NOTES OF THE WEEK.

Even if we were disposed to let the subject of the Navy drop, there is no chance of our being allowed, in addition, to be no more disposed to let it drop. We have, as we believe, an overwhelmingly clear case against the panic-mongers, both Socialist and jingo; and every day that passes brings confirmation of our view. There is no doubt whatever that the panic is being most skilfully employed by Mr. Balfour and his party; and we can only stand in admiration while the hosts of triumphant lies go galloping by. On Monday, on Tuesday, and on Wednesday Mr. Balfour spoke at length and with all the external marks of real concern. Yet we are convinced that in his heart there is not the smallest glimmer of a genuine terror nor the smallest spark of more than political apprehension. In spite of this, his incomparable eye seizes the opportunity of party advantage, and the great wave of popular feeling, for which Mr. Asquith is mainly to blame, Mr. Balfour and his party—with all their reactionary cargo will be swept into the port of power.

The line was taken by Mr. Roberts, of the Labour Party, during the Vote of Censure in the Commons on Monday that the whole panic was engineered for political purposes. This is true. But the statement should not be left in all its nakedness. Not only is it a party device, but we can conclusively prove that it is a party device, and Mr. Roberts should have attempted that proof. We are very glad indeed that the Labour Party made up their mind to follow the lead of Jaurès, whose words on the occasion of a threatened war between France and Germany we have quoted before. Speaking on behalf of the Labour Parties of Germany and England, Mr. Roberts said "that there should be friendly relations between the two countries, and that they were prepared to say, should the occasion demand it, that there must be peace between them." These were the right words to use, and we are glad the Labour Party used them. But they must be followed up by deeds, and we hope that the occasion of the forthcoming visit of the Labour members to Germany will be employed for the purpose. Mr. Seddon also spoke to excellent effect during the same debate.

We confess we do not see, however, the compatibility of this strong and sensible attitude with the attitude of the Labour Party, both at Croydon and, to judge from the Agenda, at the forthcoming Conference. Mr. Frank Smith at Croydon was allowed to boast himself a Little Navy man, and the official resolution to be proposed at the Conference likewise approves of the reduction of armaments. Now, in this we think they would have been wiser to accept our advice and the advice tendered them on Monday by Mr. Chiozza Money. Mr. Money advised them that as a Labour Party their business was less to see that the cost of the Navy was reduced than to see that the cost fell on the right shoulders. There is indeed a colossal opportunit for a small Navy. + + *

We observe that a number of Socialists, including Mr. Cecil Chesterton, whose letter to us appears on another page, are hoping to make capital out of the present panic by attributing the present state of the Navy (which, by the way, Sir Percy Scott has just declared perfect) to the failure of class rule in England. We are very glad indeed that the Labour Party, during the Vote of Censure in the Commons on Wednesday Mr. Balfour spoke at length and with all the external marks of real concern. Yet we are convinced that in his heart there is not the smallest glimmer of a genuine terror nor the smallest spark of more than political apprehension. In spite of this, his incomparable eye seizes the opportunity of party advantage, and the great wave of popular feeling, for which Mr. Asquith is mainly to blame, Mr. Balfour and his party— with all their reactionary cargo will be swept into the port of power.

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obviously cuts both ways. If the inefficiency of the British Navy demonstrates the failure of class-rule in England, the presumably efficient navy of Germany must demonstrate the success of class-rule in Germany. Both countries are capitalist countries, and both, therefore, are partners in the system. It is, of course, curious that capitalism should be so incompetent in England and so competent in Germany. That, however, is precisely one of the points that has never so much as been mentioned in all the oratory of the last few weeks. We have allowed, in previous numbers adumbrated the line of policy which Germany is intending to pursue; and we emphatically repeat that neither the invasion of England nor the humiliation of England is part of that policy. The case was put very well in the highly official "Cologne Gazette" of last week. Discussing the question of the naval rivalry, the "Cologne Gazette" expressed the intention of Germany of pursuing the "straight path," and added: "Pursuing such a degree of naval strength as to "make war so assuredly a matter of life and death that statesmen would not dare to engage in it." On the supposition that, as the world is, the best security for peace is to be prepared for war, we know nothing better calculated to make war impossible than the reasonable certainty that one of the parties shall be irretrievably ruined. Now if Germany's navy remains small and ineffective, the damage she could inflict upon England would be comparatively slight, while the damage England could inflict upon Germany would be crushing. But with a powerful navy of reasonably equal dimensions with our Home Fleet, Germany might hope to make war between the two countries almost, if not quite, as dangerous for England as for herself. And such a prospect would ensure a sufficiently long pause in taking the possibly fatal leap as to enable intelligent diplomacy and better counsels to prevail.

Now we will go further, and declare that not only is this the view held in the minds of German statesmen (we exclude the professors who think otherwise, as well as here, mostly have a bee in their bonnet), but it is the view of German policy that prevails in the best diplomatic and political circles in England. Not only does Germany not intend invasion, but Mr. Asquith, Sir Edward Grey, Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Balfour know that it is not calculated to make war impossible than the reasonable certainty that one of the parties shall be irretrievably ruined. Now if Germany's navy remains small and ineffective, the damage she could inflict upon England would be comparatively slight, while the damage England could inflict upon Germany would be crushing. But with a powerful navy of reasonably equal dimensions with our Home Fleet, Germany might hope to make war between the two countries almost, if not quite, as dangerous for England as for herself. And such a prospect would ensure a sufficiently long pause in taking the possibly fatal leap as to enable intelligent diplomacy and better counsels to prevail.

We see no possible escape from this solution of a problem that states that Germany intends war; nor do we believe that there is any other solution. The "Observer" of a fortnight ago was cowardly enough to whimper that the Germans would one day catch us like "rats in a trap." Is it credible that a nation that perceives this threatening fate and has the means in its hands to escape it at once—in a single week—by a not very bold or dangerous stroke, would remain passive while the panic is on. For let us suppose that the contrary is true, and that Germany intends invasion and is merely waiting until she is strong enough before attempting it. That surely is the well-nigh universal supposition, and we do not deny that the superficial evidence for this belief is very strong. Well, what in that case would be the proper course for our politicians to pursue? Obviously an immediate war while Germany is still inferior.

But we will be infinitely patient with the fools who are taken in by sound and fury, and concede that no civilized Power can decently make war merely on the excuse of safeguarding a distant future. Que les mésieurs les assassins commencent! This pamphlet of propriety would be all very well if in the first place it were consistently maintained; and if, in the second place, no colourable excuse for war could be found. But on the one hand, our most prominent statesmen would not hesitate to call German statesmen liars in the House of Commons and to employ language against Germany compared with which Mr. Chamberlain's celebrated "long-spoon" speech was an amiable jeu d'esprit. And, on the other hand, if an excuse be wanted, there is an excuse of the best colour and warranted to wear well throughout future history in the conduct of Germany in the European negotiations over Servia. As everybody knows by this time, the last great triumph of Berlin, which all the Great Powers of Europe swore solemnly to observe, has been torn to shreds by Austria-Hungary with not only the connivance but with the employment of threats of force by Germany. There are, we happen to know, excellent reasons for supposing that Germany has done precisely what any other Power in her place would have done; and we frankly dissent from the general view of the "Times" and our prejudiced Press that Germany, or Austria either, has behaved more unscrupulously than is the habit of all the European Powers, including England. However, that is only our view, and we admit and claim that the contrary view prevails not only in Russia, whose heart is sorer from Germany's threatening pistol, and in France, still absorbed by her criminally idiotic occupation of Morocco, but in England where presumably, as we say, a pretext for an immediate war with Germany is exactly what is needed.

Is there any indication that England is going to jump at this chance of laying the ghost of 1912; laying it, too, with the approval of the public conscience of all three partners in the triple Entente? Not the least. Despite the fact that now or never, according to the alarmists, should be the time for action, when we have 40 first rate ships to Germany's 20, and four Dreadnoughts to Germany's none, and all our bold new grey ironclads, our platform admirals are strain-ing at the leash—despite all this, England takes the outrage of Germany on the Treaty of Berlin positively lying down. We sought in vain in the "Times," in the "Daily Mail," in the "Daily Express," and in all the patriotic organs for some shadow of a suggestion that now was the time for the "rats" to escape the trap. But no, neither there nor in Mr. Ballour's trinity of speeches this week, was there any allusion to even thinking that war should be declared forthwith. On the contrary, the olive trees of Lebanon were stripped of branches to be held out to the Power that had just chewed up an International Treaty, and was preparing to chew up the British Empire itself. The failure to the malediction of Germany nothing has been more nauseating than the adulation to which she has been subjected at the direction of our Press and politicians. And what is the explanation of it all? Simply this, that
save and except perhaps one neurotic member of the Cabinet, not a single person really in the know believes that Germany ever intends the invasion of England.

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We will put the matter still more plainly, if possible, and declare now that if a quarter of what Mr. Ralfour and the party have got to say, the venerable Mr. Frederic Harrison, the almost equally venerable Mr. Hyndman and Mr. Blatchford is true, then we Socialists are prepared not only to demand eight Dreadnoughts, but eighty or eight hundred (more, even, if that is the limit of the imagination) of new capital ships. There are 150 expensive and useless Boards of Directors, bound to come sooner or later, if only as a means of shielding clauses naturally, therefore, prove quite incapable of having a locomotive driven through them. Mr. Churchill sold his right to criticise the Bill are any thing like either what the traders and the employees have the right to expect or the Companies the necessity to concede. Mr. Churchill committed the error of taking nobody else's advice on the matter but his own. He consulted no association of traders, who certainly had a claim to be considered in any new arrangement; nor did he consult any of the men's representatives. His safeguarding clauses naturally, therefore, prove quite incapable of having a locomotive driven through them.

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Clause five, for example, provides that the Railway Companies shall not dismiss any of their present employees on account of the amalgamation. On this we have only to remark that the Companies will have no need to do so. All they need do is to continue what they have already begun, namely, refrain from filling vacancies as they arise. Against this reduction of the wages bill Mr. Churchill's clause is obviously no remedy whatever. It is in point that whatever the excess of hours of labour shall be reduced or that the wages of those employed will be increased; nor is there the smallest additional security against traders being fleeced in railway rates to the bare of their backs. In short, to use a homely phrase, the Railway Companies are to continue having it all their own way.

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Now there is not the smallest excuse for Mr. Churchill allowing this. Plainly he, and he alone, stands as the representative of the people against the predatory instincts and activities of the gigantic companies, with their 2,400 miles of railway. With the Companies in the position of beggars he had a unique opportunity for bargaining: and if the Companies refused his terms they might be allowed either to dispense with their Bill or to assent to nationalisation. Nationalisation is bound to come sooner or later, if only as a means of national revenue (Prussia makes a profit of 30 millions annually on her State railways). There are also more serious reasons. Competition has practically ceased: there are 150 expensive and useless Boards of Directors; and thousands of square miles of the country stand no chance of ever being opened up by private enterprise. It is to point out that whereas the whole complete colonisation of England only 45 miles of new railway lines were constructed last year, Mr. Churchill should have taken a firmer stand.

All sorts of rumours are current both as to the contents and the prospects of Mr. Lloyd George's Budget. Everybody realises that Free Trade finance is on its trial; and part at least of the Naval scare was due to the natural desire of Tariff Reformers to make the Estimates for the coming year as high as possible. The deficit has turned out to be disappointingly low for these gentlemen. Instead of three or four it is only one million. On the other hand the increase for the coming year of expenditure is certain to be 11 or 12 millions, and may, if eight Dreadnoughts are laid down, be 17 or 18. "Times" says that the "Tories" will be obtained by (a) suspending the Sinking Fund (4 millions); (b) putting 2d. on the income tax (4 millions); and (c) increased Brewers Licences (3 millions). The "Times" further suggests what ought to be done, and we draw attention to the suggestion; since it confirms our forecast of last week that the man in the street who consented to the Naval scare might be called upon to pay the bill. The suggestion is that the exemption line for income tax should be lowered to admit incomes of £50 per annum! This is broadening the basis of taxation with a vengeance; but we do not expect that Mr. Lloyd George will fall into a trap spread in his sight. There are rumours, indeed, that a graduation of income tax; or something of the sort, will be obtained by the Excise to the Customs appears to indicate that Somerset House is being made clear for action.

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The first reading of the Indian Councils Bill was taken in the House of Commons on Thursday. We note that Lord MacDonnell still maintains (in a letter to "The Times" on the eve of the Commons' debate) that Lord Lawrence's dictum of one-man government is perennially applicable to Indian provinces. If all the Lieutenant-Governors were Lord Lawrence we could assent to it perhaps, but Lord Lawrence was unique. It should be observed, too, that the statement that carried so much weight in the House of Lords against Clause III. of the Bill turns out to be false. It was said that Mr. Gokhale was the only begetter of the Clause; Lord Minto in Council on March 19 specifically repudiated this allegation, declaring that he and his Council alone were the "first framers of the scheme."

Mr. W. L. George, in the March issues of "Pages Libres," has an admirable series of articles outlining the whole political situation in India, We commend them to our readers. One of his sentences we translate and copy here: "We must therefore affirm that Indian reforms will come not from Anglo-Indians, but from the English themselves." This, in fact, is our chief argument for the discussion of Indian affairs in Parliament. We do not believe that Members of Parliament are better informed about India than Anglo-Indians; but we believe that they are better informed about humanity.

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We understand that a Liberal Member of Parliament, Mr. Josiah Wedgwood, is standing as a candidate for the Warrington Parliamentary Society. We have often wondered how Mr. Wedgwood ever came to be a member of the Society at all. As far as we can learn from his public acts and speeches, there is nothing whatever to distinguish him from the ordinary intelligent rank and file of semi-advanced Liberalism. He is a Single-taxes, it is true; but a Single-taxer is more often an Anti-Socialist than a Socialist. And this is confirmed in Mr. Wedgwood's instance by a pamphlet of his now lying before us. Written within the last six months it contains nothing that deprecates the taxation of capital on the ground that it would make capital dearer! The Fabian Society has had queer people on its Executive; but to its credit, they have hitherto been Socialists. And we hope that this precedent will be maintained.
The Rising Flood at Croydon.

The Croydon election is not a very dainty morsel for a Socialist journal to handle. One's first impulse was to leave the Labour Party and its broken candidate discreetly alone—it seemed the right time to let the dead bury their dead, with as short a ceremony as possible. To criticise the Croydon result is unpleasantly like conducting a post-mortem examination. However, as more or less official explanations are being published by the medical attendants appointed to minister at the Labour Party's bedside, the subject is now open for general discussion; and, what is more, the fatal cause must be discovered, for the sake of the future health of the Socialist movement.

The facts are quite simple. The Labour Party put up a candidate, who has been simply wiped out of existence. With a far weaker candidate at the General Election of 1906, the Party polled over 4,000 votes in a similar three-cornered fight against both Tory and Radical opponents. Mr. Frank Smith has not been able to find 600 supporters. Further, at the General Election the Labour and Socialist candidates were busy in their own divisions, and Croydon had mainly to rely on its own efforts. Last week, the Labour Party poured its best speakers into the town; the I.L.P. concentrated its efforts on the man who had been chosen from all the fighters at its disposal. Again, at the General Election the helpless wage-earner was justified in thinking that an independent political party of his own making, and devised to work for his own interests, was after all, an impossible dream. Since the almost miraculous return of over thirty Labour members to the House of Commons, it is hoped, impressively, that this independent workers' party can be a substantial certainty. In other words, Mr. Frank Smith could point to accomplished facts, where the former candidate could speak only of vainly hopes.

With all these things in his favour, the recent Labour Party's man has gone to his political grave; leaving only one-quarter of the previous Labour vote to survive him. That result has not astonished anyone with knowledge of the trend of things during the last year. Without the slightest desire to rub salt into the raw wound which every earnest Labour supporter must feel since the Croydon slaughter, it is right to point out that this journal, at least, told the Labour Party that this independent workers' party can be a substantial certainty. In other words, Mr. Frank Smith could point to accomplished facts, where the former candidate could speak only of vainly hopes.

For what is the real truth about the Labour Party's defeat at Croydon? The explanation is being offered that the candidate was submerged in a tumult of voices shouting for more and more Dreadnoughts. It may be perfectly true that the empty-headed youths of Croydon allowed their affection for Mr. Raphael as a champion of the sports' field to be outrun by their admiration for Sir Hermon-Hedge as the apostle of the real battle-ground. But to assert that this journal, at least, told the Labour Party that this independent workers' party can be a substantial certainty. In other words, Mr. Frank Smith could point to accomplished facts, where the former candidate could speak only of vainly hopes.

One thing is clear after Croydon. It is little advantagé to desire to hold office in a Cabinet, if one has convinced oneself that the best way to help Labour is to take office in a Radical Ministry. Mr. Burns was honestly of that opinion. After the result in his case, I firmly believe, maintain the fighting independence of their party; but they are in the grip of leaders who apparently have other ends in view—a political understanding with the Liberals. I have too much respect for Mr. Ramsay Macdonald's capacity to say that he is going his way unconsciously.

Now, it is idle for Mr. MacDonald to obscure the issue by replying that this is an accusation of treachery. It is nothing of the sort. It is a perfectly legitimate experiment. We are not discussing personal motives; it is entirely a matter of deciding which is the better policy. An independent Labour Party or an alliance with the Radicals?

Mr. Macdonald and his friends need not reply by a reference to the Bloc system, adopted for a short time by M. Jaurès in France. Jaurès was endeavouring to save the Republic from a Monarchical rebellion. All that Mr. Macdonald is doing in England is to save Mr. Asquith, Free Trade, and Welsh Disestablishment. None of which important things are of the slightest concern to the workers.

One thing is clear after Croydon. It is little advantage for a Socialist candidate to have the support of the Labour Party. Indeed, for the moment, it seems a positive drawback. The moral of this is, that the I.L.P. must insist on its freedom to run candidates, when it pleases, outside the party control. The I.L.P. must not go down with the sinking ship. The
A Word of Remembrance and Caution to the I. L. P. 

Delegates,

On the eve of the Seventeenth Conference of the I.L.P., we send greetings.

We write this noting a sense of urgency, in all friendliness, and with a single eye to the healthy growth and prosperity of Socialism. The New Age has no axe to grind; its circulation does not depend upon your goodwill, and is independent of the I.L.P.; it is not contributing to the personal aggrandisement of the person: time is a dangerous enemy. The New Age's mission is not to dominate your proceedings or with the vexed problems of internal organisation upon which you will waste most of your time.

You meet in Edinburgh at a critical moment in the history of Socialism. We take leave, therefore, to remind you that the main question to be decided is not the Labour Alliance, nor Mr. Grayson's position, nor the intellectual sterility of your leaders, nor the journalistic futility of the "Labour Leader"—these, no doubt, demand your serious consideration—but whether as a body of men and women you may safely be entrusted with the tremendous responsibility and honour of voicing and fighting the Socialist cause in Great Britain. Can you rise to the height of the great argument? All other questions are subsidiary and relatively unimportant.

In short, you are on your trial. You; not your leaders. They have already been weighed and found wanting.

We write advisedly, this is a critical time in the history of Socialist in this country. Owing to various causes, the British Socialist movement is to-day side-tracked. Political issues are predominant with which your leaders are impatient to deal. Instead of grasping the one fact that Socialism has its own distinctive criticism upon every social and political problem, they have stampeded back to mid-Victorian Liberalism. Every day brings overwhelming proof of this. We will cite three recent illustrations: the Croydon election, Temperance, and Free Trade. Out of 21,000 votes, Mr. Frank Smith obtained less than 900! Why? Because he completely failed to distinguish his views from Mr. Raphael's. So vague and indistinct were they that the electors were not sufficiently interested to attend the Labour meetings, the average audience being less than thirty, including the stars on the platform. This has never before happened to a Socialist candidate. Many a time has the poll been disappointing, but the meetings have always hitherto been crowded and inspiring.

Mr. Frank Smith may conceivably have failed to make his meaning clear from sheer fatigue or incapacity, even though he personally may not have reverted to mid-Victorian Liberalism. But what must infer from the Labour Party's adulatory support of the Licensing Bill? The arguments advanced were precisely those of two eminent Whigs, the late Sir Wilfrid Lawson and Sir Thomas Whittaker. Had the Labour Party simply voted for the measure as (perhaps) the lesser of two evils, the average audience dearly stated the Socialist solution—a solution common to every Socialist organisation—we could possibly sympathise. But your Parliamentary representatives out-Stigellised Stigllngs, the egregious Snowden arrogantly denouncing the democracy as "driven as sodden—a democracy, by the way, which financially supports him considerably beyond his deserts. The truth is that these gentlemen are still the victims of the Gladstonian tradition—in other words, mid-Victorian Liberalism. Mr. M., Shackleston perfectly consistent, for this is essentially their creed; most emphatically it is not the creed of the Socialist. Our criticism is that the Socialist section of the Labour Party has capitulated to old-fashioned Whiggery.

Queen Victoria came to the throne in 1837; in 1846 the repeal of the Corn Laws and the adoption of Free Trade as our national policy. It was the outward and visible sign of the triumph of the manufacturer and shipper over the landed interests. Cobden was its prophet. We have been trying to forget Cobden. Alas! the Labour Party won't let us. Just mention Free Trade, and every member of that party—the I.L.P. section included—will submerge you in mid-Victorian formula, and files. The New Age is much to be said for it. Indeed—who can say?—perhaps the present Government may legislate on the lines of the Money Reporting Law Commission. For ourselves, we take the long view, and therefore strenuously advocate and patiently await the formation of a Socialist Party, urging as a first step the constitution of Socialist Representation Committees. We entreat you also to take the long view. We sincerely believe, however, that you really are the nucleus of a political party with all the sovereign rights of a political party. If you fail to do this, you—you abdicate. You will then find time to read Ibsen's play, "When We Dead Awaken." A more searching query is whether you take the long view or the short view. If the short view, then why not join the Liberal Party? You can get from Mr. Asquith much that comes within the short view—you have already obtained the Trades Disputes Act and Old Age Pensions and he will welcome you to the fold. Many Labour members will also be glad. There is much to be said for it. Indeed—who can say?—perhaps the present Government may legislate on the lines of the Money Reporting Law Commission. For ourselves, we take the long view, and therefore strenuously advocate and patiently await the formation of a Socialist Party, urging as a first step the constitution of Socialist Representation Committees. We entreat you to take the long view. We solemnly warn you that in grasping at immediate things, you may bankrupt your future.

"Oh, if we draw a circle premature, 
Needless of far gain, 
Greed for quick return of profit, sure, 
Bad is our bargain."

Because of your vision ("where there is no vision, the people perisheth") it is your imperishable heritage to think not in a day or a decade, but in the long view, because you are the nucleus of a political party or merely a fifth wheel to the Labour party. The New Age is its prophet. We have been trying to forget Cobden. Alas! the Labour Party won't let us. Just mention Free Trade, and every member of that party—the I.L.P. section included—will submerge you in mid-Victorian formula, and files.
this year, not able to record a profit as in late years, yet this is mainly due to the greater activity of the party." Until we came to the last word we thought we were reading the directors' report of a trading concern. A profit! Of course, it does not mean what it says; it is a gaucherie, a practical absurdity. But all understand the meaning of the official? Thus at the outset of your deliberations you inadvertently stumble upon the besetting sin of the I.L.P. The official mind is uppermost—and that way lies destruction. It will be impossible to determine whether the Party is too subordinated to effective organisation or whether the organisation is merely a means to achieve Socialism. Follow the lead of your officials, adopt their tone, and the end of the I.L.P. as a Socialist force is within measurable distance. If you do not have the courage to remember that mere organisation is futile unless it is inspired with living ideas. Truly may it be said, in this connection, that "it is the spirit which quickeneth.

Two closely related problems are necessarily raised in this report: the position in the I.L.P. of Mr. Grayson, and your future attitude towards the Labour Party.

Consider, then, the case of Mr. Grayson. You do not doubt his bona fides as a Socialist, do you? We know that long before he reached full manhood he was an ardent propagandist. We know that he gave up a promising career in another sphere that he might the more effectively preach Socialism. Today he is the most popular platform speaker in the movement. Yet your official leaders do not disguise their fear and dislike of him. He is not cantankerous; on the contrary, he is lovable, companionable, and given to generous impulses. Yet round his person is wafted a bitter conflict the end of which is not yet. What is his offence? It is simply this: that having, in the interests of a Socialist and with the veiled hostility of your leaders and officials, he retains his independence, declining to submit himself to the yoke of an outside, non-Socialist party. Is he worth retaining in your ranks? It is for you to decide. If you drive him out, rest assured that the loss will be yours and not his. Nor will he go out alone.

It is an easy transition to the vital issue of your alliance with the Labour Party. Is it not time to count the cost? The N.A.C. assure you that the Labour Party "stands more firmly embedded in the confidence of its supporters than ever before." If so, then why enter a defence of it in this report? As a matter of fact, the days of the Alliance are numbered. But let us consider the charge that is offered by the N.A.C. Here are the exact words:

"It cannot be too often repeated that Socialist members of the Labour Party are as free to expound Socialism, not only on the I.L.P. platform, but also at elections and in Parliamentary debate, as we believe would be the case were there no Labour Party; not only are they free to do so, but they take full advantage of every occasion for doing so, as press reports of speeches and Hansard's reports of the Parliamentary debates prove beyond question. This being so, your Council deprecates that uninformed criticism of the party and its work, which represents the alliance as a hindrance to the growth of a Socialist Party, and declares anew its belief that anything which tends to discredit the party, or to engender suspicion concerning it in the minds of the workers, is a real hurt to the growth of Socialism.

We respectfully urge your Council to read one of Kipling's Barrack-Room Ballads entitled "Tomlinson." You may remember that there was no room in Heaven or Hell for your Tomlinson. His intentions were excellent. He was most tremendously generous in intention; he was never slow to speak what he thought; but strangely enough neither Almighty God nor his Satanic vicar-devisor deemed this to his efficient "What's the quack who thundered and the shivering wretch who had just crossed the chilly Styx. You will observe that the defence of the Alliance is based entirely upon platform freedom of speech—Tomlinson's defence. In plain terms, it is not good enough to have a platform free of any political candidate, but you have a candidate of your own, and that is the I.L.P. Party "to expound Socialism"; it is a freedom equally freely exercised by Mr. Chiozza-Money, who is a member of the Liberal Party. Platform freedom! Fish! Are you deluded by such obvi-

ous clap-trap? What vitally concerns us is that your members of Parliament shall have freedom to act—and the capacity to act. We cannot, however, leave this part of the problem on a note of destructive criticism. We are not blind to the practical advantages of the Alliance. We readily grant that as things are it possesses many enticements. In the rough and tumble of politics it may prove beneficial to have organised Labour as your ally—particularly when it pays you handsomely for your services. Nevertheless there is a way out which we invite you to adopt. Yet N.A.C. definitely advises you to stand by the Alliance. If you are so minded, then do so. But what is there to prevent the I.L.P. from running Socialist candidates in addition to orthodox Labour candidates? Let the local branches decide whether their candidates shall run as Socialists or Labourists. The I.L.P. is composed of a mass of resolutions seeking to restrict popular men from occupying too many offices. One resolution deprecates "the N.A.C. fee of £2 for national speakers"; another "protests against the exorbitant fees charged by the M.P.'s for their services as speakers"; yet another that M.P.'s should be content with "that no Member of Parliament shall hold two offices"; another "that no member of the I.L.P. shall hold two offices"; again, that "no more than one member of Parliament shall be selected to represent the I.L.P.

Are you deluded by such obvi-
The Economic Test of Unemployed Policy.*

I.

No remedies for "unemployment" can be effective, so far as the whole industrial system is concerned, which do not correct the normal tendency of production to outrun consumption, evidenced to the ordinary business man by the greater difficulty in selling than in buying. Local or even national remedies such as technical instruction, through the provision of machinery of manufacture or of transport, enabling a particular district, trade, or nation to out-compete others by better or cheaper production, may secure a larger share of the volume of employment, shifting more unemployment on to less efficient trades, localities, or nations. But, treating the industrial system as a whole, it is evident that improvements of productive power cannot remedy a generally prevalent unemployment which attests an existing excess of productive power.

Indeed, we may go further, and affirm that the real and injurious check upon the progressive efficiency of industry, whether in the shape of inventions, investment, and the education of labour, is furnished by the recurrence of long periods of trade in which ability, capital, and labour-power stand idle or half employed.

Though in a progressive system of industry a certain margin of waste, tolerably constant, must be incurred through misapplication of industrial power and miscalculations of future demand, there is no reason in the nature of industry why these great oscillations of the volume of production and employment should occur.

To say that the modern system of industry will not work without a margin is merely to assert that whatever it is is inevitable. No other adequate explanation is given than that of a periodic failure of consumption to keep pace with productive power, and a consequent periodic accumulation of materials and goods in the productive system which congest that system and cause injurious stoppages. The financial machinery through which failure of consumption is revealed fails to act with rapidity and precision, and the equilibrium between the rate of production and of consumption which is eventually brought about is always effected upon an unstable basis which under-estimates the increasing power of production solely disclosed when business has resumed a normal course.

No remedy for unemployment is valid unless it is seen to stimulate the current of consumption by converting surplus income, either into wages spent in raising the standard of comfort of the workers, or into public revenue spent in raising the standard of public life. Surplus income, by its excessive saving and by its irregular spending, impairs the volume and the regularity of employment: its diversion either directly into wages or into public expenditure for steady purposes of popular support and progress is the only method of securing full and regular employment.

It is only by the application of this principle that we can test the utility of concrete palliatives for unemployment which modern governments exercising. Proposals which, for educational or other purposes, aim at removing from the labour market certain classes of superabundant labourers are genuine correctives of the over-supply of current productive power. If the large employment of young boys and girls can be curtailed by the abolition of half-time and the compulsory attendance at continuation and technical schools, their removal from the labour market will furnish some increased employment for capital and labour.

Since large numbers of efficient and skilled workers suffer both from seasonal and cyclical unemployment, it is not obvious that improved teaching, general or technical, will increase the volume of employment. Though individuals, by training, will get a better chance of obtaining work, they will do so at the expense of other individuals, unless at times when, and in trades where, the demand for trained labour exceeds the current supply. During periods of general depression there are no considerable trades prepared to take on more skilled workers, so that the training of unemployed persons cannot at such times be deemed an efficacious remedy. Taking a more general view of the effects of improved general and technical education upon the volume of employment, I should be disposed to distinguish the direct from the indirect consequences.

So far as such education enables workers to increase the quantity, as distinguished from the skill or quality, of their output it cannot contribute to alleviate unemployment: on the contrary, it would appear to increase the sum of the excess of the supply of labour at such times. Any improvement in the skill of individual workers, or in that of the nation as a whole, resulting from better training, would enable these individuals or this nation to keep a better hold upon employment than other individuals or other nations in world-industry at times of general trade depression. But since large numbers of workers whose efficiency is adequate to secure them regular employment in good times are unemployed when times are bad, it cannot be argued that any raising of the general level of efficiency, or any increase of the numbers of efficient workers would in itself secure an increase in the aggregate demand for skilled labour. As a local, or even as a national policy, such technical training might of course be efficacious in procuring for one town or one nation a larger share of employment at the expense of other towns or other nations. But when a cyclical depression in the industrial world exhibits an excess of competent workers in the various trades, to furnish a larger supply of equally or more competent workers is no remedy.

This rigorous application of the principle of quantitative demand, however, this not unimportant qualification. A general rise in education and technical training among the workers will stimulate among them an increased desire to keep a better hold upon employment than other individuals or other nations in world-industry at times of general trade depression. But since large numbers of workers whose efficiency is adequate to secure them regular employment in good times are unemployed when times are bad, it cannot be argued that any raising of the general level of efficiency, or any increase of the numbers of efficient workers would in itself secure an increase in the aggregate demand for skilled labour. As a local, or even as a national policy, such technical training might of course be efficacious in procuring for one town or one nation a larger share of employment at the expense of other towns or other nations. But when a cyclical depression in the industrial world exhibits an excess of competent workers in the various trades, to furnish a larger supply of equally or more competent workers is no remedy. This rigorous application of the principle of quantitative demand, however, this not unimportant qualification. A general rise in education and technical training among the workers will stimulate among them an increased desire and capacity for organisation, economic and political, which may thus incidentally produce a demand for wages and the standard of consumption. Just in proportion as it conduces thus to increase the share of the product which comes to labour, and to reduce the unproductive surplus, does it enlarge the total volume of employment.

By no other economic reasoning is it possible to defend the policy of public expenditure upon unemployed relief works or unemployed insurance, in which most modern States have committed themselves.

(J. A. Hobson.)

* From a forthcoming work : "The Industrial System: An Enquiry into Earned and Unearned Income." By John A. Hobson. (Longmans.)

and more regular employment and some rise of wages will ensue in the trades in which they were casual hangers-on. Not only would the labour market by such measures be relieved of the less effective portion of its own supply, but the increased cost of keeping and educating these classes devolving on the public purse would, following the line of our analysis, cause some net increase of consumption, and thus involve increased employment for capital and labour.

England—The Foreigner’s Home.

Mr. Asquth, on the departure of English capital for foreign shores, shares the optimism of the priestly fraternity at times of bereavement. Capital has left us for a better land (the land of 6 per cent.), but he assures us that we shall meet it again, resplendent as a demand for British labour. It is a pretty story, and has the merit of exceeding plausibility. An investing patriot, ill-content with 4 per cent., discovers a little more surplus value in the rice-fed labour of the Eastern
ascetic, for whom the pork chops and beer of Britain's
nearly are comfort. But the enterprising
patriotic capitalist does not send his shekels to the
foreigner's "bowler " hats, and there you have a new market for British
goods, and everything is for the beat in the best of all
possible worlds!

Mr. Chiozza Money, in the "Daily News," while
showing that the gain to the people would be im-
measurably greater if the investor put his money into
the Country Council for an extension of the tramway service,
is yet suffering from a similar obsession. He
asserts without any reservation that when we say that
a man invests his money in a Mexican tramways com-
pany, "we mean that British exports, the result of
British labour, will leave this country and go either to
Mexico or to some other country from which Mexico
exports goods."

The contention can easily be reduced to an absurdity
by supposing that capital found its way abroad until
all productive industry in England was supplanted by
industries established in those countries which
cheap and efficient labour is available, and where the
essential raw materials are abundant. And suppose all
the capitalists of the world, agreeing with William
Waldorf Astor that England is the only fit place for a
"gentleman " to live in, decided to take up their abode
in this country. Then, with the low cost of living
under a Free Trade régime, they might still have some
unspent income, and could still invest it abroad,
although all directly productive industry had ceased
here and there being nothing produced for export,
Mr. Asquith 's "demand for British goods " would have
to die unheard.

The fact of the matter is, that the investment of
capital abroad does not necessarily establish a demand
for British goods; it may merely represent a transfer
of the lien upon produce, represented by the interest due
to English capitalists upon their investments abroad, to
the country where the new investment is made.

The picture of England as a country without any
direct productivity, with no imports and no exports, is by no means so fanciful as it first appears.
We only need a few more multi-millionaires to take up their residence here, and by their expendi-
ture to divert the industry of the country into unpro-
ductive channels, it might become an accomplished
fact. The capitalists resident in the country would then
have a lien upon foreign produce as interest upon their
investments, sufficient to enable England to subsist as a
parasite upon the industry of the rest of the world.

Meanwhile Englishmen would be employed in catering
for the desires of their over-rich guests-building more
Hotel Cecil's, Brooklands motor tracks, etc. Of course
distribution would still employ a considerable section
of the people, and the professional classes would to a
large extent remain undisturbed. Mr. Smith, the
doctor, would be medical attendant to a grocer, who
served a bootmaker who made shoes for a tailor who
made the liveries of a plutocrat's footmen. Until they
are connected up, it is not obvious that we have a
string of parasites all dependent upon the foreign
capitalist, himself a parasite upon the foreigner's
labour. As a nation we might even be a great deal
better off than we are now. The railways might be
nationalised, municipal enterprise much extended, the
right to live recognised, and yet still we should have
a nation of parasites—little fleas living on the big fleas!
And of course we should have a magnificent Navy to
protect our interests abroad. And how very awkward
it would be if the nations upon whose surplus labour
we thrived became infected with Socialistic doctrines
and combined to repudiate their obligations to our plut-
cratic masters. The bubble would burst, and England
as a nation would go under.

F. H. MISETT.

The Desire to Own.

An Reply to Mr. Hilaire Belloc, M.P.

I now approach the central dogma upon which the new
attack upon Socialism is based—the assertion that men
desire to own.

Now, if I ask "What do men desire to own?" Mr.
Belloc will call me a professor. So, instead, I will ask
"Why do men desire to own?" Let us analyse this
alleged human passion, resolve it into its elements, and
see how far Socialism would satisfy it.

Whatever the desire really is, it is certainly not a mere
craving to be recognised as an absolute owner.
This I can prove on Mr. Belloc's own testimony, for he
is always pointing to the Middle Ages as a time when
men lived under a stable and happy economic system.
And, however much he may minimise the practical im-
portance of the fact, he cannot deny that it is a fact
that there was no such thing as absolute ownership of
land under the feudal system. Our very words "free-
hold" and "fee simple" are supposed to mean that, in
theory at least, all the land of England belonged to the
King of England and that all Englishmen were his
tenants. And this remained the case until the oligarchy
which had robbed the Church and the people com-
pleted its work in 1660 by abolishing feudal tenure, and
so established for the first time absolute ownership of
the earth. It is obvious, therefore, that if the medieval
peasant was really happy, it was not because his
absolute ownership of land was recognised; it was not.
It must have been something else which made the
difference between him and the modern proletarian.
Nor is it very difficult to see what that thing was.
Though the medieval peasant did not tend to be a
parasite on the land, he was not free to sell it if he did
belonged to the land, could not be turned off it, could
cultivate it in peace, and hand it on to his children.
In a word, he was secure.

I believe that quite nine-tenths of the desire to own
the means of production at the present time is simply
a desire for security. So long as the means of pro-
duction are the private property of some people, it is
obvious that those who do not own them must be
dependent for the very permission to live on those that
do. The only way to get out of this degrading depend-
ence with all its horrible consequences of insecurity,
chronic unemployment, penury in old age, and ghastly
anxiety for the future of your wife and children, is to
become yourself owner or part-owner of the means of
production either as landowner, independent craftsman,
shareholder, or (under a Collectivist system) citizen.

Therefore, now that the capitalist system has practi-
cally squeezed out the independent craftsman, and while
a Collectivist State is still in the remote distance,
everyone who has saved a little money is eager to
extend it in order to secure for himself some minimum
of independence. I utterly refuse to believe that he
ever gets at all sentimental about these investments,
or that he feels that they have become "a part of his
personality." He is simply insuring against the risks
of life.

I will even venture to doubt whether this does not apply to the French and Irish peasant proprietors about
whose "desire to own" Mr. Belloc and G. K. C. get so
rhetorical. If Land Nationalisation were proposed in
rance to-day, the bulk of the peasantry would no

NEW LINES OF THOUGHT, INTERESTING TO
SOCIAL REFORMERS,

are opened up by Dr. Eldgate's Essay, " Shakspeare and Tolstoy,"
which touches on Property, Marriage, and Political Relations
Published by GARDEN CITY PRESS, LTD., Printers, etc.,
Letchworth, Herts, 1909. 47 PAGES. Price 6d.
doubt resist it, but I suspect that they would do so on strictly commercial grounds, because, having their farms free of charge, they would not see the fun of paying rent for them. But, if they could be convinced that the small rent the State would charge them would be nothing to the service it could render them in organizing the distribution of their product, guiding it to the best market, improving facilities for Trade and Transit, and increasing the purchasing power of their customers, I firmly believe that they would close with the offer. Indeed, some of them must even now be willing to do so, for many Socialist deputies sit for agricultural constituencies, and must be elected largely by the votes of petty proprietors.

Now, Mr. Belloc will hardly deny that, whatever else Socialism might give or withhold, it would give security, security as complete as that possessed by the medieval peasant, security far more complete than his own system of widely distributed capital could promise. So far, therefore, as the desire to own is a desire for security, Socialism would satisfy it.

Let me anticipate Mr. Belloc's answer. I admit that the desire to own is not wholly a desire for security. Slavery gives a measure of security, penal servitude and the workhouse give still greater security. Yet they are found intolerable by free men.

I do not doubt that the desire to own is a desire for liberty and for the extension of the personality. Every man wishes to surround himself with an environment which he can change at will. He wishes to choose his own clothes, furniture, pictures, dinner, dinner-clothes, seats, having all these things according to his permission anyone. These are the things to which the sense of property most naturally and humanly attaches itself.

For they are things really "proper" to the individual man, existing solely for his own use or pleasure. Mr. Belloc and Mr. Chesterton have in no way exaggerated the strength and universality of this sentiment. As G. K. C. has pointed out, children develop it almost at once. But they develop it in regard to things that they see and use. It is easy enough to make a child understand that the box of tin soldiers with which he plays belongs to him, while the arm-chair in which his father sits belongs to his father. But it would, I suspect, be difficult to explain to him how it comes about that his affection for the bricks and mortar of the row of shops in Tottenham, which he has never seen, but the ground-rents of which he bought on the advice of his surveyor from another man, who also had never seen them.

No man really thinks that the rails and rolling stock of a Peruvian railway are "proper" to him. The object of the men who buy these things is simply to make money out of other people's work—a quite human and intelligible desire, but not an exalted one. Anyhow, it has nothing whatever to do with "the extension of the personality."

The "Liberty and Property Defence League" would be an excellent title for a Socialist society. With it altogether deny that this feeling of property is applicable, except in the most far-fetched and unnatural manner, to investments. No man really feels a human affection for the bricks and mortar of the Peruvian railway, which he has never seen, but the ground-rents of which he bought on the advice of his surveyor from another man, who also had never seen them.

The "Liberty and Property Defence League" would be an excellent title for a Socialist society. With liberty I shall perhaps deal later, but I certainly maintain that one of the functions of Socialism is the defence of property—public and private.

Socialism will secure to the individual man a fuller control of the things which are really "proper" to him, and will give him more of these things. But there are other things—the great means of production—which are not "proper" to any individual or group of individuals, and which they are necessary to the life of all. These things are "proper" to the community; they ought to be the property of the community. Render, therefore, to the individual the things which are the individual's, and to the Nation the things which are the Nation's.

Next week I propose to discuss the stability of Mr. Belloc's alternative to Socialism, and I shall then go on to show how Socialism alone can realize Mr. Belloc's own ideal.

CECIL CHESTERTON.

The Post.

By Anton Tchekhov.

(Translated by Fanny Stein and Rochelle S. Townsend.)

It was three o'clock in the morning. The postman, ready for his journey in his great-coat and peaked cap, a rusty sword in his hand, stood by the door and waited for the driver to finish packing the mail bags into the coach. The sleepy postmaster was sitting at a table, which resembled a counter, and, while signing a paper, remarked:

"My nephew, a student, asks me to allow him to go to the station with you. Well! Igniattef, you had better give him a lift in the coach. I know it's against the rules for strangers to drive with the mail; still, what's to be done! Give him a lift; it will save hiring horses."

"Ready! A shout was heard from without.

"Go, now! God bless you," said the postmaster. "Who is the driver?"

"Simeon Glassoff."

"Sign the papers."

The postman signed the papers, and went out.

At the entrance to the post office stood the mail coach; two of the horses were standing motionless, but the off-side horse kept pawing the ground impatiently, and every now and again would shake its head so that the bell jingled. The coach, filled with mail bags, appeared like a dark spot, and next to it two figures were situated: the student with a portmanteau in his hand, and the driver. The latter was smoking a pipe, the light of which shone in the darkness. It kept going out and flickering up again, and for a second would throw its light now upon a sleeve, now upon a nose and thick moustache, and now upon a scowling brow. The postman put the mail bags, placed his sword on the top, and jumped into the coach.

The student hesitatingly followed, and accidentally knocked the postman with his elbow, for which he timidly apologised.

The pipe went out.

The postmaster came out in his shirt-sleeves and slippers, groaning and shivering in the night air.

"Well! God be with you," he said. "Michailo, remember me to your mother, and to everybody. Igniattef, don't forget to deliver the packet to Bistrettof. Be off!"

The driver took the reins, blew his nose, arranged his seat, and smacked his lips.

"Don't forget!" repeated the postmaster.

The big bell, in a sonorous voice, began speaking to the little bells, and they replied caressingly. The coach moved, the big bell soliloquised; the row of lights was lit, and the driver, standing up, slashed his whip twice near the restless side horse, and the coach rolled along the dusty road.

The little town was asleep, and the lights were out. On either side of the wide street the dark forms of houses and trees could be seen. The sky was covered with stars, and in certain places long, narrow clouds were visible. In the east, just where the sun would rise, appeared the crescent moon; but neither the numerous stars nor the pale moon could pierce through the darkness. It was cold, damp, and there was a smell of autumn in the air.

The student, wishing to be amiable to the postman, who so kindly gave him a seat in the coach, tried to enter into conversation with him.

"In the summer, at this time in the morning, it is quite light," he remarked.

"But now there is, as yet, no sign of the dawn. The summer is over."

The student gazed at the sky, and continued, "Even the sky has an autumnal look. Look to the right. Do you see those three stars standing in a line? It is Orion's Belt, which appears on our hemisphere in September."

The postman, with his hands tucked away in his sleeves, and muffled up to the 'ears in his coat collar, did not look at the stars, and did not stir.

Evidently Orion had no interest for him. He was accustomed to seeing the stars, and was probably tired of them.

After a brief silence the student began again:

"It is cold! It's quite time for the day to break. Do you know at what hour the sun rises?"

"What?" asked the postman.

"When does the sun rise?"
A little after five o'clock, interpolated the driver.

The coach left the little town behind. On either side of the road were now visible the wattle fences of kitchen gardens, and lonely willows. Ahead, everything was obscured in a mist.

In the open country the moon appeared larger and the stars brighter. Suddenly a wave of dampness swept over them. The student pulled his collar down. A cold wind, with an outstretched fist, was going about its work. The student felt the unpleasant cold rushing around his feet, over the mail bags, and over his hands and face.

The coach quickened pace. The sound of the big bell became fainter, as if it also felt the cold.

A sound of splashing water reached them; around the whole coach, and the horses' hoofs reflections of stars could be seen jumping about in the water. In about ten minutes it became so dark that neither the moon nor the stars could be seen. The coach had entered a wood.

Prickly branches of fir trees constantly hit against the student's cap, and his face became covered with cobwebs.

The wheels and the horses' hoofs crunched over the roots of old trees, and the coach swayed and tugged like a drunkard.

"Drive in the middle of the road!" said the postman, angrily.

The face is all scratched by the branches! keep to the right!"

An accident nearly happened; the coach jerked suddenly, as if overcome by a violent fit, shook, and with a shriek, swayed to and fro, and then to the left, made a tremendous effort, and rushed through a clearing in the wood. The horses got frightened, and bolted.

"Whoa! Whoa!" shouted the driver, alarmed.

"Whoa! devils!"

The student was being terribly jolted. In order to keep his balance and not fall out of the coach, he bent forward and leaned against the back of the postman. Even if the bell were to awaken the postman at the slightest noise, he would have been thrown from the box.

Through the noise of the wheels and the screeching of the coach was heard the sound of the sword falling out, and in a little while a dull thud reached them from the back of the coach.

"Whoa!" shouted the driver.

"Stop!"

The student fell forwards on to the seat in front and hurt his forehead; a moment later he fell backwards and hurt himself very much by being knocked against the back of the coach.

"I am falling," flew across his mind; but at this moment the coach got stuck in a bog. He maintained a sullen face, and the student felt the unpleasant cold rushing beneath him, in shape like a gun on its carriage, with the wheels and the horses' hoofs crunched over the roots of old trees, and the coach swayed to and fro like a drunkard.

The student felt snubbed, and did not address the postman during the rest of the journey.

The dawn was beginning to appear, so gradually that the change in the colour of the sky was scarcely discernible. It still seemed dark, but the horses and the driver were becoming more distinct.

The crescent moon became paler and paler, and a cloud spreading beneath it, in shape like a gun on its carriage, assumed a form like the postman.

Soon the face of the postman became visible—it was wet from the dew, and looked grey and stony, like the face of a dead man. He retained a snubbed and gloomy anger, as if he still felt the pain from his fall, and was still annoyed with the driver.

"Thank God, it's getting light!" said the student, gazing into the cross and chilly face of the postman.

I feel quite frozen! The September nights are cold, but the cold disappears as soon as the sun rises. Are we getting near the station?"

The postman scowled, and drew a wry face.

"How you like to talk, to be sure!" he said.

"Can't you drive in a coach! without speaking?"

The student felt snubbed, and did not address the postman during the rest of the journey.

The sun rose, cold, dim, and sleepy. The tree tops did not appear, but a golden spot appeared on the sun, as they are usually described. The rays of the sun did not reach the earth, and there was no expression of joy and gladness in the flight of the sleepy birds.

The cold remained just as it was the night before.

They passed a country house, and the student, sleepy and sulky, looked at the drawn blinds, and thought, "Strangers are not allowed to drive with the mail!"

"Can't you drive in a coach! without speaking?"

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I will go back to the bush—to the scent of the wattle-tree bloom ;
To the land of labour and heat, and restless, torturing flies ;
Where the ragged gums weep and droop in a silence
like that of the tomb,
And the sun glares down relentlessly from cloudless, brazen skies.

I will go back into exile, and forget the things I have known.

Forget forever the scented grass of England's summer days—
Forget my hours of leisure and rest, and happiness long since outgrown,
And search once again for peace of mind along more strenuous ways.

And there, it may be, I shall forget a vision of golden hair—
Of soft blue eyes suffused with tears, and lips that said
"Don't go!"
But the voice of the Bush croons peace to my mind 'mid the din of the city square,
And the cry of the bell-bird rings in my ear when the evening sun is low.

Back to the land of the Southern Cross—to spinifex, she-oak, and sand,
To the country of mullega-scrub—the land of the kangaroo—
To the land of the bluey and billy—the swagman's, the sundowner's land,
Ne'er again to forsake its shores and its skies of miraculous blue!

E. L. ALLHUSEN.

Books and Persons.
(AN OCCASIONAL CAUSERIE)

I passed an agreeable evening, last week, at the dinner of the Omar Khayyam Club, held to celebrate the centenary of the birth of Fitzgerald. There was a gathering of about ninety people, most of them in "Who's Who," and quite half of them—I should say—connected with letters or journalism. To my keen regret, "Claudius Clear" was represented only by an empty chair and a name printed on a programme. Mr. Birrell was also absent. The toast of Fitzgerald's immortal memory was proposed by Mr. Edmund Gosse in a speech distinguished by a certain elegance of form, considerable knowledge, and an entire failure to understand the human nature of Fitzgerald. It was in listening to such a speech that one saw, as in a vision, why Mr. Gosse, with his gifts and his graces, has never stood the human nature of Fitzgerald. It was in listening and housework for months together. Often he does not speak to anyone for over a week. He seems as to defy any serious denial.

I was, of course, prepared for Messrs. Moffat, Yard and Co.'s statement that Mr. Trevena’s knowledge of Dartmoor is "probably unique." But I regret the following: "All other writers have described Dartmoor and its people from the impressions gained by a few short summer visits." It is a pity that authors have not some legal power to prevent such silly and malicious lying on the part of their publishers, and the consequent foolishness from Messrs. Moffat, Yard, and Co., for the mere reason that they are the publishers in America of Mr. Eden Phillpotts’s novel, "The Virgin in Judgment."
BOOK OF THE WEEK.

First Lessons in Revolution.*

It was in Derna on Sunday morning, July 26th, whilst I was sauntering with Ramadan Freitís for the hire of some camels to take us across Cyrenaica, that news came to me of the most successful revolution in history. The young electrician of the wireless telegraphy station at Derna pounced upon me, wildly excited with the importance which he brought him through the air. "A chamber of deputies is to be summoned; all exiles will return." And then it ended. Owing to disturbances (atmospheric, not political), not another word was to be wrung out of the air, and the excitement waned as to how it had all come about, and what exactly had happened. The electrician, a youth, the doctor in charge of the troops, an adult, the commandant of the district, a military grey-beard, were all Young Turks; in fact, the whole revolution was the result of the scrupulous avoidance of all self-advertisement and his firmness in refusing the high place to which he might justly have expected to rise. And so it is with every member of that wonderful Committee which bound together and of neglect. Many knew more or less of the trend of affairs up till within the last few months. "But the Army is ours," Nissim Bey had at once exclaimed, but now, at this moment, the insignia of his new rank, the imperial sash, was being wrung out of the air, and we were left wondering as to how it had all come about, and what exactly had happened. The electrician, a youth, the doctor in charge of the troops, an adult, the commandant of the district, a military grey-beard, were all Young Turks; in fact, the whole revolution was the result of the scrupulous avoidance of all self-advertisement and his firmness in refusing the high place to which he might justly have expected to rise. And so it is with every member of that wonderful Committee which bound together and of neglect. Many knew more or less of the trend of affairs up till within the last few months. "But the Army is ours," Nissim Bey had at once exclaimed, but now, at this moment, the insignia of his new rank, the imperial sash, was being

Revolution deserved greater credit than the rest. "Yes, he did very well; he did quite as much as the others." "Yes, the work in Macedonia was very slow and arduous, but those who were working in Asia Minor ran greater dangers than we." Enver Bey had said: "We had studied other revolutions. We saw that, time after time, they had been wrecked by men who strove to put themselves at the head of their fellows, saying that a leader was the one thing needed. . . . We asked ourselves, why have any leaders at all? Working together, that is our idea. We considered that essential." If I dwell on this point it is not because of its novelty as a theory—Kropotkin has shown us the necessity of this common working, but because of its successful practice, which should endure it to the English.

When we have thoroughly assimilated this real sub-ordination of all to the common good, this absence of all playing to the gallery, the part of anyone, the next lesson is the application of Wentworth's "Thorough." One can imagine that many of the Committee must have been secretly tempted to get what reforms were offered them knowing how dangerous was the game they played. Mr. Buxton writes: "Force proving ineffective, conciliation is tried on a magnificent scale. Five hundred and fifty officers receive promotion in a single day. . . . The 36 imprisoned officers are pardoned and released, and the first of these, Enver bey, is dismissed, and the semi-liberal Said put in his place." A Fabian Committee would have accepted all this as a great victory, beyond their wildest dreams. The Ottoman Committee was framed of other stuff. They had made up their minds as to what they were out for, and would accept nothing less than the maxim. "But the tumult is not delayed; the determination of the Committee is growing." On the 31st four members of the Committee de-

manded an audience of the Sultan. They entered the Palace with loaded revolvers in their pockets, prepared, if the Sultan refused their request, to take his life on the spot, and sell their own as dearly as might be. The Sultan signed the document and took the oath.

But the Committee was not satisfied. In the grant of the constitution, he retained in his own hands the appointment of the Ministers of War, of Marine, and of the Interior. He was quickly given to understand that this would not be tolerated. And the Sultan yielded—the Revolutionary Party gained every point they had demanded and of which demands they would not abate one tittle; because they were not satisfied to have the Sultan's commission as just as far as he would go. The policy of No Compromise was successful.

There is a good deal more to be extracted from Mr. Buxton's book than I have space for. The propaganda among the army, for instance. We Socialists have not carried our propaganda sufficiently among the officers and men of the Navy, which is, after all, one of the oldest of our collectivist institutions. There is a big harvest to be reaped there among all ranks of this skilled profession. These intelligent men are not misled by Mr. Balfour's platocratie claptrap, or Sir Edward Grey's dangerous entanglements.

Mr. Buxton gives a picturesque and moving sketch of the Turkish revolutionary movement, to which I feel I have not done justice by drawing so much attention to our English needs. The story is, need I say, splendidly worth reading for its own sake, and Mr. C. N. Buxton is a graphic and impartial guide. He does not pretend to know whether the new order will be permanent. And so I may hazard my conjecture that it will be permanent if the peoples are successful in other lands; it will fail if the ruling oligarchies of England, Germany, Austria and Russia continue long in possession.

* "Turkey in Revolution." By C. N. Buxton. (Unwin.

** "Turkey." By Stanley Lane-Poole. (Unwin.)

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REVIEWS.

The Wander Years. By J. H. Yoxall. (Smith Elder. 7s. 6d.)

It may be said at once that Mr. Yoxall has written an unusual work, both for its ambition and its matter (whose quantity and variety must astonish even himself), and if we are compelled to say we do not altogether like Mr. Yoxall has chosen himself to blame. In the first place, he prefers to a Flaubert use of words. "Lador said he hated false words. So did Flaubert. So indeed do I, even I." Then he writes a book to contradict it. Thus the title-page tells us "The Wander Years" are an account of journeys among other regions—Art (whatever this may mean). In another place he informs us, "I have studied wise words," but offers no proof. Perhaps the best instances of his careless and slovenly use of words and terms are to be found in the chapter on "The Rowing Brush." Here you have such gems as "a peaceful and distinctly British Art grew into lusty youth." There is no such thing as a peaceful and distinctly British Art. "The mystery of landscape painting" (whatever this may mean), he takes up "the bayonet pen" in behalf of the British Water Colour School, whose work, unlike that of the "opaque brown varnishy Old Masters, is not smudged nor scumbled, nor thick with layer on layer of stratified pigments, etc." (this is painful nonsense.) He discovers that "till Girtin broke with tradition" there were no water-colour works worth mentioning. This is ignorance. He speaks of the Water Colour School exhausting our small island of its "views" (a guide-book term). He refers to the members of the British School as "the younger school" (a confession of a horrid statement, seeing that no artist can be a John Bull to the core). "Modern improvements, that foe to class art, we are not sure whether their colours are mixed with Mafeking or the Lord Mayor's Show. It is needless to multiply these examples. On every page the author exhibits his passion for careless statement; on every other page he treats his reader as though he were a fool. Says he, "I fear the great English Water Colour School is gone" (we fear that Queen Anne is dead).

These faults aside, the book compels attention. Its author traverses a wide realm of Art passing easily from earth to heaven, from the soul of porcelain to that of a cathedral (viewing the latter not altogether in a Viollet de Duc sense). His passing is curiously uniting force, is the keynote of her writings, as it is of the author's. His work has been frequently noticed for its likeness to TOLSTOI'S. It may be said at once that Mr. Yoxall has written a clever and an original work (Westminster Review), whose work has been frequently noticed for its likeness to TOLSTOI'S.

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In its review of the first edition "The Crank" (now "The Open Road") says:-"To conclude, I may say that I have read through nearly every Food Reform Cookery Book published, and I have no hesitation in saying that I think it is the most satisfactory Work of the Kind yet published." L. N. FOWLER & CO., LUDGATE CIRCUS, E.C.

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noting all the curious ways of birds, mammals, or insects. In her dying moments she is attended by those who have loved and wailed over her with clasped hands and shining eyes in presence. Her last conscious moments "are gladdened by the sudden cry of the cuckoo calling from the bough of the great tree opposite her bedroom window."

Thus Mr. Gosse in an epilogue brings to a close a book which, as the preface says, "is a very original and telling study of a megalomaniac youth, the Wandering Brush. You see passing amid such incidents and characters lend themselves to humorous treatment. The plot deals with Christabel, aged 50, the stern, unrelenting realism of Mr. "Frank Danby's "new book有期徒red by the unpreparedness of this blessed country is being bomed. Briefly, the book surveys the moral and religious life of London under Chinese occupation in 1924, what time Ping Wung carries on the traditions of Nero, Dolcetian, and Julian. The cover illustration of the Boxer beholding the Bishop, or metaphorically, Confucianism decapitating Christianity, assists the imagination. In this way the Celestes are shown as ergin herself in tell-

The gay temperament reveals itself in "Wax." Its scenes are realistic, and its unwholesome men and women are in harmony—all save one who is, oddly enough, a tradesman. A 'sanguine outlook on life characterises Mr. Oxenham's work. He apparently freely choose the pen as something of a personal document. It offers a life characterises Mr. Oxenham's work. He apparently freely choose the pen as something of a personal document. It offers a

"The Incompleat Etonian." By Frank Danby. (Heinemann. 6s.)

"Wax." By G. S. Layard. (George Allen. 6s.)

"Chip." By F. E. Mills Young. (Lane. 6s.)

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Chance opportunities, says Rochefoucauld, make us known to others, and still more to ourselves. This is equivalent to saying that temperament, like murder, will out. Temperament is indeed a thing that will reveal itself even in the best regulated novelist. It usually speaks within the limit of its geographical area. But this is little to do with the quality of its voice. The fact is, though temperament affects topography, topography is not the cause of temperament. Just as it is a fact that though genius affects its voice. The fact is, though temperament affects

"The Neptune Pen (a 9s. 6d. one) has scarcely had a day's rest during the last five years. Professor Harbach's book comes at a very opportune moment; for it lays a sound historical foundation of the facts which we shall have to consider before a policy for the future can be drawn up. He has taken a broad view of the ground, and his book, despite a certain heaviness of literary style, is yet of extraordinary interest to anyone who takes an economic or humanitarian delight in the study of his fellows. Agriculture, even in this age of factories, still employs more inhabitants of the United Kingdom than any other single occupation. We do not always agree with Dr. Harbach's conclusions. For example, we profoundly distrust the solution by peasant proprietorship. But the facts are given for the reader to draw his own conclusions. The pages on the earlier Poor Law have an interest to-day beyond their immediate reference to the agricultural population.
The whole volume is, indeed, a very interesting contribution to the history of this country in the broadest sense; and of particular interest as a valuable guide towards the formation of intelligent opinions on a subject which so urgently demands the attention of responsible citizens.

Lord Windlesham's Tenant. By Farquhar Palliser. (Seale, Bryers, and Walker. 3s. 6d.)

Maturin (I.d. W.'s half demented brother): There was once upon a time—Hah?

Nan: (W.'s daughter, and heiress to the W.): A great and good man whose virtuous and only daughter, rich beyond all want, was sought in marriage—

Mat.: Stay, child, how named you this man?

Nan: Hardied the Good.

Maturin: And ought in marriage, to whom the heave shoul have been Maturin. Pray thee, more?

Nan: And sought in marriage by one she loved not. Then there was another youth whose love she reprieves to be Lord Windlesham's eldest son by a previous marriage, and the youngest of all, himself disposed of by girl, titles, and estate, promptly declares. Thus, as always, the dear, delightful colonies are made the dusthole of melodrama. A novel of the old-fashioned sort, containing some strong moments, and providing a change from the strain. The appearance, were nevertheless aware that a new thinker had arrived, were perturbed by the form of the new readers, though. It is certain that the name of the author. And it is certain that the most remarkable books of the last half century was no other than our old friend, Mr. Allen Upward. As we knew the name of the author. And it is certain that by one who thoroughly understands it gives an impression of the name of the author of the "Last Word."

When some months ago a now extinct publisher issued a strangely printed volume by an anonymous writer, annexing to it, its early discriminating readers, though perused by the form of the new arrival, were nevertheless aware that a new thinker had swum into their ken. Outside a small circle from which we and all our acquaintances were excluded, nobody knew him. And it is certain that none of us could have guessed that the writer of one of the most remarkable books of the last half century was no other than our old friend, Mr. Allen Upward. As may be seen by a reference to "Who's Who," Mr. Allen Upward's previous record had not prepared the world for his appearance as a thinker of enormous power.

A penchant for the secrets of the Courts of Europe, the Secret History of To-day, it is true, having led us to suspect something of a Cagistiro nature concealed behind the popular writer, but not even Mr. Upward's plays would have given us any clue to his mystery of intellectualised occult lore. In short, we are absolutely taken by surprise at Mr. Fifield's announcement of the name of the author of the "New Word."

However, we shall stick to our opinion that the book, though it were written by Miss Marie Corelli, is a masterpiece of provocative thought, a mine of diamonds, and a book to buy and keep.

People's Co-operative Banks. By Henry Devine. (Cassell and Co. 18.)

Implying a desire to promote thrift among the necessitous poor, this excellent exposition of the P.C.B. system by one who thoroughly understands it gives an account of its principles, working, extent, methods of organisation; recommends its methods of raising money at low rates of interest in poor localities where a person's character is a guarantee of security; points to the advantage of being able to borrow money at about 1 per cent., and the disadvantages of other systems under which 300 per cent. would be considered quite an ordinary rate of interest, and instances of going up to 1,500 per cent. are common. The fault of this system, in common with others, is that it is based upon the ignorance of the borrower. This is shown in Mr. Devine's book, which carefully avoids reducing its calculations in terms of so much per cent., per annum, by which means the borrower could see at a glance what he really pays. As it is, he is led to believe that he is only paying a ud. a shilling, whereas he is paying a much larger percentage. The book aptly illustrates how the monied class gets a hold upon the working class, through the latter's ignorance of simple arithmetic, and unconsciously emphasises the need of the working man knowing how to work it out in terms of the money market. When he has learnt to do this, he will drop money-lenders, and solve the borrowing problem by an exchange of products by a system of counters, and use no money except, perhaps, to settle balances.

DRAMA.

East End and West End.

The two performances which the Stage Society gives of each of its productions are quite different in "feeling." The one on Sunday night is usually at worst rather a lark, but the one on Monday afternoon has often the solemnity of a religious rite. At the back of the mind is a notion that you are there because you ought to be there. I was present last Monday afternoon, and I may say that the extraordinary and abundant wit displayed in Mr. George Calderon's three-act play, "The Fountain," entirely dispelled the religious feeling. We laughed constantly, and for the sole reason that we couldn't help it. Yet "The Fountain" is a play of the East End, and I am sick of East End plays. Moreover, it contains about enough dramatic material for a one-act piece, and even its dramatic moments are not very dramatic. And in tone it wavers between comedy and knock-about farce. And the lesson which emerges—namely, that the West End can help the East End, not by going to the East End and being sympathetic, but only by going to the House of Commons and being just—is a lesson which I should have thought every intellectually honest person had learnt long ago.

Despite all these things, "The Fountain," with all its faults, has something doing and worth seeing. Its pictures were very true and very amusing, and the wind of a fine, sound common sense blew through it. The crowd of characters was manoeuvred on the stage with skill, and for this, no doubt, credit is due to Mr. Norman Page, "the producer." (Strange, how the producer is generally ignored at the praise-giving!) The acting was excellent, especially that of Miss Alice Mansfield and Miss Nancy Price.

"The Fountain" was preceded by "Unemployed," in one act, by Miss Margaret Mack. This trite and utterly devoid of any interest or merit of any kind. The members of the Managing Committee of the Stage Society are astute and experienced persons, and they have taste. They must have had some reasons for accepting "Unemployed." I think that one of them might write, to this paper or some other, and state those reasons. I think that some such statement is due to the Society and to those critics whose attitude towards the Society is friendly and helpful. Some critics, it is notorious, seldom conceal their detestation of the Society.

There occurred a great triumph of what in the days of the labour party and the women's movement would have been called "cynical realism" a few days later at the Haymarket, when Mr. Hubert Henry Davies' new comedy, "Bevis," was produced. I, who am not a liberal, was allowed to join the audience.

The "Christian Commonwealth" for next week will be a special I.L.P. number, and will contain an important article with Mr. J. Keir Hardie, M.P., on the situation in which the Conference meets. The Rev. R. J. Campbell, M.A., deals with "The Democratic Spirit in Religion," and the Rev. T. Rhondda Williams, whose work for Socialism in Bradford is well known, writes on "The Labour Party." A valuable feature will be a portrait gallery of leading Socialists, including Mr. J. Keir Hardie, M.P., Mr. J. Ramsay Macdonald, M.P., Mr. Philip Snowden, M.P., Mr. Robert Blatchford, Mr. Bernard Shaw, Mr. Sidney Webb, Mr. H. G. Wells, and Mr. Victor Grayson.
am an out-and-out realist, was of course delighted. I was more than delighted, I was startled. I am thoroughly accustomed to the "worst excesses" of the Parisian stage. I have also a sort of gift for writing novels which the managers of municipal libraries refuse to circulate. And it is within my memory that I once produced a comedy of provincial manners which, by its utter "sordidness," infuriated and shocked the dramatic critic of the "Times" for the space of over one column. I never thought it to be startled by a spectacle on the licensed English stage. And yet I was, on Thursday night. And so that not Octave Mirbeau, not Maurice Donnay, not Tristan Bernard, and assuredly neither Ibsen nor Sudermann, produced such a complete picture of a corrupt, vicious, and vile society as Mr. Davies gives in "Bevis." The only apparently decent people in the play are the servants—of whom, happily, there are quite a number.

Bevis, the Marquis of Bewdley, is the young head of an impoverished and haughty family. His mother, the Marchioness, wants him to marry a lot of money in order that she may lay hold of a proportion of that money for her own extravagances. His uncle, Lord Herbert, persuades him to marry a woman who is insulted by the suggestion that she accepts coin from Mr. Hopkins for chaperoning his girl, but rather tickled by the suggestion that Mr. Hopkins is generous to her because she is his mistress. Her heart and body, by the way, belong to Lord Herbert. They can't wed, because she would lose her income if she married again, and Lord Herbert is so poor. Their desires are so little under control that even in another person's drawing-room he will chase her round the table for the purpose of achieving physical contacts. Bevis knows of their aged amour, but both he and they regard it as a matter of course. Everything is regarded as a matter of course. And everybody insults everybody. The mere lack of manners displayed would appal cabmen. The whole play is one unceasing caddish rudeness from end to end. The Bewdleys quarrel loudly and boorishly with Mr. Hopkins instantly they see him. Lady Bewdley flatly asks him for money for herself, Lord Herbert flatly asks him for two hundred pounds flatly, lies by for a thousand pounds to pay for a motor-car—all this before he has been in the Bewdley mansion ten minutes. There is no deception, no beating about the bush, no expense of words. It is "How d'ye do. Glad to meet you. Your cheque—book, and hurry up!" Still Mr. Hopkins doesn't seem to mind much. Rachel, by means of a direct lie, breaks off the match, and is immediately insulted by everybody.

In the second act we have Mrs. Pym's small country cottage at Maidenhead—so few beds that only married couples can be invited—but this could not have been so, for the author Lucullus, was accepted with smiles, with laughter, and with joy. I was staggered to find myself behind the times. I thought Mr. Davies had overdone it. But no! Nobody seemed to think so. And presumably the public British is now quite prepared to listen to the truth, and plenty of it, provided it is put before them correctly. But the mere fact that the Half measures might fail. Now that realism has thus triumphed, I have a mind to leave my business and try the idyllic. I was told in the foyer that the piece was a farce, but this could not have been so, for the author Lucullus, was accepted with smiles, with laughter, and with joy. I was staggered to find myself behind the times. I thought Mr. Davies had overdone it.

Robert Buchanan's ballad is, of its sort, a fairly good ballad, but where it just misses excellent fun on the one hand and fine sentiment on the other you have curiously without any particular hurry to get "copy" in by eleven o'clock the same evening. I may sneer a bit later at the programme. But the mere lack of manners displayed would appal cabmen. And I scribbled some unrepeatably profane reflections that evening; some that even in the encouraging and congenial atmosphere of Gambrino's I dare not quote to you. And the thing was carried out with unfailing bitterness. Nobody once relented. Miss Lottie Venne was enormously fine as Mrs. Pym (I discovered a remarkable similarity between her talent and that of the celebrated Jeanne Bloeck, such as Thorwaldsdotter was to present), and such a picture of a corrupt, vicious, and vile society as Mr. Davies gives in "Bevis." The only apparently decent people in the play are the servants—of whom, happily, there are quite a number.
I am writing this in the train, and as I have not the analytical notes of your cantata in my pocket, I cannot give you chapter and verse for this little accusation, but I am thoroughly glad that you have had the courage and the honesty to avoid using actual folk-tunes for the purpose of suggesting local colour. This is my pettest aversion. I know of no method so generally successful in defeating its own ends as the employment of folk-tunes in orchestral music. The duty of such a composer is to express thoughts of an infinitely more hopeful nature, and to achieve that aim he must use methods capable of embodying those thoughts. The Cambridge professor, for example, sank any individuality he ever had had of a century ago by this accommodating nationalism.

I wonder what you thought of Paul Puéget's "Olysses and Sirens," in which the piece that was performed before yours on Tuesday evening? It seemed to me that this was the "Olysses" of American folk-song. I never felt so inclined to blow up any orchestra; such a piece of abandoned melodrama has seldom been heard in London. I wonder will it ever be heard again?

Something was radically wrong with your new orchestral accompaniment to "Ev'ry" at the Strolling Players' Amateur Orchestra Society on Thursday. Miss Gainger Kerr sang all three songs too slowly, which was bad enough, but it was the "Olysses" of the sea-horses I missed. When Mr. Cecil Pearson sang it at the Beachten a few evenings previously with the original piano-forte accompaniment one could actually taste the salt of the water and see the white manes of the horses flying over the accompanist's head. Yours very obediently,

HERBERT HUCHE

CORRESPONDENCE.

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

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

SPECIAL NOTICE.

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

THE P.O. TELEPHONE DEPARTMENT.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Will you let me work off in a letter to the Socialist New Age the spleen and exasperation produced in me by contact with one State enterprise—the Post Office Telephone Department?

As you are of course aware, the State is taking over the telephone monopoly shortly, and meanwhile is a competitor of the National Telephone Company, which has only eighteen years' experience of the service. For this very reason there is a temptation to use national folk-tunes in the accompaniment. It is a temptation that must be resisted.

The State Department should not be allowed to use the name of the National Telephone Company to encourage State action by applying to the State Department, although I was warned by business friends against doing so. But I must add that on March 9th, when on the spot a gentleman appeared with an agreement form. This I signed at once and handed to him, with a request that the instrument might be put in as quickly as possible. The N.T. Company, I have been told by two friends who have just had installations, fit you up in three days after the application, and I was rather taken aback when the arrangement office told me it would take their department seven days to do the job—especially as he had said (before I signed) that the electrician would probably call the next day. I now found that he meant only a visit to find out where I wanted the installation. My request was simply a polite way of expressing my desire to have the instrument placed. "Well, you can tell him that," I said. But no, these things must be done in order it seems, and the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. However, if I was in very much of a hurry, by writing the Manager of the Department and also the Chief Electrician, I might get fixed within a week; and the number, which I wanted for some new stationery, would probably come by return. Well, I wrote those two letters straightforward, and waited. But I must have a number of cleretarian delays. My request was placed on the telegraph, and then a man called, to see the office. "Get the instrument? Well, perhaps in a fortnight's time." Another fortnight, and then only perhaps. I put on my hat and went forth to interview the Manager in Carter Lane. The official I saw there nearly had a fit when I said I wanted to see the Manager. That high and holy personage, it seems, is too unconscious of such trivialities. If he had any compassion it must be put into writing. "But I cannot see any one responsible," I said; no, I must put it into writing. As I refused to go away, however, a pleasant and soothing official was finally called, heard my story, agreed I had been badly treated, because "it generally takes a month for the Post Office to fix the telephone," and promised the installation for the next morning. Well, another honour has gone, for I am still telephoneless, three days later—and three weeks after my application. Now, fancy all our business being carried through in this way—promises, promises, promises, and no fulfilment. Under officialdom we would probably manage to carry out their promises, shielding the responsible heads, and the heads refusing to be seen. Imagine this going on with the nation's manufacturing and transporting departments, paralysing and obstructing progress throughout the country.

Socialism and the Navy.

A. C. FIFIELD.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

The New Age is always worth arguing with on those rare occasions when one is in a hurry. But I am not at present, so I will return to the subject soon. By the way, I am thoroughly glad that you have had the courage and the moral and intellectual
character of its editorship saves it from the possibility of imitating the blackguardism of the "Labour Leader," while its political editor, Mr. Hyndman, is financially interested in the manufacture of guns,—a taunt which is directed with peculiar impatience against a man who has probably the most personal hatred for the Socialist movement than any man in Europe. I think you are wrong about the Navy, and, if you will afford me the space, I will tell you why.

Parliament is bad—bad for Socialism, bad for democracy, bad in the long run for national defence. There are only two ways of avoiding these recurrent panics. One is by a band of men bringing all nations to their feet to provide their armies to enforce the decisions of Arbitration Courts. That would be excellent if it could be done, but it has not been done yet, and personally I do not believe that it ever will be done while every Government in Europe is controlled by a small wealthy class. The other way is quietly, steadily, unostentatiously to lay down two keels to Germany's one. Had that been done consistently for the past three years, there would have been no panic, no partisan scare-mongering, no set-back to Socialism. It was not done, because the governing class was, as usual, selfish, lazy, and incompetent. It did not want to work and it did not want to pay.

Does not that suggest the true strategy for Socialists? At the present moment the Tories are working the "Naval Scare" for all it is worth against the Liberals. It is our business to remind the people that as regards national efficiency there is nothing to choose between the two parties. The Tories landed us in the South African War, and when war came they were as little prepared for it as the Liberals are to-day. Mr. Asquith and Mr. McKenna did not know that the Germans had submarines, nor did Mr. Balfour and Lord Lansdowne did not know that the Boers had horses. The Kaiser, as Mr. Blatchford truly says, is not a party failure. That a government is against a war is equal to the job for which it gets such extravagant remuneration.

The situation is too serious for trifling. It is, to say the least, exceedingly improbable that the German Government contemplates an attack upon this country. And, if it does contemplate such a thing, it is pure folly to trust to a combination of German Socialists to avert it. The argument that the governing class wants a war it will have its war, and it will have the overwhelming majority of the workers themselves on its side. If we protest we shall be howled down and stoned in the streets; if our German comrades protest, they will be pretty nearly lynched. If we have not learned that lesson by this time, then, indeed, we are past teaching the lesson. The instance in which the country in 1895, and the Kaiser " rode down" the German Socialists at the last election by appealing to the country on a patriotic cry. Yet, in these cases, it was only remote colonial wars that were in question. How would it be if the war was one involving, in case of defeat, the utter and final downfall of the nation.

Another aspect of the question with which I have no space to deal at length is the reaction of the discontents and disappointments on our foreign policy. Because we are weak we have entered into a degrading and immoral bargain with the infamous Government of Russia, and we shall be making such bargains so long as self-preservation is our final object. I want to see Great Britain live honourably, and I know that a nation can, no more than a man, live honourably unless it is secure.

Let us Socialists come forward boldly and declare that we alone can save the nation against its worse enemies. A free people can always defend itself; witness what the French did after the Revolution, without money, without organisation, without an army or a civil service. Moreover, we know where the necessary money can be found. Let the workers claim the £200,000,000 which they hand over annually to the idlers, and they can pay for eight, sixteen, or, if need be, thirty-two Dreadnoughts without feeling the inch.

[Our comments on the main point of Mr. Chesterton’s letter appear in “Notes of the Week.—Ed. N. A.”]

Mr. KEIR HARDIE AND THE CONFERENCE.

To The Editor of “The New Age.”

What strikes me particularly in the attitude of Keir Hardie and the N.A.C. is the remarkable resemblance between their attitude and that of the bureaucrats of our Anglo-Indian Government, almost approaching that of Russia. When any of the rank and file criticise their actions, they, the officials, histrionically inform them that the officials know best, what is in the best interests of the movement. This sort of thing necessarily intensifies and extends the dissatisfaction. The official mind then becomes pained and disgusted that anyone should be dissatisfied, and immediately attributes it to contumacy.

That their own actions could possibly cause the dissatisfaction never seems to enter their heads, and to inquire into the matter, or admit the possibility of their having made mistakes, would be derogatory to their dignity.

The position of the N.A.C. seems to be that of the schoolboy with the large cake, who remarked to the other boys, "Them as don't ask don't want, them as asks shan't have." Unless we see the official mind prevail at the coming Conference, I am sadly afraid there will be disruption and withdrawals from the Federation, as I have already heard of several branches who have seriously considered whether they should not sever their connection and start independent branches under other names. This would be most deplorable and ruinous, as we have in the I.L.P. a large, enthusiastic, and hard-working body of men and women, anxious and ready to do good work for the cause they love.

C. BROWN.

THE I.L.P. CONFERENCE MUZZLE.

To the Editor of "The New Age."

I shall be glad if you will allow me the opportunity of drawing the attention of branches of the I.L.P. and delegates to the Conference to a most insidious attempt to muzzle the discussions on the constitution of the party. The N.A.C., acting under the following rule, have appointed an Agenda Committee:

The N.A.C. shall be empowered to appoint a Committee to revise and classify the resolutions sent in by branches, and to place resolutions dealing with important matters on the agenda.

The "important matters" have always been understood to mean political matters, on which it is desirable for Conference to express an opinion. But the Agenda Committee is endeavouring to deflect this clear and definite intention to matters dealing with the constitution itself. It submits the following resolution:— "The constitution shall not be altered or amended except every third year."

This will be put as one of the first proceedings, and, if passed, the chairman will immediately rule out of order the fifty resolutions and amendments sent in and supported by 160 branches of the party. For, the constitution having been amended last year, the questions could not be re-opened till 1913.

The Agenda Committee, I would point out, contains two members of the N.A.C., and is entirely Scotch. One may almost trace the Machiavellian hand from which the resolution emanates.

I would point out that if the resolution be accepted from the chair, it places in the hands of the Agenda Committee (that is, a body appointed for purposes of classification only, and not by the party) a power that neither the N.A.C. nor the Conference itself possesses. Every resolution has to be proposed by a branch, and must be in the hands of the N.A.C. by January 3. Yet here is a purely formal body which arrogates to itself the right to propose the most important resolutions dealing with the constitution, and to silence the discussion on those questions for which an extra day has been set apart, but which are not acceptable by the
narrow oligarchy which is endeavouring in this unscrupulous manner to gather all the wires into its own hands.

That the intention of the constitution of the union, as I have given it to be correct is evidenced by reference to the time table, from which all the constitutional questions are deliberately omitted.

I trust the delegates will not only reject the resolution, but censure the Agenda Committee for its impudence.

April 8, 1909

DR. WALLACE'S SCHEME FOR UNEMPLOYMENT.

To the Editor of "The New Age."

Dr. Wallace's scheme of unemployment must ultimately be dealt with in our National scale. The reason why something should not be done at once on the lines of Dr. Wallace's scheme is urgent. I write to say that some of us have already made a small start, and have been putting a fund for the purchase of land by a simple method. A portion of this fund has already been used and a few acres bought. There is room for one or two small bidders, if a little capital is left in the fund and make themselves self-supporting. I should be happy to hear from any who would like to know more of the scheme.

Theodosius Harris.

4, Graham Road, Dalston, London, N.E.

THE S.R.C.—ANOTHER.

To the Editor of "The New Age."

I observe the case of the Harrow S.R.C. incensed in The New Age. I shall not dispute the honour of its being the first, but will merely say it is not alone. Selby Socialist Society is the pioneer body of an S.R.C. at Barkston Ash, of which I am the Secretary.

John Lindesay.

WEBER AND DEBUBBY.

To the Editor of "The New Age."

Mrs. Franz Liebich probably knows a great deal more about Weber's life than I do. But it is rather beside the point to describe his personal habits, who his intimate friends were, and how the beholding the "panic" appealed to him. I have no doubt that he derived many nice qualities from his dreamy mother. I merely do not see any inherent analogy between Weber's musings on Debussy's fame, and do I see that the quotation from Debussy's article on Weber proves anything except his professional admiration for Weber. I do not dispute Weber's sincere intention to explore all kinds of supernatural phenomena, but I do dispute the achievement. So that, while they may be legitimately brought together on paper from the point of view of intention, in actual achievement there is too wide a difference between the two artists for them to be brought satisfactorily together on the same programme.

Herbert Hughes.


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