Churches, were pouring into the movement.

The national disappointment with the new Tory Government helped to swell the current. Tariff Reform had certainly not justified the extravagant fears of the Liberals, but it had failed to justify the still more extravagant hopes of the Tories. The people of England did not live on nettles and horse-flesh; probably they were, on the whole, more prosperous than under the Free Trade régime. Still, Unemployment continued, and it soon became apparent that Tariff Reform did *not* mean "work for all." The adjustment of tariffs by the plutocratic ruling class fostered the growth of powerful monopolistic interests. The confrontation of classes had begun. The atmosphere was electric. It required only a match to set the country ablaze. It was Charles Murray who applied the match.

Murray was the child of Scottish peasant parents, and had, like so many clever lads of his class and nation, received a good education at St. Andrew's University. Thus he combined a native sympathy with, and understanding of, the common people with an intellectual culture which in England was then almost confined to the richer class. But over and above these advantages, he had been dowered by Nature with a priceless gift, the gift of an incomparable oratory. Old men who remembered the Midlothian Campaign declared that Gladstone at his best was not Murray's equal. He could play on an audience as on an instrument, melt it to tears, rouse it to passionate anger, touch the strings of every emotion at will. To this gift he added a profound knowledge of the condition of the workers, an intense indignation at their sufferings, and a close grip of economic Socialism.

He was returned to Parliament at a by-election in 1912 by a large majority in a three-cornered contest. The question then agitating the country was the attempt of the Tory Ministry to force a Conscription Bill through Parliament. The decisive victory of Murray following upon two or three Liberal successes was regarded as a menacing sign of the public dislike of what was called "Militarism," and led eventually to the dropping of the Bill. The Government fell back upon the plan of strengthening the so-called "Territorials," a force recruited mainly from the middle class by a kind of amateur conscription exercised by the richest firms of employers.

The small Socialist Party was divided on the Army question. It was indeed united in opposition to the Conscription Bill, but while some of its members wished to create a citizen army by compulsory military training without martial law, others were altogether hostile to military preparations, and wished to reduce the existing army to a minimum without providing any substitute. Murray belonged to the latter school. From the bottom of his heart he hated war and preparation for war, and his influence soon proved decisive. His oratory made him at once the acknowledged leader of the party in the House and its most conspicuous champion in the country. At by-election after by-election he had only to appear and speak for a candidate to secure that candidate's return. Eventually it became a regular thing for Liberals and Tories to combine to hold a seat against a Murrayite, but even this combination was rarely successful. The clever men who presided over the caucuses of the two capitalist parties looked forward to the next General Election with dread.

In 1916 the election came. At the end of the 1910 Parliament the figures had stood: Conservatives 392, Liberals 183, Labour and Socialist 12, Irish Nationalist 83. The new Parliament consisted of: Conservatives 224, Liberals 197, Labour and Socialist 166, Irish Natinalist 83. The Irish were in close alliance with Murray, so that the two capitalist parties united had only a majority of 172.

An attempt was immediately made to form a Radical Ministry under Mr. Winston Churchill, relying on Labour and Nationalist support, but the revolt of the Socialists on the one hand and of the moderate Liberals on the other brought the experiment to a premature conclusion. Mr. Churchill resigned, and Parliament was again dissolved. The new elections gave results even less satisfactory to the capitalists: the Liberal Party was practically obliterated, yet the Conservatives had not gained ground. The figures were: Conservatives 218, Liberals 143, Labour-Socialist 226, Irish Nationalist 83.

The panic among the propertied classes was indescribable. No longer was it possible for a young man of the wealthier class to avow himself a Socialist without inconvenience. The fashionable clubs blackballed men of good family and irreproachable character because they had advocated the mildest measures of social reform. The Tory and Liberal Parties were subjected to a savage purge, every man of the mildest Collectivist leanings being either intimidated or cast out. There was a general cry of consternation among all those who had anything to lose. And under this cry was heard another which such crises seldom fail to produce—the cry for a Dictatorship. And forthwith the Dictator appeared.

Sir Raymond Grenville had passed the earlier part of his life in the Indian Civil Service. He had been Secretary for India from 1910 till 1916, and had been distinguished by the relentless vigour and success with which he had suppressed the Indian Nationalist movement. He was now called to a harder and bloodier task. He became Prime Minister in 1918.

When the Liberal and Conservative Parties had been purged of some score of waverers, it was reckoned that there were at least 340 (or more than half the House) who could be relied upon to vote against the Socialists. But Grenville was determined to run no risks. His first act, therefore, was to do a deal with the Irish.

A Home Rule Parliament, with powers even more extensive than those conceded by Mr. Gladstone's Bill, was offered. The measure, it is true, was unacceptable to British democrats, for only free-holders were to vote in the counties and only ten-pound householders in the towns. But, as the Bill was accompanied by an extended scheme of compulsory purchase, thus turning almost all the remaining tenant farmers into free-holders, it was accepted by the Irish Party. The Nationalists deserted their Socialist allies and supported the Government in all its subsequent measures.

The King's Speech had promised, along with the Home Rule Bill, a Registration Bill for Great Britain and a Prevention of Crimes Bill. When these two

[Being an extract from Professor Rackshaw's "History of the Social Revolution in Great Britain," published A.D. 2016.]

measures were laid before the House there was not a little sensation. For the former amounted to nothing less than the disfranchisement of all British citizens who were not twenty-pound householders, while the latter enabled the Government to imprison indefinitely all who should be thought to meditate evil to the State. A precedent was found for this in the Prevention of Crimes Act of 1908, which established the Indeterminate Sentence.

The Crimes Bill was hurried through the House of Commons in a single sitting, sent up to the Lords, and carried into law within a week of its introduction. The Registration Bill was carried on its second reading by 415 votes to 240, and on the night of its passing two hundred of the minority were thrown into prison. Murray, who had exerted all his eloquence in vain against the two Bills, was the first to be arrested.

Then followed the White Terror, to which England still looks back with loathing and horror. Murray and three or four of his most intimate associates were brought to trial for high treason before a jury packed by the Government, and chosen from the fiercest anti-Socialists in London. The charge of the Lord Chief Justice closely resembled the charges of the judges who tried the suspects of the Popish and Rye House Plots. Of course they were convicted.

All this was not tamely borne. The Socialist populace attempted insurrection, but, alas! they had neglected the means which alone make insurrection possible. A few barricades erected by the S.D.P. in Clerkenwell and in the East End, being manned by men undisciplined and practically unarmed, were soon demolished by the regular troops. The rebellion of the North was more formidable, but its fiercer spirit and wider extent only prolonged the agony of its suppression. Lancashire and the West Riding, Glasgow, Birmingham, Newcastle were given up to massacre. It is estimated that not less than a million of men, women, and children perished. Meanwhile the Registration Bill passed both Houses by large majorities.

A frightful persecution of the Socialists followed. On May 28, 1919, Charles Murray, Nathaniel Hearst, Victor Grayson, A. R. Orage, Conrad Noel, Cecil Chesterton, and other prominent Socialists were publicly hanged in Trafalgar Square.

The fate of the last-named was the more undeserved, as he had always been conscious of the need of a Citizen Army.

CECIL CHESTERTON.

Books and Persons.

(AN OCCASIONAL CAUSERIE.)

AN occasion has arrived for glancing at certain reputations, old and new, four books by "eminent hands" having been published almost simultaneously in this active season. First there is Mr. John Galsworthy's "Fraternity" (Heinemann, 6s.). My sympathies are with the general tendency of Mr. Galsworthy. He has a comprehensive and a coherent view of his epoch, rare among novelists. He is intent on using the story-teller's gift (sole weapon really effective upon the public) to the end of some definite social criticism. He has acquired by accurate observation a large stock of facts, and he can arrange his facts around a centre. He knows how to find a great theme. He has a true feeling for his medium. You naturally expect that this general praise is the prelude to a particular blame. It is. The theme of "Fraternity" is worthy of him. It consists in that uneasy, conscience-struck preoccupation of the honest Haves with the condition of the Have-nots—a preoccupation which characterises this age perhaps more than it has characterised any other age in English history. He has seen his theme "in the air," and has seized it. Good! But I do not think that in other respects the novel is worthy of his promise. Its chief fault is a lack of dramatic grouping. Nothing in it stands out clear. And, further, neither the background nor the foreground is quite in focus. He seems to have been so meticulously busy with detail that he has forgotten to "compose" his picture. Also, I find a continual slight effect of caricature. Every character appears bizarre, highly unusual, as though in an excess of conscientiousness he had "teased" each figure by overhandling into something artificial. Possibly this misfortune has come to pass through his instinctive perception that he draws types better than individuals. (I imagine that "A Commentary" is, after all, his best book.) Then, though his sense of the seriousness of his calling is admirable, it forces him too often into the pose of a philosopher. The philosophising of a novelist should never be other than implicit; the novel should hold it in solution, leaving it to the reader to precipitate. And innumerable lumps of Mr. Galsworthy's philosophising are of third-rate quality. What heavenly use can be served by such sentences as this?: "Whether or no—as philosophers say—little things are all big with the past, of whose chain they are the latest links, they frequently produce what apparently are great results." Padding is the sole word for that. And Mr. W. E. Norris can do it very much better. I would like to ask Mr. Galsworthy if he has decided definitely for himself that minute descriptions of the faces of characters ever, save by extremely rare hazard, leave any impression on the reader. He multiplies such descriptions by dozens in "Fraternity." I would beg him to reflect upon Lessing's remarks on the technique of our great master, Homer, in this matter. My personal verdict upon "Fraternity" is that it is dull. I say it

with respect, with sympathy, with admiration; but I say it. The book does not advance the author's reputation. I do not suppose that Mr. Galsworthy can abolish the limitations of his artistic temperament—limitations due to the very violence of his humanity—but I believe that within those limitations he can achieve a far more complete self-expression than his books yet show. It is difficult not to surmise that he has insufficiently nourished himself on classical models in fiction. He seems to have accepted without due inquiry the pattern *à la mode*.

* * *

It is a long time since I read a novel by Barry Pain. He has written very few. It is still longer since I read "In a Canadian Canoe," that Chinese cracker. There are people in Fleet Street and elsewhere who are yet waiting for Barry Pain to "arrive." If these simple ones mean "arrive" in the commercial sense, they cannot be aware that some forty thousand copies of "Eliza" have been sold. If they mean artistically, somebody ought to tell them that Barry Pain has not got to arrive, and never had to arrive, having been born "there." Whenever I read him I think of Stendhal, who began his day's work by conning a few clauses of the Code Napoléon, so as to remove any nonsensical notions about "literary style" that might have sprouted in his head during the night. Barry Pain's admirable style has all the virtues of the Code, and indeed much resembles Stendhal's. On the first page of "Fraternity" there are quite ten different indiscreet fineries of style which Barry Pain's natural classical taste would infallibly save him from. Here is an example of what I enjoy in Barry Pain's style: "The chairs were of good design and bad workmanship." Compose ten pages about the modern artistic furniture movement as it has extended to the lower middle-class, and you will not achieve a better descriptive criticism of it than that. The author's peculiarity is that the ordinary six-shilling length is not "his length." His length is rather that of a French "nouvelle"—say, twenty thousand words. The public's peculiarity is that while it will pay six shillings for sixty thousand words, it will only pay a shilling—that is, half the rate—for twenty thousand. And of course it will not accept as "serious" something which it can buy for a mere shilling, and which is not respectably bound in cloth. No one knows why. Occasionally his muse permits Barry Pain to write up to six shillings. "The Gifted Family" (Methuens) costs that. Tale of the family of a suburban stationer and bookseller. It is a very able, truthful, and witty novel; too idyllic in the smoothness of its events, possibly too consciously planned "to make you feel nice"; but an honest and often brilliant rendering of the less disturbing aspects of the kind of existence with which the author deals. It is not the whole truth, but it is the truth. Again and again one notices a successful overcoming of the temptation to exaggerate for diversion's or sentimentality's sake. The first half of the book is the best. In my opinion the mild fun concerning eccentricities of pronunciation is too mild. On the whole, the lower middle-class pronounces English much more correctly than the "better educated" class above it. If a realistic novelist arose to depict the upper classes of this country, and he set down the speech of his characters according to their pronunciation, the result would surpass in horror the worst bizarreries of the Kailyard school. In the upper classes, nineteen persons out of twenty are incapable of pronouncing any long vowel sound correctly. "The Gifted Family" will, I hope, induce the simple to see Barry Pain "arrived."

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The principal heroine of Barry Pain's novel is named Sandra, and Sandra is the name of the heroine of E. Nesbit's "Salome and the Head" (Alston Rivers, 6s.). E. Nesbit's work has of late been so lyrically lauded in these columns by another hand that I do not care to enter into the competition of praise. True, the previous occasion was a book for children. But, then, this book also is for children—who read "The D.T.," worship George Alexander, and talk of "this Socialism" in disgusted tones. Labelled on the binding and on the title-

page as a melodrama, it *is* a melodrama, in good sooth; with excellent horrors about p. 200. Being an expert craftsman, E. Nesbit can write anything well. She can write tales for little children nearly as good as Mrs. Ewing's, and tales for big children immensely better than Mr. Le Queux's and Mr. Max Pemberton's. From the commercial point of view, she makes an error in not pretending that the big children are not children. She teases her readers. Now, you can laugh both at and with a small child, if you laugh *at* gently. But it is unwise to laugh at a big baby. Big babies lack humour. Hence, though "Salome and the Head" (what a genial title!) is out of sight superior to "The Woman in White," "The Mystery of a Hansom Cab," and "She," and is about as good as "Dracula," I do not venture to hope that it will exceed these concoctions in popularity. Mr. Spenser Pryse's illustrations—despite a certain preciosity, as if they had strayed out of the "Neolith"—have beauty and some originality.

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To literary dilettanti aged about forty the appearance of a new volume of "prose fancies" by Richard Le Gallienne must administer a thrill. I admit, with my usual dreadful candour, that on its publication I was so enchanted with "The Book-Bills of Narcissus" (large-paper copy) that immediately after reading it I read it all again. A great moment in the author's career—and he knew it not! Another great moment was on the night of Gladstone's death, when one of the New York dailies came out with a huge electric sky-sign: "Gladstone. To-morrow: Sonnet by Richard Le Gallienne." That is fame, in America. And it surpasses any form of fame yet invented in England. Doubtless it was such subtle flatteries that endeared New York to Mr. Le Gallienne. Since then his reputation has advanced neither here nor there. It has, indeed, declined. We no longer discuss the style of his prose fancies as we used to do in our "unspilled youth." I do not think the quality of his work has declined. "Little Dinners with the Sphinx and Other Prose Fancies" (Lane, 6s.) seems to me to be as good as its predecessors. But age has chilled me, and the book leaves me cold. I am astonished that once I was capable of arguing whether Mr. Le Gallienne would or would not "live." And yet, and yet, I still suspect him to have written a few lines that could not easily be distinguished from immortal verse.

JACOB TONSON.

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

"New Light on Ancient Egypt."*

FOR many years several gentlemen have been enjoying themselves hugely by forming digging parties in Egypt, raking up old tombs and temples, copying inscriptions and attempting to decipher them, discovering old books, and amusing themselves generally by piecing their bits of knowledge together to reconstruct Ancient Egypt. It's really an awfully jolly game, and when you once get into it, ever so much more exciting than golf or cricket. If your lot has only been to damp the copying-brush of one of the savants in such an amusing expedition, you cannot help sharing in the general enthusiasm, and feeling excited as to what new guesses may be made from a translation of the inscription. As a rule, the accounts of these picnics are hidden in books and periodicals which may not reach the vulgar; and even then the fun is usually concealed.

Professor Maspero is among the best known of the gentlemen who pass so agreeable a life, and in this volume he gives a pleasant picture of the manner he and his fellow-excursionists have been passing the time—pretty much in the same way as people did many centuries ago. Professor Maspero tells us something about the oldest known explorers in the African desert.

"They lived somewhere about the year 3,500 B.C.—two or three centuries are of no consequence in dealing with dates in the history of ancient Eastern Empires. I cannot say that these explorers penetrated far into

*"New Light on Ancient Egypt." By G. Maspero. (T. Fisher Unwin. 12s. 6d. net.)

the interior of the Dark Continent, but their expeditions were long, fatiguing, dangerous, profitable. They inspired them with so much pride, and brought them so many good things, that they desired to preserve their memory for posterity."

I suppose they exhibited their findings very much in the same way as Prof. Flinders Petrie shows his every year at University College, although the primary object of the Egyptian explorer was trade, not amusement.

Hirkhouf made three journeys during the reign of Metesouphis I. ; his first was to the land of Amarni to open up the road to that country. "I accomplished it in seven months, and brought back all kinds of commodities, for which I was highly praised." "The ideal thing for an Egyptian explorer was to come across a Danga, and to transport it alive into Egypt." Hirkhouf was successful. A Danga was a particular kind of pigmy whose appearance and antics amused the Egyptians of the day, just as the pygmies brought to London a few years ago amused ourselves.

If we are pleased with the same things that pleased people four or five thousand years ago, we frighten and protect our children in a quite similar way. The policeman and bogey man are ancient institutions. I do not say they are the better for that. This is the description Egyptian mothers and nurses gave their children: "Avaunt, ye dead man, who comes in the darkness, who enters stealthily, with nose behind, face obverse, avaunt, frustrated of what ye have come for. If ye are come to kiss this child, I shall not allow you to kiss it. If ye are come to still its crying, I shall not allow you to still it! If ye are come to injure it, I shall not allow you to injure it! If you are come to take it away, I shall not allow you to take it from me." Don't you feel sorry for those poor little Egyptian children when they were threatened with the mysterious thing whenever they were naughty?—no doubt, mothers then, as nowadays, thought it necessary to teach their children to be good—*i.e.*, not to disturb them while they were reading the latest novel, the "New Arabian Nights," or the translation of a Coptic novel, of which a fragment has been recently found, and of which an extract is given in this book.

Professor Maspero, of course, stands up for his side as against those who play for Greece or the other people. According to the Egyptologists, Dionysus is of Egyptian origin; Foucart finds it in "Osiris of the Infernal Regions." "Our knowledge of the ceremonies of the Anthestêria (the most ancient and the most solemn of the festivals of Dionysus) scarcely permits us to doubt that the Egyptian Osiris was the original of the Attic Dionysus. We have in both cases the resurrection of a god, who had been treacherously mutilated. The number of pieces is the same and the march of events identical . . . The mysteries of the 12th Anthestêrion exactly reproduced the principal features of the Egyptian legend and the practices to which it gave rise . . . "

The Hellenists apparently will not have it. But M. Maspero believes: "As soon as the material facts of the commercial and political relations are demonstrated to the Hellenists, spiritual relations will follow of themselves, and the traditions of Egyptian colonies or of religious borrowings that they have hitherto so decidedly put aside, will have credence in their eyes as they have long had in ours."

Christian science and orthodox medicine flourished in Ancient Egypt, and, as among ourselves, were both exercised by the same person. "The doctor would have been of little use to his patients if he had not proved as expert in exorcisms as in formulas of pharmacy." Vaccination, bleeding, vegetarianism, all-meat diet, anti-purin, sauermilk, spas, and so on were all in favour at different periods. As for drugs: "At base, it was a sole remedy that the Egyptians administered, disguised through various vehicles, when they desired to try wholly different remedies. If we examine the ingredients, we find that all contain a more or less considerable quantity of some active element that modern physicians often recommend in similar cases."

Professor Maspero has always something interesting to say. It is nearly always concerned with superficial, every-day affairs—that is, the most interesting things—of the Ancient Egyptian. He touches once or twice upon their spiritual life, but here he is never illuminating. The translation by Elizabeth Lee is excellent.

M. D. EDER.

Recent Music.

Creme de Menthe and Mignonette.

MR. FRANZ LIEBICH tried hard the other evening at the Æolian Hall to persuade us about Weber. He had the amazing audacity to place Weber and Debussy on the same programme on the same evening in the same concert-room. For myself, I may say that I was fearfully embarrassed, and have not even yet, a fortnight later, completely recovered from the state of nervous prostration I was then thrown into. The principal thing that troubles me is that Mr. Liebich is an honest man, and I've got to respect his opinions. And I've got to reconcile two things that to my present way of thinking are utterly opposed. One cannot easily appreciate Puvis de Chavannes and at the same time wax enthusiastic over the achievements of Sir Alma Tadema. One cannot, or I feel one cannot, easily appreciate Verlaine's attitude towards poetry and at the same time yell oneself hoarse with delight at the accomplishments of Mr. Stephen Phillips. Some of us may of course delight in the bitter-sweetness of anachronisms, but they are few who honestly delight in positive antagonisms. Mr. Liebich cannot really feel any antagonism between Weber and Debussy—and I do, so heaven help me the next time I meet him.

* * *

Nobody disputes Weber's orchestral skill. He is credited with having been the founder of the Romantic movement in modern music, but his alleged romanticism was broadly a derivation, a reflection of the period in which he lived. His superb ecstasies, his tremendous invocations, his joy and gladness were—lumpty lumpty lumpty lum. Now, I have no passionate aversion to lumpty lumpty lumpty lum; indeed, I admire and envy the mood it expresses, but I should not instinctively associate high classic subjects with this particular style of utterance unless, indeed, in frank parody. But Weber, like most great artists, of course, expected and hoped to be taken seriously, and his desire to be taken seriously is evidenced in "Euranythe" and "Oberon" just as much as in his pianoforte sonatas. The one I know best, the C major, is really a horrible advertisement of a shallow soul. Nothing can forgive its most truculent mendacity. Mr. Liebich played some other one (I forget its key signature), and to my timidly-prejudiced mind it was merely another way of saying the same thing.

* * *

In the February number of the "Contemporary" Mr. Ernest Newman, in an excellent essay on Mendelssohn, indicates, unconsciously I'm sure, another defect in Weber's mental equipment. He is suggesting that Weber, and not Mendelssohn, was the first to bring "the faeries into the orchestra"; and he goes on to say that "the treatment of them by the two men is characteristic. Weber's faeryland is as full of feeling as the world of human beings. Mendelssohn's faeries hardly think or feel at all; but they are incomparable dancers." Of course, Weber was wrong indeed to depict faeries with any feelings at all, and Mendelssohn, soulless being as he was, was far nearer the truth when he made them "incomparable dancers." Weber always over-emotionalised, piling one sweet agony on the top of another with merciless banality; his work was virtuoso and innocuously facile, like the art of the pastry cook, and with something of the same intellectual appeal. So I really do fail to understand why Carl Maria von Weber should be entitled to a place between two such intelligent artists as Monteverde and Debussy.

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Mr. George Henschel returned recently to London, and gave a vocal recital at the Bechstein Hall. He is a man with an ancient and famous reputation, and his audience the other day included an amusing conglomeration of voice-worshippers, hero-worshippers, Schubert-worshippers, Brahms-worshippers, the usual academics, and a few who, like myself, went there out of curiosity. My first impression was that I was listening to a first-rate singer, my second that I was listening to an artist, my third and last impression that I was listening to a charlatan. Charlatan is a very rude word to use about any man, but when a singer who has a good sense of phrasing, who can "do anything" with his voice, who has achieved a wide popularity and all that sort of thing, will sit down before an anxious audience and deliver himself of trash like Cimarosa's aria from "Don Calandrino" (a comic extravagance of the worst period of Italian opera) and Beethoven's "Libertine's Song" and, please note, play his own accompaniments, one can only think that his desire is to arrive at some difficult and almost impossible *tour de force*. The obvious and usual thing is that a singer should have someone else to play the accompaniments. Mr. Henschel prefers to play for himself (supplementing his programme with irritating improvisations before each song), but the result is not good. It is very nearly, but not quite; for a few of the accompaniments required more careful attention than any singer, however accomplished, could possibly give to them while singing the tune and trying to make his words heard at the end of the hall. Mr. Henschel naturally thought first of the singer's business and the proper enunciation of the words, and in no single instance did he fail in his renderings; his voice is wonderfully rich and sweet, and his diction most highly cultivated—but the more difficult accompaniments suffered. In little masterpieces like "Das Wandern" and "Der Liermann" of Schubert his performance was about as fine as one could imagine.

* * *

Mr. Henschel was assisted by the Motto Quartet (Miss Marie Motto, Messrs. Thomas Morris, Frank Bridge, and Purcell-Jones), whose playing of Haydn's "Variations" from the string quartet in C (No. 42) was a thing of joy. Nothing could have been lovelier, sweeter, more fragrant and delicate. When one listens to this music so exquisitely played one could fancy a charming little picture of an old walled garden with heaps of mignonette and moss-roses and thyme and the sweet balm of Gilead. In our concert-rooms, so contaminated by virtuosity and commercialism, it is little of the music we hear to-day that can drive us back into such nice dreams and memories.

HERBERT HUGHES.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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

PEACE OR WAR?

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

It is hard to be always serious, and only the last of the following questions is that.

First: Suppose England and Germany, instead of spending most of their money on armaments, were determined to spend it all? There is no proposition which cannot be made ridiculous by pushing it far enough, and this is a striking case.

Second: Is it not strange that the mutuality of Christian States is best represented in art by animals snarling at one another, and that the cost of these beasts to their owners should be hundreds of millions of pounds?

Third: Is it not time for the civilised races, those we call Powers, to look at the purely commercial aspect of this very serious question, with the intention of making the utmost of their opportunities; and is not commerce, with all its fingers and interests in the great international pie, more likely to promote peace than a Ministry backed by the troops which are fit for nothing but fighting?

Other questions are: What would become of that commerce if we had not the will to work; and if working in order to provide clothing and food for the force is as pleasant as it would be if there were not at least as many starving people as there are, soldiers and sailors? (Do you remember the rumour as it reached England of the great strike on the Russian railways which, though it only lasted for fifteen minutes, was said to have paralysed industry, and proved, if it did nothing else, that a properly organised strike would be a tremendous thing?)

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Edited by ARTHUR KITSON.

THE EDITOR'S FOREWORD.

A new journal, like an uninvited guest at a banquet, is expected to justify its appearance—in some more or less plausible degree—and this degree of justification is generally believed to be registered by the number of its subscribers. In these days of evident over-production in the realm of journalism, one may naturally exclaim: "Why another?" "What possible field of human interest and activity is still unrepresented? Is there a single subject, profession, or occupation, from rat-catching to soul-saving, that has not its weekly, monthly, or quarterly review?" Curiously enough there is, and it happens to be a subject of great—if not the greatest—importance to every member of civilised society, as will appear from the following:

Some months ago a meeting was held at my house in Kensington to discuss the recent United States monetary panic, and to consider suggestions from certain well-informed persons, of means by which these panics might be prevented or checked. At the conclusion of the meeting it was decided to try to enlist the aid of the Press in calling public attention to the terrible dangers to which trade and commerce are continually exposed, from the excessive weakness of our financial system—a system which begins to tremble whenever £2,000,000 or £3,000,000 of gold leaves the country. Confessions by many present of their numerous ineffectual attempts to interest various papers, led to the discovery that there is not in this country a single well-known journal (with perhaps the solitary exception of a Socialist weekly—"The Clarion") willing to open its columns to the free ventilation of this subject.

It was finally suggested that the only means for presenting it to the public was to start a review which would honestly and fearlessly deal with it in all its various phases. It will doubtless surprise most readers to learn that this question of currency and banking reform is banned from the columns of our newspapers, and that their owners regard any criticism of our financial system, or the Parliamentary Acts upon which it is built, as a crime rather worse than blasphemy! And yet no less an authority than Lord Goschen, Chancellor of the Exchequer, when referring to this matter in a speech delivered at Leeds in 1892, said: "No fertile imagination could exaggerate the gravity of the position"—since which time the dangers have grown even greater. Moreover, at the Annual Meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, London, March, 1907, a resolution declaring that "A reform of our existing financial system is an urgent necessity" was carried unanimously, and the special committee appointed by this body is now endeavouring to impress upon the present Chancellor of the Exchequer the seriousness of the situation, and the importance of strengthening our financial position.

When some years ago Mr. Chamberlain described our industrial condition as perilous, and likened it to the Campanile before its collapse, a general alarm was sounded, not only throughout Great Britain, but all over the Empire; unfortunately for the nation, Mr. Chamberlain forgot that the most potent factor in developing trade is finance, and that no system of tariffs ever conceived will alter the fact that gold controls trade, or compensate a nation for a weak financial system. Had he brought to this subject the same influence and enthusiasm he has given to Tariff Reform, he might have accomplished not only all the good he has promised us will inevitably follow from the adoption of his Fiscal Policy, but a reform which would have lightened the lot of every toiler and every business man throughout this vast empire, and which would have made our trade and commerce absolutely impregnable. Evidently Finance is not one of Mr. Chamberlain's strongest points.

Just now the country is being worked into a state of hysteria by panic-mongers who assert that Britain is open to invasion, and that only the forbearance of our Continental neighbours prevents our shores from occupancy by foreign troops. The Government is being warned by the Press, and even the Stage, that unless millions more are immediately expended upon the Army and Navy, we are doomed. If these agitators would but expend a little intelligent thought upon the science of trade and its present basis, they would ascertain that if foreign Powers are bent upon our destruction, our financial system provides them with ample facilities for doing us irreparable injury, without their having to approach our shores with either a navy or army, and at infinitely less expense. They have only to withdraw a considerable sum in gold from the Bank of England and the collapse will come! Thirty years ago Walter Bagehot wrote as follows:—

"The amount of our cash is so exceedingly small that a bystander almost trembles when he compares its minuteness with the immensity of the credit which rests upon it."

Already the Bank of France has on two or three occasions saved us from a ruinous panic by lending us bullion, in times when the demand was a mere bagatelle to that which could be artificially created if any great power were anxious to ruin us. Provided it is willing to risk a few millions, we are as completely at the mercy of a hostile power as though our navy were at the bottom of the sea—Nay, more, it has even become profitable for speculators to alternately stimulate and depress industry. In 1896 a New York clique, by withdrawing £10,000,000 from our gold reserves actually brought about the fall of Consols and other gilt-edged securities to the extent of £100,000,000! Whatever may be said of our ability to protect our country from invasion, there is no question as to the power of any nation—or even any great financier like Mr. Pierpont Morgan or Mr. Rockefeller—to bring on a panic which would bankrupt the nation, and yet on this point our statesmen, our political parties, and our Press are all equally ignorant or indifferent!

The questions of currency, credit, and banking have always been presented to the public from the one standpoint of the banker and investor. The ordinary man is not supposed to have sufficient brains to comprehend monetary science, and the scheme remains as it was originally created—a system of banking run by bankers in the interest of shareholders. The interests of the producers of every commodity save gold, as well as those of commercial and tradesmen generally, are altogether secondary in financial circles. For instance, Lord Avebury recently congratulated the members of the London Chamber of Commerce upon the ease with which the English banks had weathered the financial storm. Evidently Lord Avebury and his fellow-bankers are in complete ignorance of, or are extremely callous to the hardships entailed upon our manufacturers and tradesmen by reason of the rise in the bank rate. The truth is that the banks weathered these financial storms entirely at the expense of the producing classes, and their safety was and always is assured by their power to tax the community by raising the rate of discount upon loans. It is safe to say that the losses which are inflicted upon the business men of the country through the sudden and frequent changes in the bank rate, are enormously greater than any profits which accrue to the banks. The fact that money and credit constitute the mechanism of trade is eclipsed (in the opinion of the money-lenders) by the more important fact—that loans are the creators of dividends. The knowledge that every £1 rise in the bank rate costs the producing and trading classes about £500,000 per week, is only interesting to those who control our finance because they realise that this tends to swell the dividends of bank shareholders. It is surely time that these things should be known and discussed, and as there are thousands of commercial men who know just enough to wish to know more, it has been thought necessary to launch "The Open Review."

All considerations surely justify the appearance of this journal, with a right on the part of its founders to expect the support of many thousands of those who are compelled to "stand the racket" of our present harassing industrial conditions. Let me here remark—in order to settle a question which has already been put to me by many subscribers—that "The Open Review" is in no sense a bi-metallic organ, nor has it any connection with any financial, political, or business organisation. In publishing it, its founders have no policy except that of arousing the public, and particularly the producing classes, to the perils and burdens to which our financial system exposes them.

Although dealing principally with financial subjects, "The Open Review" will afford a field for the free discussion of all topics of public importance, such as Socialism, Free Trade, Tariff Reform, Education, Woman's Suffrage, etc., etc.

The reluctance of the Press to allow frank discussion is not confined to the subject of finance. As Mr. Hilaire Belloc says: "There has fallen upon our Press a mixture of convention and terror which makes it impossible to print quite simple truths." Contributors will find in "The Open Review" an absolutely free arena for combating error and establishing truth.

After urgent solicitation on the part of many friends, I have consented to conduct "The Open Review" (which for the present will appear as a sixpenny monthly)—until such time as its circulation and importance are sufficient to engage the services of one abler and more experienced in this particular field of journalism.

The **FIRST NUMBER OF THE OPEN REVIEW** will be published in **APRIL**, and the Proprietors urge those who are interested in the objects of **THE OPEN REVIEW** to forward their subscriptions to the Publisher without delay, and to draw the attention of their friends to this announcement. A supply of prospectuses for distribution will be forwarded on receipt of a postcard.

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The Church, the State, and the Forces: With all these claims upon revenue, of which the last is by far the heaviest, we still have the Government pledged to social reforms, going further than any that I have proposed in my maddest moments. If you inquire why none of these are done, you will find it is simply and solely because, under the head of income alone, we haven't the fiftieth part of the money that would be required for the purpose. On this very question, the other day at the New Reform Club, I heard Mr. J. A. Hobson speak upon "How Social Reforms can be Financed." The answer, though he did not give it, is that until the nation itself is rich we shall get nothing but never-kept promises from either political party. Things will be better, no doubt, when we have drawn all the teeth of the Lords, and when the non-progressive element in the so-called Liberal Party has been bundled out of the House; but at present, as Mr. Snowden says, "There is nothing much to be got out of the skeleton of an income," such as the Government has. I am not dealing with general causes of poverty; only pointing to one in particular, the at present unavoidable, but no less deplorable, waste of a nation's substance in maintaining the army and navy.

Did not that extraordinary creature, the Tsar, startle us some years ago with his proposal that the armies should be disbanded; a proposal of which nothing came, I believe, but the Hague Arbitration Court; and is it not time for the practicability of the suggestion to be considered more seriously than it ever has been before? What I have in my mind is an International Conference, in which the Boards of Trade, through their representatives, would play the most important part, and be asked to consider especially how the commercial position would be affected, in their opinion, by the stoppage of all this waste; but the first thing to do is to prove, by means of demonstrations, the strength of popular feeling against these mad preparations for war.

As to present interests, which must be many, I prefer leaving the matter to others, and also the question, which will be pressed, as to what would become of the dead stock (fortifications, artillery, battleships), and the enormous numbers of soldiers and sailors who would be added immediately to the ranks of the unemployed? Readjustment and compensation will be the keywords of the situation, and seeing what the present cost of their maintenance is, we could surely afford to be generous. ERNEST RADFORD.

* * *

AT IT AGAIN!

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

I don't propose to continue the controversy with our genial and kindly (though Catholic) friend, G. K. Chesterton, as it has probably gone on long enough. My object in writing is to protest against G. K. C. using his powers, as Robert Houdin, of controversial devices, to bamboozle the Nonconformist public as to the meaning of the word Socialism. I open a copy of the "Daily News" and light upon an article on "Was Dickens a Socialist?" I don't know whether he was or wasn't, and cannot say that I greatly care. As a matter of fact, I should think it highly improbable that he knew anything about Socialism. But what I protest against is Mr. Chesterton's attempting to confuse the minds of the good Nonconformists who read their "Daily News," with an utterly, ridiculously false definition of Socialism. The Nonconformist mind doesn't always see a joke as readily as we Socialists do, so Mr. Chesterton ought to temper his "Daily News" jokes accordingly. Mr. Chesterton invents his own definition of Socialism, and then proceeds to produce all manner of funny things from his conjuror's hat of a definition. "Socialism is," says Mr. Chesterton, "the assumption by the State (?) of all the means of production, distribution, and exchange." On the basis of this statement, which, of course, no Socialist would accept, Mr. Chesterton goes on to show that the said "State" might be a "despotic State, an aristocratic State, or a Papal State." Mr. Chesterton, evidently relying on the guilelessness of his readers, for fun, I suppose, pretends to be ignorant of the fact that the aim of modern Socialism is precisely to ultimately get rid of the "State" altogether. He previously confounds Statification with Socialism, and by this easy, and by no means original trick, endeavours to addle the minds of the "D. N." public into the belief that it is possible to have Socialism without Democracy. Now, of course, everyone knows that democracy is as absolutely essential in the definition of present-day Socialism as the economic centralisation itself —in other words, that Mr. Chesterton has to delete the word "State" and supply the word "People" in his definition to make it even approximately accurate. Having done this, he will probably see that his erstwhile brilliant joke about Socialism in "a despotic State, an aristocratic State, or a Papal State" begins to look feeble.

In spite of my opening remark, as I happen to be writing, there are just three points in Mr. Chesterton's article on which I should like to say a word. (1) It is not correct that my religion forbids me to swear; on the contrary, I swear a little every day, if only to guard against the Nonconformist conscience gaining a hold on me. (2) Mr. Chesterton perversely assumes that the term Zeitgeist purports to give an intellectual character or spirit to a period of time considered as abstract duration. I need scarcely say the expression refers to socially-filled time; i.e., time with regard to its social content, of which it is merely the measure. In this sense, every age undoubtedly has an intellectual character (Zeitgeist). But no human being, who has used the expression, ever perpetrated the absurdity, as Mr. Chesterton professes to think, of assigning mere abstract time as the cause of this character. This being so, his joke about the door-numbers fails of any application. (3) My article was not directed "against the use of short words," but only against the pedantic abuse of them where long ones better express the intended meaning.

E. BELFORT BAX.

* * *

PUGH V. CHESTERTON.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

I come into these lists as a groundling rash enough to cross swords with one of the protagonists. My quarrel is with Mr. Chesterton in his championship of Christianity as being in its essence hedonist. Being a parson, and so a professed teacher of religion, I shall probably be regarded as totally disqualified to say anything on the subject. In spite thereof I shall dispute altogether the grounds upon which G. K. C. gaily lays down that everything jolly is therefore necessarily "Catholic" (either with a big or small C), and its reverse, consequently "Sectarian."

The old exploded study of formal logic taught us, at any rate, one thing—the danger of the "undistributed middle." It is the fallacy that G.K.C. falls into when he unconsciously argues his favourite thesis; as thus:—

Everything jolly is human.
Catholicism is human.
∴ Whatever is jolly is truly Catholic.

Mr. Pugh in his much discussed book on Dickens complains of Pickwick's "almost entire lack of spirituality." That may be a discerning criticism, or not. But what is to be said of Chesterton's reply: "Which means that Pickwick was only a good man in the sight of God"? Paradox for ever, and at all costs! "Pickwick and Sam Weller were gay and careless because they were good men." Not at all because it was their nature to be so. Now we know. Then, also, it is obvious that Falstaff and Rawdon Crawley were gay and careless because they were good men.

My answer is that Christianity, if embraced by a cynic, will make him gay. But it will also make a Pickwick sober. It may spoil him as a work of art in the hands of a Dickens: that is another matter. The conversion of Josiah Bounderby would, no doubt, have the same disastrous effect. It is utterly beside the point. All that I am objecting to is the suggestion that because Christianity is, in Mr. Chesterton's view (and mine also), catholic, i.e., suitable for all types of character, and inclusive of all that is best in man, therefore Mr. Pickwick, because he drinks freely and beams upon the world at large from gold-rimmed spectacles, is a type of the catholic.

Mr. Chesterton solemnly assures his readers in the "Daily News" (of all papers!) that "the perpetuation of such Englishmen as Pickwick and Sam Weller is now the only vital issue in England." Very well. Then those of us who, like myself, rather incline towards Mr. Shaw's tastes in food and drink are foes to our country's best interests. But I object to be damned as "sectarian" to boot.

G. HERBERT DAVIS.

* * *

A BASTARD PATRIOTISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

In your article of last week on "A Bastard Patriotism" a very serious allegation is made, which should form the

subject of a question in Parliament. I refer to the statement that the King has interfered in defence of the melodrama, "An Englishman's Home." It should be the duty of some occupant of the Labour Benches to inquire whether the statement is, or is not, true, and if it is true, to inquire what the Government intends to do to prevent the recurrence of similar unwarrantable interference with the liberty of citizens of the United Kingdom. And I trust that the member who does ask the question will stick to it until he gets an answer or gets hove out. We have had quite enough of this pinchbeck autocracy.

ANGUS J. CAMERON.

* * *

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

I wish to call your attention to certain grave inaccuracies in C. H. Norman's article, "A Bastard Patriotism," in THE NEW AGE of March 4th.

To begin with, Bastard is distinctly the wrong word to express the writer's evident meaning. According to Worcester's dictionary, Bastard means: "Born out of wedlock; illegitimate." Whereas his intended definition is foreign, or foreigner.

Mr. Norman proves his crass ignorance of the origin of names, which he takes to be foreign, in several notable instances which are too obvious to require explanation, but at least in my own case I will point out his ridiculous blunder. The de Fonblanque family is of Huguenot descent; they came to England as refugees before the year 1750. My great-great-grandfather settled here, and ever since his descendants have served their Ruler and country. His name was Jean de Fonblanque; he was naturalised, and married an Englishwoman, as did all his descendants. Their eldest son, my great-grandfather, born in 1760, was educated at Harrow and Oxford; he was called to the Bar in 1783; made King's Counsel in 1804 with patent of precedence; was member for Camelford for many years; a personal friend, as well as legal adviser, of the Prince of Wales; when he died he was Father of the English Bar, and was buried in the Temple Church. The eldest of his sons was my grandfather, John de Fonblanque, a legal writer and luminary, born in 1787; he was educated at Charterhouse and Cambridge; he received a commission in the 21st Fusiliers, served in the Peninsular war under Lord William Bentinck, who appointed him Deputy Judge Advocate General. He took an active part in the American war, and was wounded at the siege of New Orleans. After Waterloo he served in the army of occupation; on his return to England in 1816 he was appointed a Commissioner of Bankruptcy by Lord Eldon, a position he held till a short time before he died. His brother, Thomas de Fonblanque, was H.B.M's. Consul-General at Belgrade; and another brother, Albany de Fonblanque, was a celebrated journalist and politician; he was the proprietor of the "Examiner" newspaper, was called to the Bar, and was appointed chief of the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade.

My father is a distinguished writer; his name is Albany de Fonblanque, born 1829; he was called to the Bar in 1853, and appointed Deputy Judge at Constantinople, and subsequently Judge of the Consular Court at Alexandria before England gave up the Ionian Isles. He served in the Consular service for over thirty years until he retired on a pension; his last appointment as Consul, at New Orleans, he held for nearly twenty years.

All the other members of my father's family served in the army, navy, and legal professions, and their name is an honoured one in literature; therefore, Mr. Norman's stupid ignorance in classing me amongst "Bastard Patriots" is unpardonable, and deserves this exposure.

ETHEL M. HARTER.
(Née de Fonblanque.)

* * *

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Mr. Norman's "Bastard Patriotism" is excellent so long as he confines himself to slating Hanover, Blumenfeld and Co.; but I do not see what it has to do with the Territorials. In fact, it is a shining example of the "whipping boy" style of argument.

Half way through the article I came across an alarming array of facts to show that the Regular Army and the German Army and the Army in India are rotten with sexual disease and unnatural crime. Agreed. What if they are? Does Mr. Norman maintain that sloping a rifle and marching in step produce a tendency to sexual diseases? These horrors, as Mr. Norman himself expressly states, are not inherent in the soldier's calling, but are due to the "enforced celibacy of barrack life." Well, Territorials aren't in barracks, so what has this to do with the Territorials?

War Office. DUXMIA.

* * *

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

May I suggest to the Labour Party, or to any other organisation which can afford it, and has the machinery for distribution, that the article by Mr. Norman should be reprinted in leaflet form? Socialist branches in the country would find it useful for distribution at Tariff Reform meetings.

X.

* * *

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE LEAGUE.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

May I tell your readers that at the meeting held at the Fortune Theatre during Wednesday's snowstorm I was allowed to say that I have joined the Eugenic Education Society? The office is at 6, York Buildings, Adelphi. The committee has given me permission, with other sympathisers, to form a semi-independent committee to forward the movement for the Economic Independence of Women. We shall be allowed to work out the question in our own way as a branch of the Eugenic Education Society.

This is in every way advantageous to us, as we shall have the benefit of an excellent library and the free entry to many expert lectures on the subject. FLORENCE FARR.

* * *

LIBERALS AND UNEMPLOYMENT.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Many of my friends pretend that my disbelief in Liberal promises is a form of mania—an obsession. But I would ask those who still maintain that the Liberal Party is serious with regard to the Unemployed question to look at their "Daily News" of Saturday, March 6th. On Friday night Mr. Sidney Webb spoke on Unemployment for about one and a half hours. Mr. Bernard Shaw took the chair and spoke for a few minutes. The "Daily News" gives a quarter of a column to Mr. Shaw's introductory remarks, whilst it does not give a line to Mr. Webb's weighty, luminous exposition of the subject, which embraced a closely defined solution of the whole problem. Mr. Webb is apparently regarded as Horseracing News by the Liberal Party. But is this honest journalism? M. D. EDER.

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