

# THE NEW AGE

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**[Next week's issue will be the first number of a new volume. The issue will be specially enlarged by four pages, and will contain stories, etc., by Eden Phillpotts, G. K. Chesterton, Edgar Jepson, David Lowe, etc., etc.; also the first chapter of a short serial story, "Whited Sepulchres," by Beatrice Tina.]**

## Edinburgh—And After.

THE proceedings of the I.L.P. Conference at Edinburgh, culminating in the theatrical resignation of Mr. Keir Hardie and his disgruntled brethren, cannot fail to affect seriously the future of that organisation. Superficially regarded, it would seem as though the days were spent in the unhappy clashing of warring personalities. That personal rancour found expression cannot be denied, Mr. Keir Hardie excelling himself in rhetorical venom, but undoubtedly deeper issues were involved. The fighting ranged round Mr. Grayson, whose public action cannot be said to harmonise with that of the official quartette. The delegates found themselves in a quandary: they were bound to endorse the policy of their official leaders, for after all it was their policy (vide innumerable resolutions at previous conferences), but they were obviously reluctant to condemn Mr. Grayson, who has said and done the things the majority of the party really desire. This conflict of thought and intent explains the anomalous voting of the Conference. Thus, by an overwhelming majority, the Labour Alliance was confirmed, yet when a vote of confidence in the Labour Party was put, it failed to secure the assent of more than two-thirds of the Conference. The protagonists of the Alliance were elected to the N.A.C. by substantial majorities (the delegates acting on instructions), but a majority of the Conference (untrammelled by instructions) declined to censure Mr. Grayson. All this seems hopelessly inconsistent to the man in the street, but the sympathetic observer sees and understands.

Nevertheless, the personal turn that the various discussions unfortunately took cannot fail to bring the I.L.P. into disrepute, and seriously weaken its moral and political influence. From the larger conception of the Socialist movement as a whole this is to be deplored. The I.L.P., if weak on its theoretical side, has stood for a sturdy independence in politics that has

done much to detach the voter from the orthodox parties. Until the Colne Valley election, the spirit prevailing in its ranks had been wholesome and elevating. The tragedy of the situation is that had the leaders realised that there must be wide room for expansion and experiment in a political party, the I.L.P. would to-day be strong, united and attractive to Socialists of every grade. Unfortunately, Mr. Keir Hardie and his colleagues regarded the I.L.P. as a sect organised into Little Bethels, in which heterodoxy must be stamped out lest the faithful perish. Now we believe in reasonable discipline; we cannot wage modern political warfare without it. But everything depends upon the creed to which we submit. The I.L.P. leaders have declared in set terms that there is only one test of salvation: Do you or do you not believe in the Labour Party? It is common ground that the Labour Party is not a Socialist body. Thus we have the largest Socialist organisation in the kingdom compelling its members to believe, not in Socialism, but in a political organisation that has repeatedly rejected Socialism as inconsistent with its constitution. To maintain such a proposition is to invite disruption. It is not charged against the rebels that they are not Socialists; they are to be expelled the party because they regard the pursuit of Socialism as more important and more urgent than indiscriminating faith in the political genius of Mr. Henderson, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Hodge, Mr. Kelly, and Mr. Wilkie. Mr. Keir Hardie describes the malcontents as "snarling and semi-disruptive." His own speech was a snarl, and his leadership is the direct cause of the semi-disruption that now reigns in the I.L.P. It cannot be too emphatically asserted that the trouble in the I.L.P. to-day is directly due to the refusal of its official leaders to let its own Socialist section have reasonable liberty of political action.

The resignation of the quartette brings this trouble to a head. If these gentlemen are to have their own way, there will be no room in the I.L.P. for any save their subservient followers. Militant Socialists will have to look elsewhere for sanctuary. Mr. Keir Hardie said in the Conference that the element to which he objected must be fought "down and out." For our part we do not fear the result. Proscription is always the last resort of incompetent officialdom. If Mr. Hardie succeeds, it is well; we shall have a much more efficient organisation in the Socialist Representation movement. If he fail, it is also well; the S.R.C. finds its most valuable ally in the I.L.P. In either event, the Socialist Representation movement must be instantly organised and ready for either or any eventualities.

It is difficult to gauge the real motives for these resignations. The reasons assigned are neither adequate nor convincing. If the independent Socialist movement is to be fought, Mr. Hardie and the others can fight more effectively when in personal control of

the machine. Probably the large number of resolutions seeking to restrict M.P.'s from holding office in the party, and by implication a censure upon their action, was a governing consideration. What is so strange is the violent opposition offered by these gentlemen to militant Socialist action. Can it be possible that they are unaffected by certain *pour parlers* that are even now passing in which a Radical-Socialist coalition is being mooted? Mr. MacDonald is essentially a collectivist Radical. In no respect does he differ from Mr. Masterman, who sits on the Government bench, and who might just as well have written "Socialism and Society" as Mr. MacDonald. That book constructs a bridge for a Radical-Socialist combination. In fact, we see no substantial change in Mr. MacDonald's attitude since he became Liberal-Labour candidate for Dover. In 1892, writing from the National Liberal Club to the "Westminster Gazette," he said:—

"When I accepted the invitation of the Dover Labour Electoral Association to be their candidate, I did it on condition that they would not expect me to say or do anything that would alienate the Liberals of the town."

Wherever Mr. MacDonald has planted himself as candidate he has always sought Liberal accommodation. At the time of his Dover adventure there was no I.L.P., but he negotiated with the Southampton Liberals after he had joined the I.L.P. and when he was a candidate. The same remark applies to Leicester, where an "understanding" was explicitly admitted. Mr. MacDonald's first love was Liberalism; he will return to it.

Mr. Snowden's pre-occupations with temperance and Free Trade would admirably fit him for a nook in the combination. Mr. Hardie's recent speeches have been indistinguishable from those delivered by Radicals below the gangway who, like him, refer to militant Socialists as impracticable politicians, who "follow some chimera called Socialism and unity spoken of by men who do not understand Socialism and are alien to its very spirit." Whatever may be the intentions of these gentlemen, we warn our readers that a movement is being carefully engineered which aims at a working arrangement between Radicals and Socialists under the leadership of Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Winston Churchill.

We see, consciously or unconsciously, the same Liberal bias in the extraordinary manifesto issued by these three gentlemen. The manifesto affects to "remind the party of certain facts." Let us quote an example:—

"The I.L.P. was formed by Socialists, who desired to follow the Marxian policy of uniting the working class into an independent party for the conquest of political power."

It would be difficult to crowd more misstatements into so small a space. Everybody knows that in 1893 no name was so full of terror to Mr. Keir Hardie as that of Karl Marx. Everybody knows that the Marxian policy of uniting the working class for the conquest of political power is primarily based upon the conception of the class struggle, which is emphatically but ignorantly denied by the signatories. Everybody knows that the conquest of "economic" power was the "raison d'être" of the I.L.P. Who more vigorously than Mr. Keir Hardie denounced mere constitution tinkering? The political revolution was regarded as very small potatoes compared with the economic revolution. Humour is not the strong point of this amazing quartette, or they would surely have left out any reference to Marx. The gravamen of the complaints against the Labour Party is simply that they have concerned themselves with political issues when their constituents had trusted them to fight for economic power. Notwithstanding the existence of the Labour Party in Parliament, the transfer of surplus value to the "working class" is nil. Mr. Keir Hardie recently pointed out that whereas profits had expanded during recent years, wages had relatively declined. The Irish Party did not exact land legislation for Ireland by kid-glove methods in Parliament. The necessity of British labour is far greater than was the necessity of the Irish farmer who still sweats his

labourers. The crisis in the I.L.P. is due to the Labour Party's incapacity to perceive this single fact.

Thus, the bewildered rank and file are placed in an unhappy dilemma: they must forgo militant Socialist action aiming at economic change, or they must reject the appeal of their Parliamentary representatives. Mr. Hardie and his colleagues ask for power to "enforce discipline." In plain terms this means that unless Mr. Grayson and his supporters agree to adapt their pace to that of the slowest dragoon in the Labour squadron, they are to be expelled. To this threat there is one effective answer: Form Socialist Representation Committees throughout the country. If this be promptly done, the response will surpass expectations. Every Socialist who believes in using politics as an instrument of economic revolution will rally to the standard. Every Socialist who rejects the arrogant pretensions of this quartette of second class politicians will be swift to join the army. Every Socialist who believes in freedom inside the Socialist Party will lend his support. It is intolerable that the political interests of Socialism should rest so largely in the care of such an obviously narrow-minded coterie.

We are alive to the financial argument. The turntail quartette are leaving to their successors a depleted exchequer. The General Election draws near. Therefore, something must be done. But nothing effective will be done until the I.L.P. abandons its parasitic reliance upon Trade Union funds. It is not only interesting but significant that the only I.L.P. constituency that is financially ready for the fight is Colne Valley! Far too much importance may, however, be attached to the financial side of the problem. Money will come in sufficient quantity if the quality of the propaganda is maintained. Slacken your enthusiasm, degrade the currency of Socialist thought to the exigencies of opportunist politics, and bankruptcy will ensue. The slump in the I.L.P. treasury is not due to aggressive propaganda, but to its absence. It is the result of "practical politics." On the other hand, a live Socialist movement in any locality can mainly, if not entirely, finance itself. It seems to be forgotten that in 1895 the I.L.P. actually ran 27 candidates. It could run 100 candidates at the next election if its leaders really meant business. They have other fish to fry.

The Edinburgh Conference compels the discussion of the points here raised. We have discussed them frankly. We assuredly do not welcome this disruption. In all sincerity we affirm that we want to see the I.L.P. strong and prosperous; but it can only prosper if founded upon the rock of principle. A fortnight ago we asked the Edinburgh delegates to make the way easy for Socialist constituencies. One of the N.A.C. denounced this proposal as a backstairs way of evading the terms of the Alliance. If this remain the attitude of the official elements, then obviously the I.L.P. has reached the full limit of its growth. For how can it be contrary to the object of the I.L.P., or to the terms of the Alliance, for local branches to promote Socialist candidatures where there is no Labour candidate? Such a restriction of local autonomy must weaken the I.L.P. as a fighting political force. The way out is, as we have said, to institute a Socialist Representation Committee. From henceforth, the test of any local Socialist unit, be it I.L.P. or S.D.P., or any isolated Socialist society, is readiness to fight for a Socialist candidate. The aim of the S.R.C. must be to co-ordinate all existing Socialist groups, and gather to it those thousands of unattached Socialists who are now looking for this much-delayed departure. But the S.R.C. will fail disastrously if it ever forgets that Socialism implies democracy, in fact as in form. The Socialist spirit cannot be confined in "temples made with hands," in political organisations. These must ever be subordinate to our intellectual and spiritual perceptions. The new movement comes at a moment when four flustered politicians are seriously asking Socialists to make them the repository of those great hopes and high expectations which move Socialists to action. There can be only one answer to such papal pretensions. The S.R.C. will, we trust, learn to avoid the mistakes of the past, and so usher in a new Socialist dispensation.

## “To Enforce Discipline.”

THE resignation of the four leaders of the I.L.P. has been misinterpreted, it appears. Mr. Henderson, the chairman of the Labour Party, was interviewed by the Press and has thrown quite a new light on the matter. He said: “We have been determined to enforce discipline, and ever since the Grayson election it has been plain that this collision was inevitable. . . . the determination of the I.L.P. Council to stand no more dissensions and intrigue in its ranks.” So it seems the resignations are merely a way of enforcing discipline. That is quite a quaint and original view of the situation, which might easily have been overlooked by the ordinary person. If the Liberal members had rebelled against Mr. Asquith on the Licensing Bill and the Cabinet thereupon had resigned, it would never have occurred to me that it was a method of enforcing discipline. I didn't know that resignation by the headmaster is the best way to keep a rebellious class in order. I have read of quite ordinary methods that have been adopted by simple-minded people: there was Napoleon, with his cannon at the Tuilleries; and Cromwell with his troop of soldiers in the Rump Parliament. But resignation! Yes, I suppose there is something Napoleonic about it, if you look at it carefully.

But what exactly do these stern disciplinarians want the I.L.P. to do? I see in an interview that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald has declared: “What the Party wants is a more abiding anchorage.” One knows the I.L.P. has been a great success, but one did not realise that it had quite finished its work in the open sea. There's too much suggestion of the haven of rest about that word “anchorage.” It is quite impossible to fight an effective battle with the anchors down. Mr. MacDonald does not appear to be thinking of battleships. What he is trying to build is a hospital-ship, lying safely away up a river. The I.L.P. is really not aged enough to be turned into old hulks.

Let us consider precisely what is the question at issue between the “abiding anchorage” section and the battleship section of the Independent Labour Party. I know it is not considered good form to say a word of criticism against the men who have just given up the leadership of the I.L.P. One of their most enthusiastic admirers, a delegate from Walthamstow, frankly told the Conference of Edinburgh that he objected to “self-constituted critics.” He appeared to think that no one should say anything except those holding a license from the Administrative Council. Of course, this method of criticism by special license would save much inconvenient talk; but I can assure him that it is quite impracticable for authors and painters and town councils and kings always to appoint their own critics. That system was tried by a few of the Roman Emperors, and some remote Eastern monarchs, but it broke down because there was not enough wood to build all the gallows and headsman's blocks required. It has been entirely abandoned in civilised countries. The man who has the audacity to object to criticism should be hounded out of any party which has the remotest respect for free speech.

The real issue at Edinburgh, shorn of all its personalities and side issues, was whether the I.L.P. was satisfied, or whether it was not satisfied, with the political policy for which Mr. Keir Hardie and Mr. MacDonald and Mr. Snowden have made themselves responsible during the last year. The I.L.P. was founded, over fifteen years ago, to preach two clear doctrines to the workers of this country. First, that Socialism is the only cure for poverty; secondly, that the Liberal Party, as a means of reform, is a broken reed which has failed to do almost everything it has promised to do. In other words, the I.L.P. was founded as a Socialist society, with a rigidly independent political policy.

Now, during the last year, these two principles of the I.L.P. have been put to their first severe test. The

party had entered, in 1899, into an alliance with Trade Unions which were not avowedly Socialist organisations although many of the individual members were Socialists. These Trade Unions stood for the old policy of gradual relief of the workers by asking for shorter hours, better wages, and general reforms, which still leave the masters in possession of the bulk of wealth, giving the workers the odds and ends that remained after the feast. In short, there was no real distinction between the official Trade Union doctrine and the old pricked bubble of Liberalism. It was a risky alliance, but it was worth the experiment. There was always the hope that the I.L.P. might convert the Trade Unions.

There was that hope. The facts have happened just the other way. The Labour Party is now a body (in the main of Socialists) which has accepted the Trade Union principle of gentle reforms. I am writing of the actual facts, idle professions of faith do not much matter. Faced by Liberal Ministers who, perfectly naturally, had nothing to offer but Liberal reforms, which at the highest point reached an Old Age Pension Act, which left the poorest outside, this Labour Party during the last two Sessions utterly failed to assert its principles in the House of Commons on any vital issue which arose. No one blames it for being unable to out-vote the Government—that is a matter of arithmetic in the Division Lobby. But one does blame it for acting in such a way that it is getting impossible to see much difference between a Labour member and a Radical one. The Government refuses to do anything of importance beyond the mild Old Age Pensions; and the Labour Party has generously spent its time in supporting Liberal measures which will do as much for the workers as a firework display at the Crystal Palace. The “abiding anchorage” of the Labour Party during the last Sessions has been in the harbours of Free Trade, Licensing Reform, and Taxation of Ground Values. There are not even fresh herrings in the Labour Party sea—they are all very salted and red.

When an independent Socialist member hauled up his anchor, and told the House of Commons that the people's Party must not be fooled with sham reforms any longer, then Mr. Hardie and his I.L.P. friends stood together—on the side of peace with the Liberals. It is quite possible that they do not recognise what they are doing: it is merely waste of time to admit that they are doing what they honestly believe to be the best. There is enough honesty in the N.A.C. to float another Methodist Revival. But some of us don't care about revivals; what we want is Socialism. And Mr. Hardie and his three companions have announced in their manifesto to the I.L.P. that Trade Unions “are the only expression of genuine class consciousness the workers of Great Britain have hitherto evolved.”

That is the problem before the I.L.P. Does it desire to be led by men who are Trade Unionists before they are Socialists? Because that must be the actual end of the political policy of the I.L.P. statesmen during the last year. In the words of the “Labour Leader” last week: “Surely it is time not only for the leaders, but for the movement itself, to take drastic action.” Exactly; the movement has begun its part: it has made the leaders resign. Is the “Labour Leader” satisfied with that as a beginning? The I.L.P. policy of Socialist independence was being wrecked by compromise; and the I.L.P. has risen to protest. As the “Labour Leader” points out, the rebels have the support of the “Clarion,” “New Age,” and “Justice.” There is the “Labour Leader” still faithful to the resigning party; and they have to write that themselves. Yet the “Labour Leader,” with all the chief Socialist organs against it, declares that it alone expounds true Socialism. Which somehow reminds one of the Irish juryman who was unable to convince the other eleven obstinate fellows. If I had all the Socialist press so unitedly against me, I would not call attention to the fact. But there is no end to the open honesty of our opponents. What an epitaph: They resigned that they might seek an abiding anchorage. Oh, brave I.L.P., there is more fighting to be done yet.

G. R. S. TAYLOR.

## Ten Years: A Diplomatic Retrospect.

To understand the sequence of events in modern English politics one must appreciate the occurrences in the Transvaal Republic in the last days of 1895 and the first days of January, 1896. The news reached London on January 1, 1896, that Dr. Jameson had crossed into the Transvaal, and had been defeated and captured by the Boers. On January 2 the German Emperor sent this telegram to President Kruger: "I express to you my sincere congratulations that, without appealing to the help of friendly Powers, you and your people have succeeded in repelling with your own forces the armed bands which had broken into your country, and in maintaining the independence of your country against foreign aggression." Professor Karl Blind, writing in the "North American Review" for December, 1899, stated: "This telegram, generally supposed to have been sent on the Kaiser's personal initiative, was practically an answer to a message addressed to him by four hundred Germans at Pretoria, who had offered themselves as a volunteer corps for the defence of the Republic."

The Kaiser's telegram was drawn up at a conference between the Kaiser, the late Prince Hohenlohe, Baron von Marschall, and Admiral Hollmann. On the same day that the wording of this telegram was settled the German Government officially applied to the Portuguese Government for permission to land troops and marines at Delagoa Bay. The Portuguese Government declined to allow the German Government to do so, but the fact of this application having been made refutes Prof. Karl Blind's plea that the request for German sympathy emanated from the Germans resident in Pretoria. The conference between the Kaiser and his Ministers was arranged immediately on receipt of the news from the Transvaal of Jameson's failure, and had no direct connection with the excitement among the German population in Pretoria.

Queen Victoria sent a telegram to the Kaiser, when she learned the step he had taken. This telegram was answered by a letter from the Kaiser in which he asked to be assured that no member of the British Cabinet, nor of the Royal Family, had cognisance of the Raid, or were parties to it. It was strongly suspected in Germany that Mr. Chamberlain, the Prince of Wales, and Mr. Rhodes were acting together in the conspiracy against the Transvaal Republic. On January 8 the Queen telegraphed to President Kruger, thanking him for his clemency in handing over his prisoners to the British authorities. On the same day the Queen addressed a letter to the Kaiser, pledging her word that no member of the Royal Family or the Cabinet had any prior knowledge of the Raid.

The Duke of Fife at this time was chairman of the British South Africa Company. He presided at the meeting of the British South Africa Company which was held on January 2. At that meeting it is notable that Dr. Jameson's action was not disavowed. However, when the Queen was inquiring into the complicity of those around her, it became necessary to allay her suspicions, and the British South Africa Company, at their next meeting, in obedience to a requisition from Mr. Chamberlain, delivered under Article 8 of the Charter, repudiated Dr. Jameson's illegal proceedings.

The comparative ease with which Queen Victoria was deceived in these transactions is explained by the

circumstances that she was over seventy, and that she was surrounded by unscrupulous men who would stop at nothing to accomplish their ends.

In response to the public outcry in England, a Committee of the House of Commons met to inquire into the series of incidents which culminated in the Raid. Counsel's concluding speeches on behalf of their various clients were delivered on June 4. On July 2 Miss Flora Shaw (now Lady Lugard) was recalled to explain certain telegrams which the Committee had had brought to its attention so late as June 29.

The following are some of the cablegrams addressed by Miss Shaw to Mr. Rhodes: "Dec. 10, 1895.—Can you advise when will you commence the plans. We wish to send at earliest opportunity sealed instructions representatives of the London 'Times,' European capitals." On December 17, a fortnight before the Raid, Miss Shaw wired: "Held an interview with Secretary Transvaal, left here on Saturday for Hague, Berlin, Paris; fear in negotiation with these parties. Chamberlain sound in case of interference European Powers, but have special reason to believe wishes you must do it immediately." Rhodes wired back on December 30: "Inform Chamberlain that I shall get through all right if he supports me."

These telegrams were put in evidence at the *last* sitting of the Commission, when its Report had been drafted, but neither Mr. Chamberlain nor Mr. Rhodes was asked a word about them! The Report was finally agreed to on July 6, and was circulated a week later.

The German Emperor, on learning of the existence of these telegrams, asked for an explanation, as the Queen had pledged her word that no member of the Cabinet had had any dealings with the Raiders. By this time the Queen had decided to abdicate; but on learning the full extent of the deceit practised on her, she withdrew her decision. To her grandson, the Kaiser, she expressed her sorrow, though it was some time later before he realised that there were higher names than Mr. Chamberlain's involved in these intrigues.

The Kaiser, in his "Daily Telegraph" interview of last autumn, omitted to mention that it was at the end of 1897 that the project was first mooted from Berlin to guarantee the independence of the Transvaal Republic, the guarantors to be Russia, France, and Germany. Dr. Leyds endeavoured to negotiate such a guarantee; but the scheme failed in consequence of French reluctance to enter into such a dangerous arrangement without a *quid pro quo*, which would have involved, in M. Rouher's words, "a trifling modification of the frontier of France on the Rhine."

During the Spanish American War, a European league against England and the United States was attempted, the prime movers being the Austrian Emperor, the Pope, and the German Government. The league was to include Russia, France, Germany, Italy, and Austria. One of its motives was to secure favourable terms of peace for Spain, and also to provide for the independence of the Transvaal. This scheme was regarded unfavourably by Italy, with hesitancy by France, and was dropped by its promoters.

In 1899, Mr. Kruger seems to have been convinced that some initial Boer successes would secure him European material aid, which he required far more than moral support. In the latter part of 1899 an agreement had been practically arrived at between Germany, France, and Russia; but the French statesmen, with a certain amount of prudence, desired that the United States should be approached, and invited to lend a friendly ear to the proposals of this "Pro-Boer" coalition. It should be remembered that American feeling was strongly "Pro-Boer," and there seemed every prospect that an understanding would be come to between the Powers friendly to the Transvaal.

President McKinley personally was opposed to the United States interfering, as he recognised that the British Government had "kept the ring clear" during the war with Spain, a war which was known as the "McKinley and Sugar Trust War." The Vice-President, Mr. Theodore Roosevelt, was politically an active

intriguer. It is not generally known that Mr. Roosevelt is a bitter enemy of England; his friendliness may be judged by this summary of a speech he delivered in 1897, on being invited to oppose the conclusion of an arbitration treaty between the United States and England: "He expressed strong sympathy with the opposition to the treaty, and hoped it would succeed. He believed in a strong navy, and hoped to live to see one that would be able to beat England on the sea."

In 1904, with Mr. Morton as a mouthpiece, the President used similar language: "Be assured that you have in the White House now a man who believes in having the best and strongest navy in the world." During his tenure of office, Mr. Roosevelt's naval policy has been in entire accord with these early sentiments, though against the good sense of the people of the United States.

On the United States being requested to act with the European Powers Mr. Roosevelt recommended that the British Government should be asked whether it would agree to give up its joint control over the Panama Canal, by virtue of the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, if the United States declined the overtures of the Powers.

At this period the British Empire was sore beset, and though its naval strength was unimpaired, the object-lesson to India and Africa of Great Britain being humiliated by Europe and the United States compelled the British Government to agree to abandoning its joint control with the United States over "the key of the Pacific"; whereupon the United States promptly gave notice of its intention to abrogate the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, and that Treaty came to an end in 1901. It was replaced by another treaty, which afforded no guarantee that changes in the status quo in the Panama Isthmus would not affect the treaty rights of Great Britain. The United States Government, in the meantime, had warned the British Government that it might be compelled to use coercion to induce the Republic of Colombia to agree to a lease of the canal zone.

The British Government was helpless. The one stipulation that our Minister made was that the Colombian Republic should be given a chance of accepting the terms of the Herran-Hay Treaty, which provided for the lease of the canal zone without any interference with the sovereign rights of Colombia.

What happened? The projects of intervention were abandoned by the Powers concerned, and they contented themselves with raising inconvenient questions all over the world, which were settled to the detriment of British interests. Russia and France intrigued in Abyssinia, in China, and in Persia. The Germans and Americans availed themselves of this grand opportunity to oust England from Samoa; while Germany was very busy in pushing her interests in Asia Minor and Koweit.

Owing to local difficulties, the Panama programme was not completed until some time after peace had been concluded between England and the Boers. The Colombian Parliament, notwithstanding skilled attempts by expert American "bosses" to corrupt and bribe its members, rejected the Herran-Hay Treaty after a lengthy discussion. The South African War having ended, though England was exhausted by the financial weight of the struggle, the American Ministry and Mr. Roosevelt feared that their scheme might be nipped in the bud if they delayed action much longer. At least, this is one reasonable explanation for the shameless seizure of the Panama Isthmus.

The Panama Province of Colombia had been quite peaceful in 1903 when the world suddenly learned, on November 4, that a new State had been born into the Central American polity. Agents of the United States, at a time when the loyal Colombian officials were on holiday, had bribed some of the traitors who are to be found in every State, with the result that the Panama Republic was created. We have the testimony of Señor Gabriel J. Duque that "all the rebel generals, with the exception of President Amador, received from 4,000 to 8,000 dollars for their work. The United States was

cognisant of this. We knew that the United States would not allow the Colombian troops to enter Panama once we had firmly seized the reins of Government." Señor Amador succeeded; but Dr. Jameson failed, otherwise there is little to choose between these piracies.

What conclusions can be derived from this sketch of diplomatic history? For British working men there are three major lessons. (1) They must insist that the House of Commons appoint a Committee to control foreign affairs, and that the Committee should be responsible to the House. (2) They must demand the democratisation of diplomacy. There are two main causes of war: "secret diplomacy" and the machinations of international financiers. (3) Let them never forget that the men who engineered England into a war to establish "black-leg" Chinese labour in the mines followed a course of policy which damaged Imperial interests all over the world. That is the aspect from which we should judge the political prescience of Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Balfour, Lord Lansdowne, and the crew of Tariff Reform, anti-alien, Ecksteins, Marks, Blumenfelds, and Milners.

"STANHOPE OF CHESTER."

## Mr. Belloc's Utopia.

MR. BELLOC challenges Socialists to show that a system under which the ownership of the means of production was widely distributed would not be stable.

Now, I quite admit that if we conceive a State consisting wholly of peasants and craftsmen working with their own tools and owning their own fields or workshops such a system might endure for ages—might endure, indeed, until more advanced industrial methods were introduced. But this, though it appears to be Mr. G. K. Chesterton's ideal, is not Mr. Belloc's. What he wishes to distribute is not the means of production themselves, but their ownership. We are to have the large industry, but we are to have small proprietors. Could such a state of things be stable?

Let us go first to the facts. It is clear that our European civilisation is diseased. The symptoms of that disease are the aggregation of great masses of capital in the hands of a small class, the creation of a vast proletariat dependent upon that class for permission to live, chronic unemployment, insecurity, sweating, popular discontent, and the outbreak of something like a Class War. Now, if we are to trace the cause of this disease, we must ask, first, in what parts of Europe are these symptoms to be found, and from what parts are they absent?

Mr. Belloc says that the cause of all these evils is the Reformation, and he told the audience at Camberwell that he could point out parts of Europe which the Reformation had not touched, and which were accordingly quite free from them. Just so; and I can point out countries where the Reformation completely triumphed, yet which are at least comparatively free from them. Denmark is about the most Protestant country in Europe; Belgium is one of the most Catholic. Yet the industrial problem is acute in Belgium, while in Denmark Mr. Belloc's ideal is much more nearly realised.

Our answer to Mr. Belloc is the same as our answer to the Tariff Reformers. The essential evils of Capitalism may be found throughout Europe co-existent with every variety of race, religion, government, and fiscal system. They may take a worse form here than elsewhere; that is a point which I leave Mr. Belloc to settle with his fellow-Liberals, who have been telling us for the last five years that all foreigners live upon nettles and dead dogs! But they exist elsewhere. They

are not the result of Free Trade, for they are found in protected Germany and protected America. They are not the result of Protestantism; for they are found in Catholic Belgium and Catholic Piedmont. They are not the result of the English land laws; for they are found in France under land laws carefully framed to favour the small proprietor. Two things only seem necessary to breed them. One is the development of industry to the point where large and costly means of production become necessary; the other is the existence of private property in these means of production. And I know of no instance in which the combination of these two things has failed to breed them.

Look at France. If ever small proprietorship had a chance it was in France; for the system was not imposed upon the people, but came red-hot out of the furnace of national democratic passion. I will not deny that wealth is in consequence better distributed in France than here. But will Mr. Belloc affirm that France has solved the social problem? Will he deny that there is a rich class in France? Will he deny—with his own writing on the Dreyfus case staring him in the face—that the power of this rich class is dangerously great? Will he deny that there is a proletariat in France? Will he deny that in the industrial parts of France unemployment exists, and sweating and poverty and insecurity? Will he deny that there is a bitter Class Struggle in France—a struggle which seems even now almost reaching the stage of actual bloodshed?

Above all, will Mr. Belloc deny that there is a strong and growing Socialist movement in France? Does it not seem to him a most extraordinary thing that men should embrace the inhuman and intolerable ideal of Collectivism, while they are supposed to be actually experiencing his own humane alternative? The spread of Socialism may be a good thing or a bad, but it is a pretty unmistakable symptom of the existence of poverty.

So much for the facts. The universal distribution of ownership has not shown that it can co-exist with modern industrial conditions. But can we show that it is improbable that it ever could? I think we can. Two causes make its stability all but impossible. One is the unequal distribution of natural resources; the other is the unequal distribution of mental and moral qualities among men.

The industrial development of a country always involves, and always must involve, an enormous increase in the economic rent of certain areas. Great cities and vast industrial populations will grow up in spots favourably situated for trade or possessed of special natural resources—coal or iron or gold. Nothing but the definite refusal of men to avail themselves of the resources of the earth (which I understand G. K. C. to recommend) can prevent this happening. And yet, if land remains private property, is it not clear what will follow? The peasant owners of the favoured spots will be tempted to sell their land at a price which, while it will be affluence to them, will be a mere fraction of what the purchasers will ultimately make out of it. The economic rent which will pass to the new owners will be saved and invested in the new industries. The profits of the new industries will go to the new owners, to be re-invested once more. Once more you will have the capitalist and the proletarian face to face. This is no fancy story. It is what happened in England when our reserves of coal began to be vigorously developed. It is what happened in the Transvaal when gold was discovered. It will happen everywhere whenever (under a system of private ownership) there is a rapid increase in economic rent.

Let me take an imaginary case. Suppose that the end of the eighteenth century had seen in England a revolution similar to that which took place in France,

that the great estates had been broken up, and divided among the people. I will suppose that my ancestors had obtained a market-garden on the outskirts of the village of Kensington, while Mr. Belloc's had a farm of about the same value in Sussex. What would now be the situation? If my forebears had been wise enough to retain the land (which is improbable), I should be drawing a handsome unearned income from the ground-rents of a row of shops in Kensington High Street, with the prospect of a reversion of the rack-rents—something like £1,000 a year each—when the leases fell in. Yet, in spite of these monstrous exactions, the increase in economic rent would be so great that my tenants, after keeping me in idleness, could still get enough out of it to make at least ten times as much as Mr. Belloc was making out of his Sussex farm. And, if money were his object, Mr. Belloc might well leave his farm, forswear "the magic of property," and take one of my shops—thus exemplifying the phenomenon of rural depopulation, which always marks a certain stage in the evolution of Capitalism, and for which our Liberal and Conservative statesmen are so busily devising quack remedies.

But there is another cause which must, it seems to me, render Mr. Belloc's Utopia unstable. Suppose that all men have money to invest, it is surely not clear that they *will* all invest, still less that they will all invest with equal wisdom and good-luck. Some will prefer to live fully up to their income. Others will invest recklessly in wild-cat projects. Others again will invest in projects inherently sensible, which are yet rendered unprofitable by mismanagement or by some accident of fortune. The progeny of these will be propertyless, while the progeny of the wise or lucky investors will have plenty of money seeking investment. The former will have nothing to sell but their labour; the latter will be able and anxious to buy it. The wheel has again come full circle.

I say, therefore, that Mr. Belloc cannot guarantee the permanence of the system he asks us to adopt. But I will tell him what can guarantee the permanence of his own ideal. Socialism can guarantee it. Socialism, as I have said, is Man taking his economic destiny into his own hands. If the nation wants peasant farmers it can have peasant farmers, for it can refuse to let more than a certain amount of land to one individual. If the nation wants handicraftsmen, it can have handicraftsmen, for it can refuse to supply the raw material to any others. It can have the large industry or the small industry in any particular department, just as it chooses. For my part, I do not believe that the Socialist State will either go mad on largeness, like the late Mr. Cecil Rhodes, or go mad on smallness, like Mr. G. K. Chesterton. It will, I should imagine, recognise that some things are better done on a large scale and some on a small one. It will not set a number of individual craftsmen to make pins, nor will it erect factories for turning out jewellery. There will certainly be plenty of private property and private enterprise under Socialism; but the nation will have a firm grip of the original sources of production, and, if private enterprise shows signs of taking an anti-social turn, if it becomes usurious or oppressive or dishonest, it will be sharply curtailed, as it would have been in Mr. Belloc's favourite Middle Ages.

Above all, Socialism, unlike Mr. Belloc's alternative, can guarantee us against any possible recurrence of the evils of our present system. Other dangers we may have to guard against, but not those. The horrors, the crimes, the miseries of the capitalist system—these at least, in Carlyle's phrase, "shall never through unending ages insult the face of the sun any more." We intend to root them out, utterly and forever. Some time ago Mr. Belloc wrote a fine revolutionary poem which ended with these lines:—

And all these things I mean to do,  
For fear, perchance, my little son  
Should break his hands as I have done.

We can give his little son that security. Can he?

CECIL CHESTERTON.

## Western Civilisation Through Eastern Spectacles. V.

By Duse Mohamed.

FROM Ismail Abbas Mohumad, dweller in the cities of the English.

To Abdul Osman Ali, Sheik of the Bashi-Bazouks, Upper Egypt. Most Worthy Father, once more, in the names of Allah and the Prophet, I send thee greeting.

Thou knowest, oh my Father, how that a State without laws is like unto a rudderless ship, tossed hither and thither upon a tempestuous sea. But the State that hath laws which are administered only in the interests of those of much substance is doomed to final dissolution. For much power and many conquests have made this people proud, even with the pride of the Roman patrician of the Days of the Empire. "For behold," they say, "we have conquered the earth, and the fulness thereof is ours, and there is none like unto us. Gold have we, and gold hath given us power, for lo, the nations of the earth tremble at the name of Britain!" And they hug their God of Gold, and they crush the poor of this land with a heel of iron. For the laws are the laws of the rich, and the rich man may do that which seemeth him best. But even as the pride of the Roman was humbled in the dust, so shall the fall of this people be.

Now, among this nation the theory of their law is that all men are innocent until they are proven guilty; but in practice only to the men of substance doth this apply.

The rich man may plunder the poor of their gold on the mart, and should the law overtake him, he straightway fees unto himself a lawyer, who with many tricks and tortuous ways frees the wealthy scoundrel from his obligations.

Yet, if perchance the poor man should steal a loaf of bread wherewith to feed his hungry wife and children, he is straightway shut up in the prison house.

The rich man and patrician of this land may take the goods of the trader on credit, so that he may vie in opulence with those of his class; but when the day of reckoning comes, the trader is put off with frail promises, and should he lay his case at the feet of the Judges, behold, the man of the patrician class straightway enters the Court of Bankruptcy, and the trader loses all. But should the man of lowly birth obtain that for which he cannot pay, he is liable to be consigned to the debtor's prison. For unlimited credit is the right of the impoverished patrician; but the lowly creditor is but "an impostor."

The woman of class and influence may enter the shop of the trader and steal the choicest raiment which she can conveniently remove in secret, and should she be discovered they call her a "kleptomaniac."

Should the poor woman steal something wherewith to sustain her wretched life, she is branded as a common thief and shut up in the prison house among the vilest criminals—kleptomania being a "morbid mania" from which only the wives and daughters of the "mighty" may suffer; for is it not their exclusive property? The laws are the laws of the "mighty," and the working thereof is for the protection of those who sit in high places.

When one of lowly birth is accused of crime, the secret minions of the law straightway "move heaven and earth" to find evidence against him, and should they not find it, they manufacture it, for he that is accused must be convicted at any cost, for thereby lies the way to promotion; and when he is brought to the presence of the judge, the lawyers of the Crown distort the evidence against the accused beyond recognition; and when he that is accused hath the panorama of his past life spread before his eyes, the colours are so strange and startling that he is lost in amazement at his own vileness.

Of what matter is the accused be innocent? He has fallen into the clutches of the law, and verily the law is costly; therefore must the prisoner be led through the torturing and bewildering mazes of legal lore; and then is he lost, indeed! For his conviction is certain, and when he shall have served the term of his imprisonment, the detectors of crime dog his footsteps until they keep him from the paths of virtue.

Thus do the minions of the law manufacture criminals; for their office is not, as understood by them, the discovery of crime, but the making of criminals.

The "Goddess of Justice" is traditionally blind, but those who administer the law are truly devoid of sight, for they see only the shortcomings of the meek; but the transgressions of the wealthy are hid from them.

Once more I,

ISMAIL ABBAS MOHUMAD,

commend thee and thy house to the care of Allah and the Prophet.

## The Novels of Eden Phillpotts.

MR. EDEN PHILLPOTTS has taken a whole province for his knowledge. All that is best in him belongs only to Devonshire. He has given us the very essence of its wild moors and peaceful valleys; he has made us live with the very men and women, the arduous youths and maidens this infinitely varied soil has engendered and fostered. Here is already much to be thankful for. We much need the artist who will write down for us the life and manners and the language of the people who now dwell in these western shires, who will note their every-day atmosphere. All that Devonshire now connotes to us will be soon passing away. With our modern facilities of travel, and the resultant migration, with the ever increasing call of the big cities, with a Board of Education, with the building of factories and the decay of agriculture, there will perish the old traditions and the old scenery.

Be this for good or ill, it is assuredly as good to have a record of this past; it may be even of practical use, for perchance we shall one day desire to re-establish by artifice all that elaborate ritual wrung out of slow conflict, so that we may breed again the men Devon has bred in the past.

It is to our novelists that we shall then turn for our indications. We shall go to Mark Rutherford to know what manner of men the Midlands gave us, and to Eden Phillpotts for the west country folk. "The Three Brothers," his latest novel, is one of those skilled pieces of craftsmanship wherein Mr. Phillpotts rejoices to reveal his carefully observed characters. "The Three Brothers" belong to the well-to-do Devon farmer stock, and it is with their diverse characters that the main interest of the story lies. Humphrey Baskerville, the somewhat ill-natured, soured, prosperous farmer who, with keen insight into his fellows, had no sympathy with their ways, may not seem a very new creation. It is characteristic of Mr. Phillpotts that he takes quite ordinary men and brings out all that there is of heroic, of individual, in them, in the same way that he fits them into quite ordinary every-day events. "Humphrey Baskerville personified doubt. . . . His dark mind, chaotic though it continued to be even into age, enjoyed one precious attribute of chaos, and continued plastic and open to impression. None understood this quality in him. He did not wholly understand it himself. But he was ever seeking for content, and the search had thus far taken him into many fruitless places and landed him in blind alleys not a few." And when he finally surrendered his reasoned view of life and acted the good Samaritan to all those who had been brought low by the actions of others, he found not perfect peace.

Nathan Baskerville's character is set before us in a few easy strokes. "He had a histrionic knack to seem more than he felt; yet this was not all acting, but a mixture of art and instinct. He trusted to tact, to a sense of humour with its accompanying tolerance, and to swift appraisal of human character. Adaptability was his watchword." The third brother, Vivian, plays but a minor rôle in the story; as usual with Mr. Phillpotts, there are a number of personalities, all of whom are worth following. Vivian's two sons, Mark Baskerville, Cora Lintern, around whose three engagements centres much of the plot, are all described with extreme care. The canvas is crowded, moreover, with a number of other persons, some of whom play nothing more than the part of chorus, and, to my thinking, are not in any way essential to the story.

I must confess—it may be due to mere intellectual inertia on my part—that I dislike having to follow the adventures, whether physical or spiritual, of many characters in one book. I find a difficulty in keeping the threads of their histories in my mind, and am compelled to be looking back every now and again to bring myself in touch with them. Mr. Phillpotts, it must be admitted, handles his team with magnificent skill. He does not, like the older novelists, give you some years of one character, then make a big halt whilst he brings the others up to date, nor does he in that still more provoking way of some writers, devote each chapter alternately to heroine No. 1 and No. 2 and so on. No, the story goes on smoothly enough, it is only my poor head that cannot take in so much at a time. In a word, I like to become wholly intimate with one or two principals and to be introduced to as few subsidiaries as possible, only, in fact, to those who bear some decided part in the fortunes of the chiefs.

There is a further general criticism I have to make of the village chorus that occurs so constantly in Mr. Phillpotts's novels—in "The Three Brothers" here are the Rev. Dennis Masterman and his sister, Thomas and Eliza Gollop. Their conversations do nothing to develop the general action, whilst in some of his novels, where these minor characters are allowed a plot all to themselves, it is a positive drag on the story. It is not that these rustics or what not are not quite genuine descriptions, and oftentimes most human and humorous (I think of Moleskin in "The Mother"), but the reader can skip all their talks without any misunderstanding of the main features of the book.

I should not have ventured to mention this minor blot were Mr. Phillpotts not among the two or three living writers of fiction in this country whose work counts, who write as knowing they must be heard. It is, after all, in the work of our contemporaries that most of us are really interested. For my part, whenever some old book is mentioned, I get down a new one. I want to know how actual humanity appears to living artists, to learn how they confront the very problems that perplex me. Doubtless the basic qualities of human beings remain much the same throughout the ages, but their presentment varies with our ever-changing conditions. Our anthropophagous forefathers desired, I suppose, their due quantum of proteids, carbohydrates and fats just as ourselves to-day, yet our dinner-table is a very different affair from that of the cave men's ancestors. Now Mr. Eden Phillpotts is distinguished by being not only entirely of the day, but somewhat in front of it. This attitude towards life is what we may expect will become more and more general. We are going through all the stages of city life, of a life of culture, and then we shall deliberately elect for something quite other, we shall want a world where there shall be scope for the whole gamut of human emotions.

It is with these essential human passions that Mr. Eden Phillpotts is concerned; and he makes you comprehend their rare beauty, their everlasting freshness. We have become so extraordinarily conscious of our consciousness, so wonderfully alert to our possession of brains that we spend a large measure of our time in wondering at ourselves and speculating upon our whence and whither. Mr. Phillpotts traffics not in this wire-spinning of the literary folk; he seizes hold of human beings who can feel greatly, who want something so intently and get it, and who are prepared to storm heaven and hell to win their heart's desire. There is no hint of melodrama in any of Mr. Phillpotts' books; there is no perfect character, but there are in all these books which reveal Mr. Phillpotts' big outlook on life, very adventurous, reckless men and women who love wholly or hate quite savagely. For Mr. Phillpotts' haters are desperately in earnest, and you know it, too.

In "The Portreeve," one of the least complex of his later novels, you are presented with the vengeance of a woman slighted. Step by step the beautiful daughter of the prosperous farmer constructs her engines of destruction against the portreeve who had rejected her advances as soon as he knew the woman he loved was free. There is no escape for the Port-

reeve, valiant man though he be; he has met a power of hate, fiercer even than his love. Such hate deserves success, and gets it.

In "The Virgin in Judgment," Mr. Phillpotts deals with a passion that had not been illumined, as far as I know, by any other of our big men. The existence of ardent love between sister and brother is fraught with the same possibility of tragedy, of shattered lives, as is the more common form of sex love. Jealousy in these brother-sister loves can be as overwhelming in its intensity, as horrible, as distorting, and to the onlooker quite as uncalled for as between the usual swains. How far the sex element enters into this relationship is an interesting subject; it is, of course, usually quite unconscious, as it is presented in Mr. Phillpotts's book. Rhoda, the Virgin in Judgment, is devoted to her brother David, and he reciprocates her affection. Whoever David marries is bound to have a bad time of it; it is a matter of course that Rhoda, the competent farm woman, shall live with her brother and his wife. It is inevitable that the wife should dislike such a menage even if she be wholly and entirely unaware of her dislike and have some real affection for her husband's sister. Happy in her marriage, she would gladly find a mate for Rhoda, and so would the brother. Rhoda, with her jealous love for her brother, the absorbing passion of her life, is in that frame of mind when the slenderest doubt becomes clearest evidence. No analysis will do justice to the pages that tell of the wife's suicide, how David turns upon his sister, and how she, sore-stricken, goes back to her parents.

A real Devonshire girl of the vales is Phoebe, in the "Children of the Mist"; rather timid, but very sweet and tender, and a very fit mate for her young lover, the impetuous, self-opinionated young labourer who, coming into a legacy, expends it, in his headstrong way, upon a Moor Farm which had once belonged to his family. With what a delicate hand does Mr. Phillpotts show us that the youth's mother, whose judgment is usually so sound, is for once at fault, blinded by her attachment to the old homestead. Family affection plays a strong undercurrent throughout this book, which contains many passages that reveal Mr. Phillpotts's sympathetic comprehension of those less valiant souls who require firm support if their life's journey is to be at all tolerable. In this novel, as in others that deal with the lives of poor men, Mr. Phillpotts shows that he has not only inhabited their houses but has abided in their souls. He does not describe the poor man's life as a subject for picturesque delight or amused tolerance. His working men and women have the passions, the desires, and the aims of real human beings. The ways of literary criticism are to me quite amazing; to judge from the notices of "A Poor Man's House," by Mr. Stephen Reynolds, one would imagine that this writer had for the first time discovered a poor man. Apart from the fact that Mr. Reynolds's study is not that of a poor man, in the modern sense, for he is an independent fisherman, when you contrast this book with the work Mr. Phillpotts has given us for years, what a world of difference. Mr. Reynolds writes of the poor like a nice young literary man who knows he can run up any day and see his cultured friends, and knows he can always rely upon seeing the leading reviews and the books of the day. For Mr. Phillpotts, on the other hand, life with his poor men is the whole of life itself; he does not describe them from the exterior; these people really live in his pages. He does not rhapsodise because they have no objection to a bad smell, he is not elated when a stink offends their nostril. Moleskin, in "The Mother," put up with his house on the Moor, "for none knew better than himself the peculiar secret charms of this abode"—for a poacher.

"The Mother" breathes the spirit of watching guardianship, of that loving anxiety which companions motherhood from before birth till—it rests not, it ceases not. How well Avis Pomeroy understands her son Ives, the "headstrong, ownself youth." From the first note to her son, which the book gives us, after his quarrel with the mother, "Supper in the oven. Good-night,



dear heart, Mother," to the message Ives finds in the old Texts, what a tale of a mother's heart is here to be read. The old Texts are the references to the Bible set down by Avisá from the time she knew herself with child, and follow throughout his career until her death. "When he slept, however, she lay waking, and saw dangers ahead that as yet Ives neither discovered nor suspected." But these dangers make not the mother timorous. The mother who understands her children, like Avisá, can smile, for, come what may, as in this story, the mother herself must help send her son to prison, she ever repeats: "Darken our doors he can't. Better than sunshine always. My son will come back to me a wiser man some day. Yes, he'll come home, if I know him true." With this, the most searching of Mr. Phillpotts's books, it is fitting to close this brief introduction to his work. I have not alluded to his earlier works, because they do not seem to me to represent him at all. But he has now found himself. And we may expect much yet from this genuine prophet of the twentieth century.

M. D. EDER.

## An Interview with the Tsar.

By Maxim Gorki.

(Translated by David Weinstein.)

### II.

"Charged by the Lord of the Skies with the ruling of His people on Earth, the Tsar must be severe and redoubtable; yet, notwithstanding, just! It has been said that We, Tsar of Russia, have killed thousands of "innocents." This is nothing but a vile calumny! Personally, We have killed no one. Indeed, we have hardly the necessary time to occupy ourselves with that, nor has the single hand of the Tsar sufficient force to annihilate those vast masses! In Russia, the peasants and the workers are killed by the soldiers and the Cossacks; and these, We suppose, are sufficiently convinced as to who is in the right and who in the wrong, considering that the victims consist of their own fathers and brothers. In thus having to strike down their own kith and kin they use their own wise discretion as to the part of the population that is to be killed, and the towns which are to be pillaged or devastated. If, by any chance, there *should* happen to be a few "innocents" accidentally killed, they, surely, must have died in the full consciousness that their souls will go straight to Heaven! Of what use, then, to babble about cruelties and crimes, and a host of other things too numerous to take account of? It is not given to everyone, you know, to go straight away to Heaven as quickly and as cheaply as do the loyal and faithful subjects of the Russian Emperor, Lieutenant of Christ on Earth, and Son of the great Orthodox Church! And, then again, of what significance are a million or so of killed to a country with an immense population like Ours? And We, after working tirelessly the whole year round, subduing the will of the people, have only succeeded in killing a miserable half a million—in spite of the European Press saying that We were a Tyrant, a Monster, and Ogre in human form!

"The Italian Socialists have prevented Our visit to the country of their king. Other countries have hissed us, as if the Tsar were an incompetent stage-actor. Have they, then, forgotten how excellently We played the rôle of the Peacemaker in that great International Comedy during a run lasting nearly five years? And was not the whole of Europe at the time unanimous in its praise of Us?"

The Tsar reflected for a while, and, puckering his eyebrows, continued:

"But all that is superfluous! How My subjects dare to justify the acts of their Sovereign surpasses my comprehension!" . . . . What a confounded idiot! And why has he put these points? Pœtic licence does not exempt one from correct punctuation—the fool. But let us continue:

"To the Massacres of Caucasians and the Armenians, by Our faithful subjects, the Tartars, We give the semblance of a race-hatred, and—thank God!—there are folks credulous enough to take that to be true! But how, it will be asked, is it possible that the Armenians and Tartars, after having lived for so many centuries in neighbourly harmony should of a sudden turn into irreconcilable enemies? What is there strange about that? Those terrible earthquakes were equally unexpected. When the Sultan ordered Kourdes and his army to exterminate the Armenians, there were tens of thousands of victims, and far less clutter was made then than now! I appeal to your sense of fairness; is it just? Then again, it was said that there were many thousands of Jews killed in the pogroms. Many thousands, yes; but not all! Those massacres were primarily due to

their own stiff-neckedness in refusing to accept the Gospel of Love of the Prince of Peace! Besides, every true Christian knows that the extermination of the Jews is interwoven warp and woof with the progress of Christianity. Everybody understands that save the Socialists! . . . . This idea of the mission of Christianity has been implanted into the minds of the people by the Functionaries, the Spies, and the Priests since time immemorial; and now that the idea has borne fruit, in what are *We* guilty therein? The Sermon on the Mount bids us love our neighbour. True! But *is* the Jew our neighbour? Why, the very tenets of their faith impose an isolation which restricts the sphere of their being to a given area! The Jews are a long-suffering people, and they are never tired of proclaiming to the world that their duty to their God behoves them to suffer. Very well! We shall not deprive them of the Heritage of Martyrdom! Then the insolent scribblers impute to us, with equal accuracy, the crimes of that bloody day, the ninth of January. . . . He has again lost the rhythm, the scoundrel. What negligence. He will be suitably rewarded for his blunder-headedness—I will make a note of it at once! Have you a pencil about you?" As I unconsciously lowered my arms to gratify his request, he cried: "No! No! Keep your hands up!" He then underlined the offensive lines with his thumb-nail, and went on:

"But of accusing the Tsar. . . . H'm. . . . Imbecile! . . . . 'No reasonable man would be guilty. *We* are the Tsar! And if we have ordered the people to be shot down, we must have had ample reason for so doing. Had we thought it to our advantage to speak to them instead, rest assured that we would not have allowed the opportunity to escape us. I trust I have made myself clear! . . . . God has not only entrusted the Sceptre of the Globe to the Tsar, but the Sword as well; that is to say, the bayonets and the cannon with which to chastise the unruly. . . . Damn that fool! He has forgotten to include the maxim-guns!—'with which to chastise the unruly.' . . . What a distracted idiot! . . . . Yes, the bayonets, the cannons, and the maxim-guns! 'The Tsar can use at his pleasure the instruments of war or the methods of peace, whichever may suit his ends best! There you have the reason why it was so grossly inexpedient to harass him on that famous day in January. We are *always* in the right! It is possible that at times we ourselves could not give you a definite reason for the shooting of so many of our faithful subjects; but that which the Tsar cannot understand, God does! and He must take all the onus of His actions. The Tsar is only an instrument in the hands of the Great Creator, even as man is a mere tool in the hands of the Earthly God; that is to say, the Sovereign!'"

Nicholas the Second lifted his kingly head, weighed down by the heavy helmet, and brushed the beads of perspiration trickling from his forehead.

"Reflect upon that!" he continued. "What profound wisdom! So profound, indeed, that *We* Ourselves cannot understand it; but we *feel* that it is magnificent! The hound who composed the discourse I hold in my hand will some day be Minister of the Interior—you will see! He is still young. Even now he is being 'kept' by two septuagenarian Countesses and a Danseuse, and is being nurtured in the ideas that lie nearest to Our hearts. But please do not communicate these intimate details to the Press. It is Our own affair, and We wish to keep it to Ourselves!" . . . .

"Your Majesty!" I said, my arms drooping with fatigue.

"Cannot you keep them up?"

"No!"

"Then you may lower them. I must, however, warn you that if you attempt to move your hand in the least degree we will send the entrails of your body flying, and we will ask your pardon in advance. Our Life is invaluable to the Russian people—they have paid very dearly for it, Heaven only knows! . . . . But to return to our discourse; where were we? Ah!"

"This is a short résumé of our modest doings to which the Journalists have given the excessive attention devoted to the crimes of Ivan the Terrible, and the rest of the unhappy monarchs unfortunate enough to guide the destinies of a people ignorant of the illimitable power granted by God to his representative Sovereigns. Our doings mean nothing if they are not a standing reminder that Royal Power cannot exist without those so-called "Barbarous Methods," nor can the people be happy or peaceful. . . . Nay, more! It is even essential from time to time to shoot the Workers down, in order to destroy the senseless dreams they cherish concerning the supremacy of the People over the Throne, the Rich, and the Idle! Even the Peasants must be whipped and bayoneted occasionally to convince them that the Emperor has not lost sight of the fact that before him they are all equal. In our democratic country the merchants, the noblesse, the clergy, the workers, the peasants are all equal—yes, equal in the eyes of the law, as well as before the point of the sword! And *We*—*We* are justly proud of it!"

"We will now bring our discourse to a conclusion by once again reiterating that God alone has the power to judge the Sovereign, for He alone has chosen him to prove His wisdom and the wonder of His works. There you have it all—complete, concise, and comprehensible! Do you think you will be able to remember it?"

"Decidedly!" I replied.

"But in spite of all I have told you, We are still a constitutional monarch!" He sighed. "Yes, because in our day no one can be found willing to lend money to an Autocrat. We have now made a Parliament! If the Members of the Duma conduct themselves according to the wishes we have intimated to them—serve their fatherland loyally and increase the taxation—but we have grave doubts as to whether they will rise to the dignity of their standing."

"Your Majesty! Would you mind telling me what you understand by the word 'Constitution'?" I asked.

"Yes, instantly!" he answered, drawing a fresh sheet of paper from his bosom.

"A true constitution consists of a number of unselfish men who place themselves between the Monarch and the People in order that the burden and responsibility of Royal Power, which formerly fell to the lot of the Tsar, should, instead redound to the credit of these chosen gentlemen. They must be shrewd-headed and Argus-eyed, and possess shoulders of sufficient elasticity to evade the blow on the head as quickly as it is given. That is my definition of a Constitution—we know a thing or two!" . . . .

"You have not made allusion to the Japanese pounding, Majesty!"

"Japan?" he replied, angrily. "Had We the necessary funds, a strong army, and a capable Commander-in-Chief, We would make certain that Japan paid us commensurate compensation for the stunning blow they have dealt us! . . . . But let us return to the Duma. . . . 'If its members continue conducting themselves as insolently as they have done hitherto, there is no probability of it rendering any service whatsoever to the country. We shall, therefore, disperse it at the points of the bayonets of our faithful guard.'" . . . .

"But the People, Majesty! The People!" I began.

He interrupted me by drawing another sheet from his helmet, which seemed to be as stuffed with documents as a goose with chestnuts.

"The People! Pooh! They are mere wax in the hand of the Tsar! There are enough subjects ready to show their allegiance to the Tsar by combating those audacious enough to side with the Duma! . . . . Already the Tartars are tainted with hostile tendencies towards Us; but We have still the Kalmouks, and the Bachkirs, and the Khirghises. . . . It but wants the permission, and they will set to fire, to pillage, and to slaughter, with the well-known ardour of the Cossacks! Should this ever come to pass, it will, of course, take the aspect of a sudden outburst of hatred among the rival tribes. We shall then have the right to say to Europe: In those days when the Sovereign was invested with the absolute power We knew how to control the savage tribal instincts, but since the Constitution has loosened Our hand, you can now see to what that much-coveted liberty leads—that liberty so much clamoured for by the rebels always and everywhere! The conclusion, therefore, is one of simple deduction: Russia is too savage and far too uncultivated to adopt European forms of government. It can only prosper under the Sceptre of the Tsar, in whose hand all the power of the State must be concentrated. . . . For so long as faith in God exists, it will be proof positive of the Monarch's right of absolutism, and as long as the savage instincts of a people are still manifest, the Monarch will know what means to adopt for its suppression. . . . Mamma and Pobiedonostzef have admirably instructed Us in the manner a Sovereign must think. . . . And We are not alone! The Grand Dukes, the Courtisans, Governors, Functionaries, Burglars, Assassins, Spies, are all on our side; for they well know that their offices will, sooner or later, be abolished if the régime of the Constitution is to continue, and that Order and Equality will spell ruin for them. Is it to be expected, then, that they will join forces against the Sovereign? No! Much blood—I mean water—will flow under the Nevski Prospect ere Our Reign will come to an end." His air was gayer, but a cloud of anxiety still clung about his forehead and eyes.

"But your Majesty! Where will the money come from for those purposes?"

"Money? Why, the Duma will find it! Europe is prepared to lend at eighty-eight per cent. on the strength of that institution, although, entre nous, it has not the value of a tithe." . . . .

"And what if you order the dissolution of the Duma?" . . . .

"In that case we shall sell Poland to Our Brother, the German Emperor, though I think it would be equally advantageous to sell Caucasia; it has cost us much, and has brought us nothing but trouble, revolts and enmities in

return. . . . The Americans will buy Siberia, and We can use the Government of Archangel for the purposes of transportation—it has quite a bracing climate, and the population is not at all dense! . . . . Oh, yes! It is easy to round off Russia like an apple, so that once gripped firmly in the hand it can be crushed until it will finish by being appeased."

His pale lips trembled, and his forehead was agitated with nervous reflexions. He cast a restless glance on the mouldy walls, and clasped his hands tightly.

"Perhaps we shall yield at the commencement; yes, perhaps! We are advised to accede to some of the people's demands; we may do so! But when this almony is being distributed We will attack them unawares! Then the hands of our faithful subjects will pluck out the lying tongues of those insolent prattlers who consider the starved and the ignorant will of the people superior to that of the Autocracy, Anointed of the Lord."

His pale face was covered with sweat, and he clutched with his fingers to prevent them from trembling.

"But—enough! We have revealed to the world everything—everything inscribed on these papers, and sundry other things besides, not a word of which was superfluous. No one will accuse the Tsar of idle words! I trust you have not allowed anything to escape you? What? Just so! Now, go; announce to the world the wisdom and the goodness of heart of Him who was gracious enough to grant you the favour of conversing with Him, face to face. Hasten!"

He dropped the electric wire, and before I had time to wish him bon voyage he had vanished beneath the floor with his throne.

THE END.

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## Books and Persons.

(AN OCCASIONAL CAUSERIE.)

ON Good Friday night I was out in the High Street, at the cross-roads, where the warp and the woof of the traffic assault each other under a great glare of lamps. The shops were closed and black, except where a tobacconist kept the tobacconist's bright and everlasting vigil; but above the shops occasional rare windows were illuminated, giving hints—dressing-tables, pictures, gas-globes—of intimate private lives. I don't know why such hints should always seem to me pathetic, saddening; but they do. And beneath them, through the dark defile of shutters, motor-omnibuses roared and swayed and curved, too big for the street, and dwarfing it. And automobiles threaded between them, and bicycles dared the spaces that were left. From afar off there came a flying light, like a shot out of a gun, and it grew into a man perched on a shuddering contrivance that might have been invented by H. G. Wells, and swept perilously into the contending currents, and emerged by miracles untouched, and was gone, driven by the desire of the immortal soul within the man. This strange thing happened again and again. The pavements were crowded with hurrying or loitering souls, and the omnibuses and autos were full of them: hundreds passed before the vision every moment. And they were all preoccupied; they nearly all bore the weary, egotistic melancholy that spreads like an infection at the close of a fête day in London; the lights of a motor-omnibus would show in the rapt faces of sixteen souls at once in their glass cage, driving the vehicle on by their desires. The policemen and the loafers in the ring of fire made by the public-houses at the cross-roads—even these were grave with the universal affliction of life, and grim with the relentless universal egotism. Lovers walked as though there were no heaven and no earth, but only themselves in space. Nobody but me seemed to guess that the road to Delhi could be as naught to this road, with its dark, fleeing shapes, its shifting beams, its black brick precipices, and its thousand pale, flitting faces of a gloomy and decadent race. As says the Indian proverb, I met ten thousand men on the Putney High Street, and they were all my brothers. But I alone was aware of it. As I stood watching autobus after autobus swing round in a fearful semi-circle to begin a new journey, I gazed myself into a mystic comprehension of the significance of what I saw. A few yards beyond where the autobuses turned was a certain house with lighted upper windows, and in that house the greatest lyric versifier that England ever had, and one of the great poets of the whole world and of all the ages, was dying: a name immortal. But nobody looked; nobody seemed to care; I doubt if anyone thought of it. This enormous negligence appeared to me to be fine, to be magnificently human.

\* \* \*

The next day all the shops were open, and hundreds of fatigued assistants were pouring out their exhaustless patience on thousands of urgent and bright women; and flags waved on high, and the gutters were banked with yellow and white flowers, and the air was brisk and the roadways were clean. The very vital spirit of energy seemed to have scattered the breath of life generously, so that all were intoxicated by it in the gay sunshine. He was dead then. The waving posters said it. When Tennyson died I felt less hurt; for I had serious charges to bring against Tennyson, which impaired my affection for him. But I was more shocked. When Tennyson died, everybody knew it, and imaginatively realised it. Everybody was touched. I was saddened then as much by the contagion of a general grief as by a sorrow of my own. But there was no general grief on Saturday. Swinburne had written for fifty years, and never once

moved the nation, save inimically, when "Poems and Ballads" came near to being burnt publicly by the hangman. (By "the nation," I mean newspaper readers. The real nation, busy with the problem of eating, dying, and being born all in one room, has never heard of either Tennyson or Swinburne or George R. Sims.) There are poems of Tennyson, of Wordsworth, even of the speciously recondite Browning that have entered into the general consciousness. But nothing of Swinburne's! Swinburne had no moral ideas to impart. Swinburne never publicly yearned to meet his Pilot face to face. He never galloped on one of Lord George Sanger's horses from Ghent to Aix. He was interested only in ideal manifestations of beauty and force. Except when he grieved the judicious by the expression of political crudities, he never connected art with any form of morals that the British public could understand. He sang. He sang supremely. And it wasn't enough for the British public. The consequence was that his fame spread out as far as undergraduates, and the tiny mob of undergraduates was the largest mob that ever worried itself about Swinburne. Their shouts showed the high-water mark of his popularity. When one of them wrote in a facetious ecstasy over "Dolores,"

But you came, O you procuratores,  
And ran us all in!

that moment was the crown of Swinburne's career as a popular author. With its incomparable finger on the public pulse, the "Daily Mail," on the day when it announced Swinburne's death, devoted one of its placards to the performances of a lady and a dog on a wrecked liner, and another to the antics of a lunatic with a revolver. The "Daily Mail" knew what it was about. Do not imagine that I am trying to be sardonic about the English race and its organs. Not at all. The English race is all right, though ageing now. The English race has committed no crime in demanding from its poets something that Swinburne could not give. I am merely trying to make clear the exceeding strangeness of the apparition of a poet like Swinburne in a place like England.

\* \* \*

Last year I was walking down Putney Hill, and I saw Swinburne for the first and last time. I could see nothing but his face and head. I did not notice those ridiculously short trousers that Putney people invariably mention when mentioning Swinburne. Never have I seen a man's life more clearly written in his eyes and mouth and forehead. The face of a man who had lived unchangingly with fine, austere, passionate thoughts of his own. By the heavens, it was a noble sight. I have not seen a nobler. Now, I knew by hearsay every crease in his trousers, but nobody had ever told me that his face was a vision that would never fade from my memory. And nobody, I found afterwards by enquiry, had "noticed anything particular" about his face. I don't mind, either for Swinburne or for Putney. I reflect that if Putney ignored Swinburne, he ignored Putney. And I reflect that there is great stuff in Putney for a poet, and marvel that Swinburne never perceived it and used it. He must have been born English, and in the nineteenth century, by accident. He was misprized while living. That is nothing. What does annoy me is that critics who know better are pandering to the national hypocrisy after his death. In a dozen columns he has been sped into the unknown as "a great Victorian"! Miserable dishonesty. Nobody was ever less Victorian than Swinburne. And then when these critics have to skate over the "Poems and Ballads" episode—thin, cracking ice: how they repeat delicately the word "sensuous," "sensuous." Out with it, tailorish and craven minds, and say "sensual!" For sensual the book is. It is fine in sensuality, and no talking will ever get you away from that. Villiers de L'Isle Adam once wrote an essay on "Le Sadisme Anglais," and supported it with a translation of a large part of "Anactoria." And even Paris was startled. A rare trick for a supreme genius to play on the country of his birth, enshrining in the topmost heights of its literature a

lovely poem that cannot be discussed! (And these critics iterate that mild word "sensuous.") Well, Swinburne has got the better of us there. He has simply knocked to pieces the theory that great art is inseparable from even the Ten Commandments. His greatest poem was written in honour of a poet whom any English Vigilance Society would have crucified. "Sane" critics will naturally observe, in their quiet manner, that "Anactoria" and similar feats were "so unnecessary." Would it were true!

JACOB TONSON.

### DREAMS.

Last night a vision came to me,  
I thought my lover stood by me,  
And glad at heart, and gay were we,  
And, O, the fields were yellow!

My lover was the world to me,  
For, O, he was so kind to me,  
So dear was he, so near was he,  
And all the fields were yellow!

He put his arm about my waist,  
His good right arm about my waist,  
And slowly through the fields we paced,  
The fields that were so yellow.

And on we went to Arcady,  
The lovers' land of Arcady.  
On, ever on and on, went we,  
Across the fields so yellow.

DORA WILCOX.

### REVIEWS.

**More's Utopia.** With Introduction by H. G. Wells. (Blackie and Son. 2s. 6d. net.)

To this very dainty and welcome pocket edition of More's "Utopia" Mr. H. G. Wells has added a preface, which is, in our view, a mistake. It ought never to have been written, much less printed. It is thin, shallow, slovenly, inexpressibly ungenerous, and pseudo-critical, and has the air of a pot-boiler thrown off in a few minutes by a prosperous writer who is unable to refuse a tempting five guineas or so.

Mr. Wells has the deplorable habit of patronising whatever he does not understand. That he does not understand More and his "Utopia" is clear to the dullest intellect, and therefore he patronises him much as an amateur does a professional. Thus to him More appears as an "agreeable-mannered" hardworking sort of gentleman with a bad taste for Utilitarianism. (So had Plato.) He is very witty, and Henry VIII is fond of his merry jests. But as he refuses to play the fool to the King's entire satisfaction, the latter has his head cut off. He writes an unimaginative work called "Utopia," which is a sort of scrap-book "for cuttings from and imitations of Plato, the recipe for the hatching of eggs, etc." This is Mr. Wells's portrait which we may profitably compare with that by a cultured modern historical writer who thoroughly understands the true inwardness and significance of More and his work.

"Sir Thomas More is one of the central figures in the world drama of the moral against the material order. In sacrificing his life for Papal Supremacy, he gave up place and power, fortune, friends, and family, for the moral ideal of citizenship. His execution by Henry VIII, though it did not seem to delay the victory of the Temporal Power in England (with all its lasting train of evil consequences) yet secured the sanctification of the martyr, and thus More by his supreme act of sacrifice became one of the most potent symbols in European history for the transmission of the civic ideal of spiritual freedom. . . . As a student of scholastic Oxford, as Sheriff of London, as Lord Chancellor, he looked back; as a student of Plato, as expositor of St. Augustine's 'City of God,' as a man of the new learning and friend of Erasmus, he looked forward. . . His Utopia thus comes in as a middle term between the medieval Heaven that was being shattered and the realisable ideals of city and citizenship, which are now

becoming visible after four centuries of painful preparation."

The reason why Mr. Wells does not understand More's Utopia is not far to seek. Utopias fall under three heads: theological, poetical, and scientific. More, like Morris, belongs to the poetical order of Utopists; Mr. Wells to the Anglo-Japanese scientific order of Utopists. The latter's Utopian ideal belongs to the present, and is mainly concerned with the improvement of machinery and the mechanic in a greasy smock. He stands wobbling in the narrow highway of to-day, and seems quite unable to follow More's example and steady himself in a transition time, by a long historic retrospect and a far-seeing prospect. Till he does so he can no more be expected even to appreciate More's Utopia than Ezekiel's, or Lycurgas', or Campanella's, or Comte's. Therefore we strongly advise all who read this book to skip the introduction, and consult Roper. We assure them unless they do, they will get a perverted view of its contents which will sap their delight in its spiritual beauty, choke their admiration of the genius of its author, deaden their enthusiasm in its poetical idealism, and silence their opinion concerning its real and lasting merits.

**Shakespeare's Complete Sonnets.** A new arrangement, with Introduction and Notes, by C. M. Walsh. (Unwin. 5s. net.)

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are opened up by Dr. EILOART'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 4d.

and letting single drops of water fall upon his head at intervals of, say, five minutes. The victim, if our information be correct, became raging mad after three or four hours of this ingenious treatment. At times a somewhat similar feeling, we imagine, comes over the student of certain classical writers, particularly Shakespeare and Dante. The number of editions of the complete works of these two writers is appalling; and only the indexers at the British Museum are in a position to reckon the number of editions of each separate play or canto. A student makes his selection, and begins to read; but straightway inquisitors—incarnations of Civil Service examinations, the Oxford and Cambridge locals, the desire to shine in literary conversation, and so on—lay hold of him, and the torture begins. New edition after new edition drops at more or less regular intervals upon the head of the poor (in both senses of the word) student, until he is submerged in a sea of learned and unlearned commentaries, criticisms, conjectures, and emendations. The latest crest on the mountainous Shakespearian billow is Mr. Walsh's book.

Well, then, we recommend the distracted student to secure this work of Mr. Walsh's, which is the last answer it is possible to give to a puzzle of which the complete solution cannot be attempted without divine revelation. When Shakespeare wrote his sonnets; whom he addressed them to; who his patron was at the time; whether they were written over a considerable period of years, or all at once; and if we may utter the blasphemy, what he meant by some of them, are questions which Mr. Walsh discusses and pronounces judgment upon in a clever preface. Mr. Walsh gives us a complete edition of the sonnets—not only those usually printed at the end of the works, but also those scattered through the plays. He has, apparently, carefully consulted every edition of the plays and sonnets for the purposes of his text, arrangement, and notes. The result, so far as Mr. Walsh's task is concerned, is all that one could wish for, and we see absolutely no need for a further edition of these sonnets. But we should have been glad if whoever was responsible for the cloth binding of the book had chosen a darker colour—we can only describe the present shade as a bilious pink, on which the title is scarcely legible. It seems a pity that such a carefully-edited book, printed in clear type on good paper, should be spoiled by such a hideous, senseless, inartistic cover.

**Aspects of Modern Opera.** By Lawrence Gilman. (John Lane. 3s. 6d. net.)

It is a very easy thing to get tired talking about Wagner, and it is still easier to get tired of reading about him. Probably no other great artist of modern times has had so many books written about his life and work, his ideals and methods; and probably round no other subject of hero-artist-worship have there existed such violent misconceptions and fallacies. Mr. Arthur Symons once wrote, in the "Dome" we think, an elaborate appreciation of the Bayreuth festival, in which essay he applauded Wagner's dramatic methods in that finely fastidious manner we all know. It was, however, one of the most unrighteous pieces of nonsense ever written upon the subject of Richard Wagner. It is all very well to say you accept the convention of opera and that therefore the drama may be excused, however jerky or accommodating or long-drawn-out it may be. No amount of noble music and lofty themes can ever excuse amateur philosophies and amateur stage-craft, and there is no possible sort of doubt that Wagner was a terrible amateur in drama-making. It has taken quite a quarter of a century to get this fact drummed into the heads of ardent Wagnerites; but the bulk of the obsessed ones are still unashamed. An illuminating discussion of this point appears in a new book by Mr. Lawrence Gilman, who proves very successfully that Wagner himself was "one of the most formidable antagonists that Wagnerism ever had." He discusses with much warmth and many American adjectives the various qualities of strength and weakness in Wagner's work, insisting strongly, and proving, too, that Wagner's influence was "pernicious and oppressive." Fortunately this great composer's influence is on the

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

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wane, and we can look forward with less foreboding to the ascendant star of Claude Debussy, whose music-drama is built upon sounder aesthetic foundations, and does not wobble with an over-balanced orchestra on the one hand shoving the crude philosophies over on the other. We have not space to treat of the glorious dramatic failures of the Wagnerian opera-dramas, but we can thoroughly recommend our readers to buy this book of Mr. Gilman's.

**Friedrich Nietzsche: His Life and Work.** By M. A. Mügge, Ph.D. (London: Fisher Unwin. 10s. 6d. net.)

The less said about this book the better. It is an absurd example of the so-called "scientific method" applied to art. Objectivity and philosophical detachment are the attitudes Dr. Mügge has striven to maintain, and, as a consequence, he has almost achieved the impossible: he has produced an incomparably dull book about one of the most brilliant and entertaining writers of modern times. This alone is a feat, and, together with the remarkable bibliography, should be placed to the author's credit.

But even objectivity and philosophical detachment apparently have their limits; for, beyond helping a writer to be hopelessly uninteresting, we do not suppose it is claimed for them that they make him more accurate. Or are we wrong? On the first page of Dr. Mügge's book we read that Nietzsche had no sense of humour! Is this an objective, a subjective, an accurate, or an impartial statement? In any case, it is the most utter nonsense. On page 380 we read that he should have lived in London for a year to be cured of the "traits of snobbishness" which he exhibited. He might as well have come to London for a year to be free from smoke and fogs.

How Nietzsche would have shuddered at the thought of being represented by a man like Dr. Mügge!

**Great English Painters.** By Francis Downman. (Grant Richards. 3s. 6d.)

The author tells us, frankly, in his preface that the eight English painters whose lives he has told are not, in his opinion, the greatest names on the list. He says that he would have found Old Crome and Cotman, Bonington and Girtin more valuable than some of the men he has actually chosen if he had only to consider their artistic results. Thereby he shows his sound critical taste. But whatever may be the reason which led him to fix on Hogarth, Reynolds, Gainsborough, Romney, Morland, Lawrence, and Turner, he has certainly made very delightful studies of their lives. One sometimes wonders how the novelists get a hearing and a sale when real life is so much more vivid and romantic. Take the case of Romney, with his passionate longing to be always painting his divine Emma; or the majestic success of Reynolds; Turner, the dweller in the realms of beauty when he was working, and a boor when he was at play; the sentimental Lawrence, the impulsive Gainsborough. Mr. Downman has written a series of short stories, in fact, all packed with illuminating flashes of the great mysteries of human nature. And though he does not profess that it is within the scope of his book, he gives us much sound advice on the subject of Art. Altogether a most pleasing book, full of the atmosphere of the eighteenth century. The many illustrations are well chosen.

**God the Known, and God the Unknown.** By Samuel Butler. (Fifield. 1s. 6d. net.)

Everything that Butler wrote possesses distinction, and the present volume of his complete works which Mr. Fifield is publishing is no exception. In the eight chapters of this essay Butler examines the various forms of theism, and finally rejects them for a faith with which Mr. Shaw has now made us familiar.

## ART.

### Magdeleine.

As a poor man, I find it very consoling to note the limitations of the power of money. It is an old complaint on the Continent that they grow great artists for English and American gold bags to collar. Munich trains Ternina at some expense of time and talent to be the finest Brunnhilde of her day, and straightway she flies off after a decoy eagle with a dollar in its mouth. But, in the end, what does it matter? Your brigand millionaire may capture Sir Artist; he cannot understand him.

And so I have watched the procession of eminent dancers passing, to the tune of some applause and much misunderstanding, through the London fog with a spice of satiric satisfaction. But the satisfaction, too, has its limits. It reached them on last Tuesday night, when the Palace Theatre audience guffawed and snickered at the dancing of Madame Magdeleine.

And yet, upon subsequent analysis, I decided it was not altogether the public's fault (not directly, that is), for if you have a man in evening dress coming to the footlights and saying, "Ladies and gentlemen, there is no deception!" you may be pardoned for guessing that somewhere or other in the show deception lurks. On Friday the tremendous "Funeral March" of Chopin whipped the audience into some sort of enthusiasm, but the air of jugglery continues to disturb. Mr. Butt must clear away all that palaver. It doesn't really matter a bit to the public whether the lady is hypnotised or not; it is the art that counts. If you wish to know, she is hypnotised, and she *does* dance and mime, so hypnotised, in accord with music spoken, played, or sung. I hope that will content you.

The lady is a great artist; this I would have you regard as sufficient justification for our admiration of her. At present my admiration is chaotic. Her art is something so fresh and strange that it refuses to be measured by any of my critical compasses. I have seen her three times, and each succeeding time my admiration has been bigger—who knows when will be the equinox?

What is her essential quality? What is it that marks her out from all other dancers and mimes? Let us try to find out. She is heroic—heroic in her tragedy, heroic even in her comedy. Not noble—noble is too cultured and stilted a word. She has a largeness, a strength, she puts out blossoms of beauty and triviality with tremendous and equal power; her huge gestures have something frightful about them; she is gigantic, she overwhelms.

There are two sides to the genius of Magdeleine—the comic and the tragic. On both sides she is inimitable, but it is the tragedian one remembers. Her comic gestures are feminine, fluid, tender. Her tragic gestures are male and indomitable—the limbs pose and stride like the limbs of a demi-god. Her comedy is exquisite, but it is a toy—a toy that is heroic! (This seems a contradiction, and there are moments when her comedy is heroic, but I must let the phrase stand.) It is a thing of the surface; it probes no depths. Her gestures are local and particular. In her delightful mimicry of "A Japanese Love Song," full of subtle nuances and tender graciousness, of colour and charm, perfectly balanced, lit up by a flood of spontaneous drolleries, there is something of what she has heard of Japan, something of the French and something of her own gracious external self. Her dancing to joyful melodies partakes of this character. One remembers in her waltzes that she was trained as a girl in the measures of the ball-room. It is charming—but it implies a partner and the whirl of the lights and the polished floor.

At the first note of the tragic all this vanishes away;

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the gesture changes, the figure grows greater, you find yourself a sudden, startled spectator of the sorrows of the human soul.

Has the Magdeleine a sense of rhythm? In the end I find she has. Especially in her tragedy. In her joyful dances she is superficial and derivative. But in her tragic movements there is a rhythm not of the music—a big rhythm, with irregular cadences, to be fitted to no formal rule. You will find its parallel in the poetry of Whitman, with whom in many other ways her art has much in common.

And here I note a point of comparison with Isadora Duncan. The rhythm of Isadora is lyric, it runs; the rhythm of Whitman, of the Magdeleine, is epic, it strides, it grows. Yes, grows, for often the Magdeleine seems rooted to the earth, often she is like one of those figures of Eastern fable that are half turned to stone—a gigantic stone Sphinx in the desert, with a tortured face. This in her tragic mood, when the likeness of huge carved stone does cling to her, and one is perplexed to find in each instant's pose a something eternal, of the rock, and yet to find it perpetually changing with the swiftness of smoke wind-blown. Let us pursue this comparison with Isadora Duncan.

Isadora expresses emotion in derivative, allusive figures of speech—(her piping shepherd motive, for example). The tragic gestures of the Magdeleine are terribly first-hand, they hammer directly on your consciousness; there is no intermediary, they do not stand for emotions; they are.

That you feel, too, is what the Duncan aims at—an escape from the deceptive broken lights and shadows of this painted screen which is pictured in the comedy of Magdeleine. She seeks spontaneity, she seeks the simple and primal emotion. And marvellously enough, through her rigidly built technique she has actually gained spontaneity. A patient discipline and an inspired convention have set free her soul. What her technique has done for her the mere hypnotic trance and the summons of tragic music have done for the other. The soul of Magdeleine walks nakedly before you unfettered by anything but the dragging stress of her own emotions.

It is suggestive to observe that Isadora strikes the true primal note in the expression of triumphant human joy; while the Magdeleine in her greatest moments strides and staggers like a fallible tortured god weighed down by the woes of the universe. The magnificent gloom of night is round the Magdeleine. The brow of Isadora is bright with the timid, exultant tones of the morning. The soul of Isadora is a calm lake—a mountain torrent—a bubbling spring. The soul of the Magdeleine is an immense ocean, vexed by turbulent waves, lit by its own phosphorescent gleaming and the cold shine of a few distant stars.

Isadora is an incomparable artist, she has evolved an art complete in itself, using the music only as a finger-post, following the verbal rhythm, but wilfully introducing moods and motives that are quite her own.

Magdeleine—how shall I call her an artist?—she does not select, and an artist must be a selector. Following not the verbal rhythm, but the mood of the music, she expresses every emotion that is put before her—trivial or heroic. And yet, just as Whitman put the whole earth and sky upon his canvas, and got nevertheless by the emphasis of his temperament a picture quite differentiated and individual, so the Magdeleine's tragic temperament deals with the emotions flung pell-mell upon her. Perhaps her most wonderful attribute is that lightning play of expression in her face and body, that fluidity of gesture. As she follows the music or the word, she seems indeed of the stuff that dreams are made of. Joy chases sorrow, anger chases joy; hatred, compassion, malice, gleam and fade with incredible swiftness, in this plastic flesh.

Flesh! But no, it seems as if the veil of flesh had been rent away. Here is sheer temperament before you, played on by the music with infallible touch. And yet, the flesh is there—dormant, and the soul breathes through it, fighting to be free. The breath comes in

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gasps, the sweat gathers in beads, the lips hiss the indicative words. . . .

Oh, what is it you see in the dark? Something horrible that moves with stealthy footsteps. Its shape is dim but its eyes are fire. Horror! Beware! fly from it. And hark! hark! a lark singing, high in the air. Oh, to reach it. Oh, delicate and sweet. Sway to it, sway to it, chiming so daintily. . . Pah! it is dust, and the blind worm crawls in the dark. . .

I am afraid of you, Magdeleine. You are so huge. Your emotions are so rough and strong. You rend me nerve from nerve. My heart flutters, I shudder at the stare of your stony eyes and the writhing of your contorted lips. . . . And oh! delicately sailing, how your face beams with a supersensuous delight. A delight too strong, a delight that devours its joy. . .

Halt! halt! here was a statue I would keep in my heart and here and here. But statue fades into statue too fast for my mind to follow. . . . And now the music takes a jump and breaks into madness, and you stride as the warrior strides in the battle, blood of the heroes, foam of the fighting ai! ai! . . .

But we do not exult with you. The shadow of night is always about you. There is a chasm between us. We stand, nay, grovel, on the brink—and shudder—and admire.

This dream stuff of the struggling emotions, this nightmare unrest of the soul you find, too, in the sculpture of Rodin. It deals less with form than with colour. It is the antithesis of Duncan and the Greek. It is the note of the modern. It is not always harmonious; one knows not always whether to call it beautiful; but it is great.

And it has what is suggested by that likeness to Walt Whitman—a touch of the universal. It strips off our cloaks, pulls down our trumpery dwellings, and lets us out into the illimitable night.

W. R. TITTERTON.

## MUSIC.

### "The Jury Disagreed."

I SUPPOSE dramatic and literary criticism in England shows just as pleasant a variety of opinions as musical criticism. I used to think there must be a kind of pre-arranged consensus among musical critics; that is to say, that with advertisements to consider, and the public always paying to be flattered, the ordinary newspaper critic had to be a consistent professional liar. It appears, however, that he has still considerable scope wherein to vent his genuine opinions, his little personal prejudices, his little spites, and his little enthusiasms, and that he may really lie as much as he likes, or flatter as much—within the "policy" of his paper.

\* \* \*

I cannot, and do not, expect the readers of THE NEW AGE to be specially interested in any original musical work of my own, but in so far as it represents an average illustration of critical methods, I would like to state a nice case—even if modest people will accuse me of "bad taste." Some years ago, before I had entered middle-age, I wrote a song-cycle for baritone voice made up of poems by various writers. Out of seven songs two were really decent, the other five being nothing more than exercises in emotion, and good enough, perhaps, for the class room. The one merit they all possessed, and which gave me some satisfaction, was singableness. (For art-songs this is largely out of fashion. Composers with a serious "intellectual" purpose prefer writing songs that are impossible to sing, mere tunefulness being too utterly impossible). Although singable, as I have said, they were not easy; several technical difficulties would have been considerable obstacles to the average baritone, but to a singer of Garcia's qualifications these were easily surmounted; and I admired him so much for this, and his manner of interpreting what sense there was in the things, that I was glad enough to play them for him in public. He knows very well that I would publish them as they stand, for I do not now consider the old scheme satisfac-

tory. I will just put the criticisms in parallel lines, and abridge them merely for the purpose of comparison.

The cycle . . . . was of slender interest only; the songs were effectively written, and enabled the singer to display his excellent method and sympathetic voice well; but as settings of poems by William Blake, "To find the Western Path"; Swinburne, "At the Touch of His Wand," and others, the music seemed inadequate, lacking character and individuality. — "Pall Mall Gazette."

. . . . the composer of this cycle, is an enthusiastic and discriminating collector of Irish folk songs and traditional melodies. There is a fine militant ring about most of his music, and his strains are not couched in the fugitive terminology which is characteristic of so much of our youngest school of composers . . . . Mr. Hughes's phrases, if at times wanting in contrast, reflect the spirit of the words very happily. "My Love is Dark," a charming song, with its ecclesiastical suggestion and quaint termination on the supertonic; "I have trod the upward and the downward slope," a dignified example of ordered emotion; and "The last Invocation," not only suited the singer the best, but proved the most attractive. — "The Standard."

The "Standard" critic was absolutely right in his statement that the cycle suffered from lack of contrast in the numbers. I would not dream of making love to any potential publisher at the moment for this very reason.

. . . . a young composer whose work shows much promise. At present, perhaps, his aims are sometimes better than their realisations, but there is a touch of individuality and a note of earnestness about his music which can be unreservedly commended. "My Love is Dark" is quite a little gem in its simplicity and unaffected beauty, while other examples were as spirited and elaborate as this was simple and tranquil. Sometimes Mr. Hughes is not as careful as he might be over the accentuation of his words, and now and again he annoys by arbitrary touches which appear to have been introduced merely with the intention of avoiding the natural and the obvious; but, as a whole, his cycle certainly interested and pleased. — "Westminster Gazette."

. . . . It created an extremely favourable impression because of its individuality. Mr. Hughes shows that he recognises the value of national idiom as the foundation of style, and he employs it with results that give his music character, and provide a link of sympathy between himself and his audience. As an example of the faithful employment of a distinct idiom, the third number, "My Love is Dark," is made irresistibly attractive; and feeling, of which the composer has no small command, is fully illustrated in the sixth, a setting of some words of Walt Whitman, entitled "The Invocation." In the others there is originality of thought, invariable melodiousness, and much skill. . . . The songs . . . . were admirably sung. — "Morning Post."

I can agree with the critic of the "Westminster" that my "aims are somewhat better than their realisation"—they always are, and in this case were especially so—but when he says "My love is dark" has an "unaffected beauty," I beg to complain. This particular song was a definite attempt to catch what I imagined was the art-spirit of the seventeenth century, completely and elaborately affected in detail, for I felt that Gogarty's exquisite lyric was immensely in this style. If the result was "unaffected," of course I ought to be delighted. The others were, perhaps, "spirited," but they were certainly not "elaborate," at least as we now judge modern composition. Also, I plead that I was very careful about the accentuation of words, and I challenge this critic (in a friendly way, of course) to

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point one instance where the emphasis had not been rational. And I certainly repudiate any intention of avoiding the natural and the obvious; I have a very preferential tendency in favour of obvious things in music. The "Morning Post" flattered me, I am afraid; and where the critic pointed out a national idiom I was, I confess, quite unconscious of it.

Mr. Hughes's music is simple and sincere; all the songs are based upon diatonic phrases of melody, and though some of the leading themes are not very distinguished, especially a rapid descending figure in the piano accompaniment, which is often repeated, and seems to represent the joy of life, yet several of the songs are relieved by thoughtful and expressive features. "At the touch of His wand" is carried through with an energetic rhythm; "My Love is Dark" is a graceful tune, made eloquent by its ending on the second degree of the scale; Walt Whitman's words, "The last Invocation," are genuinely expressed, and the C major chord, which comes unexpectedly to close the last song, gives it a character of its own.—"The Times."

The critic of the "Times" was quite right about some of the leading themes being undistinguished, and especially so in his reference to the "rapid descending figure," which once represented the joy of life; to-day, however, it only represents extreme irritation. My principal objection to the "Telegraph" critic is that he is both obscure and inaccurate. He is accurate, however, when he says "the majority of the songs were of little value," but he is obscure when he adds "as such." He is inaccurate when he says "the love element seemed to prevail," and he is obscure when he talks about the pedestal and the statue changing places. He is inaccurate when he says a certain song "verged on the commonplace," for it is obvious that the style of the early seventeenth century is by no means commonplace in the early twentieth. And he is also inaccurate when he talks about Mr. Garcia's phrasing completely altering "the poetic sense." I plead I am the better judge in a case of this kind.

\* \* \*

Gentle readers, you will, I hope, forgive this perfectly gratuitous advertisement? I feel, however, that as you are never likely to hear these songs, you will accept this account of a little affair in the spirit in which it is given; that you will, perhaps, have a little notion of contemporary musical criticism from this case; and that you will never judge me seriously as a composer of songs.

HERBERT HUGHES.

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### THE I.L.P. CONFERENCE. TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

As one of the "irresponsibles," may I express a few thoughts on the I.L.P. Conference?

I think everyone expected that this Conference would be more "lively" than usual. The wild and irresponsible youngsters who were trying to wreck the I.L.P. were going to be severely chastised by the persons with twenty-six years' experience, or more, in the movement. The Agenda Committee, or Fate, had arranged for me, as the Southport delegate, to move an amendment to the first resolution on the agenda. The mover of the resolution,

. . . . a cycle, so called . . . in which the love element seemed to prevail, so far as the text is concerned, but, frankly, the majority of the songs were of little value as such. Many more times than once the pedestal and the statue seemed to have changed places, but the most attractive of the seven songs, "My Love is Dark," though it verged on the commonplace, yet possessed the merit of owning a melody that was not overpowered by the pianoforte accompaniment, excellent though this generally was. . . . but his (Mr. Albert Garcia's) phrasing often left much to be desired, as in Mr. Hughes's songs, "Day-break" and "To Thirst," in each of which his defective phrasing completely altered the poetical sense.—"Daily Telegraph."

approving of the Labour alliance, explained that he had been twenty-six years in the movement, and what had been done in those years was not going to be given up now "for a jimcrack affair." My amendment to secede from the L.R.C. received scant support. The Conference decided by a large majority that the Labour alliance must be maintained. This alliance is, we are told, essential to Socialism.

Now my chief objection to the alliance was that it would necessitate a weakening of the Socialist policy of the I.L.P. This was denied. Yet I suggest to I.L.P'ers, that subsequent events justified my statement. The whole of the trouble that has now arisen in the party is due to the leaders' desperate efforts to keep the Socialism of the I.L.P. subservient to the Labour policy. Take the voting on Saturday. Every resolution in favour of independence was lost. The Independent Labour Party will not tolerate independent candidates. The Socialists of the I.L.P. will not permit Grayson to run as a Socialist candidate. It was also decided that members of the party must not support any "Parliamentary party or its candidates 'not affiliated with the Labour party.'" Mr. J. McLachlan moved that this be referred back, and I seconded. But the Conference was against us. So now we must not assist a comrade who does not swear by the Labour party. A further proof of the weakening of the Socialist position is to be found in the overwhelming defeat of the proposal to change the name to "The Socialist Party."

I left Edinburgh on Monday, and therefore did not witness the resignation scenes. I am not greatly surprised at the action of the leaders. It was well known that the leaders were hoping that Mr. Grayson would be practically forced out of the party. When Mr. Grayson's motion to refer back the paragraph in the N.A.C. report dealing with the Holborn Town Hall affair was carried, Mr. Hardie was evidently disturbed. I voted for the reference back, because the paragraph did not appear to be a correct statement of fact. I never thought of censuring anyone. If secretaries and committees of branches were to resign every time their reports or proposals were not accepted by the members, there would be quite a plethora of resignations. But, as a matter of fact, it is not the reference back per se that has caused the resignations. The object is to force the issue between the supporters of the Labour policy and the supporters of a Socialist policy. Keir Hardie, Macdonald, and Barnes clearly indicate that those who do not support the Labour party and its policy must be "cleared out" of the I.L.P., or they will not serve on the N.A.C. Will the rank and file stand for Socialism? The action of the delegates on Tuesday when they reversed the vote of Monday is not very encouraging. This action disgusts me. I can only account for it by assuming that the resignations had caused a panic. The delegates were scared, and gave a panic vote. This is a charitable explanation of the volte face on Tuesday.

But we are told by the offended leaders that something must be done to rid the movement of the persons whose criticisms have caused the trouble. Mr. G. N. Barnes has made the position quite clear in to-day's "Labour Leader." The "rebels" must be expelled. I understood before the Conference that Mr. Grayson had, to use a lady delegate's expression, to "clear out." No mercy would be shown to him. The rank and file will now have to decide whether we shall be "cleared out." The decisions of the Conference will certainly make it impossible for Mr. Grayson to fight Colne Valley under the auspices of the I.L.P., or to receive any support from I.L.P'ers, except from those who are such rebels that they won't sacrifice Socialism to Labourism. Therefore, it becomes a matter of urgency that those who favour a Socialist policy should organise a Socialist Representation Committee. We do not want to wreck the I.L.P., but we do want to be free to stand for Socialism. The I.L.P., by its constitution, stands for Socialism, and it is part of our work to see that it continues to stand for Socialism. I protest, as I did at the Conference, against the I.L.P. being absorbed by a non-Socialist party. Now is the time for every Socialist to make a firm stand against the Liberal-Labour effort to weaken the forces of Socialism. W. FAULKNER.

Southport, April 16th.

\* \* \*

### THE MIDDLE CLASSES FOR SOCIALISM. TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

I have never been able to pose as a "’orny ’anded" one, and after paying considerable lip-service to Labour, working for its candidates, and generally spending and being spent in a vain endeavour to get Socialism into Parliament, I am beginning to appeal to my own class. Perhaps I have wasted the past fifteen years. Perhaps the workers would have done just as well without me. Who knows whether our "academic" appeals to common sense and culture, our business-like projects for efficiency, our protests against waste and stupidity, haven't been addressed to the wrong quarters. It might even prove that the

salvation of the nation has been delayed by our insistence on the "class war." Our glorification of the labourer may have alienated some of those who know him. Perhaps there is a Socialism which doesn't always strike the rate-payer as a new tax on the pockets of the small professional and business man. Perhaps, and this is the bone of my contention, perhaps the right way to win the middle classes for Socialism is to preach a Socialism which offers some inducement to those hardly treated classes. Spoliation doesn't appeal to the jeweller, whose stock (mostly still to be paid for) would be the objective of the first revolting halfbrick. Free Trade never has been a popular cry with my class, and the Socialist dragged at the cart-tail of an effete religion like Cobdenism is little likely to find a welcome here. Factory legislation, which helps the worker (when he can get work), but offers no defence to the producer (manufacturer, dealer, or employee) against an inundation of goods produced under sweating conditions abroad—this is neither attractive nor tolerable. Old age pensions, for which the middle class pays, but which explicitly excludes that class from participation, may be admirable—for the seventy year old paupers. My class, if charitable, sneers at it; if argumentative, ridicules it; and whether eloquent or silent, votes against it. A shopkeeper told me he would have voted for any Government which would provide him with 5s. worth of tobacco, or other luxuries, in his old age. He thought at first that this Pensions Act was going to help his class, and he was prepared to rise to the unique occasion. His awakening was bitter. He votes, as always, with the alleged "Rate-reducing Moderates." Is the Labour attitude to temperance likely to redeem Socialism in middle-class eyes? Hardly. There is not a member of my class who wants the late Licensing Bill type of legislation; nor is there a class more interested in true temperance, or more independent of the publican's influence. We have everything to gain by temperance, and everything to lose by intemperance. Even middle-class Mr. Stead (a foe to Socialism in general) is ready for the nationalisation of the public-house. The middle classes would gladly welcome a sane scheme for gradual municipalisation, or any other way of enabling society to convert a public danger into a public advantage.

But where is the Socialist party giving a lead which a reasonable middle class can follow? In fact, its only actual attempt to "do something for Socialism" up to now has been its unworkable "Right to Work" Bill—a measure which will not bear investigation, let alone the test of practice. Even on the Free Trade side it leaves serious attempts to grapple with poverty to such brilliant financial reformers as Mr. L. G. C. Money, M.P., who, at least, has mastered his statistics, and knows where the country stands, and who can afford to pay the country's taxes.

Bowed to the earth with its burdens, the middle class looks for a lead. Are Socialists interested enough to give an eye to their needs with a view to recruiting their influence for Socialism?

GEORGE BEDBOROUGH.

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#### A WORD ON THE SITUATION. TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

As a member of the new National Administrative Council of the I.L.P., and fully alive to our duties and responsibilities (to which I am not new, having sat on the N.A.C. during the first years of the party's existence), will you permit me a word on the situation? There is no need for worry. Speaking, I trust, without any immodesty, it will be found that the new N.A.C. is quite capable of carrying on the administrative work at the centre with efficiency, and without hitch. There is no magic in this work. Any dozen men chosen haphazard from the Conference could, and would, do it as well. No individual is indispensable in this world. The I.L.P. is not going to be disrupted by the action of its prominent M.P.'s. at Edinburgh any more than by the larkly spirits of its young bloods. There is too much solid sense and devotion to the I.L.P. amongst its "rank and file" for that—even if there existed any good grounds for a splitting movement. But there are none. I, for one, am still puzzling as to how the four "resigned" members of the council intend to justify their mysterious action. The Conference ate humble pie on the N.A.C. report incident, re-elected all four of them to the N.A.C. by most flattering majorities, and re-affirmed its adherence to the principle of the Labour Alliance by a practically unanimous vote. What is it that that worthy and able quartette want of us? "More discipline"? Yes; but discipline cuts both ways. We want discipline all round, and the whole question at issue is: By which authority that discipline is to be imposed—a well-meaning, but wrong-headed caucus, which lumps all criticism as mutiny; or the party, as a whole, expressing its opinions on management and policy with the maximum of freedom obtainable by the most democratic methods. Those who favour autocracy, as well as those who tend to irrespon-

sibility—the two extremes of danger which the mass of sane and disinterested members of the party have now made up their minds to discourage and resist—are prejudicing clear thinking by presenting the present position as a duello between "the Old Guard" and the "New," and by fastening the argument on Mr. Grayson's personality and "the Grayson incidents." Which is right off the target. The truth is that those who led the criticism at the Conference were men who themselves had no mean share in founding the I.L.P., and are determined to uphold its original spirit and policy, resenting any weakening or compromising of that spirit or that policy, either by party bossing, or by gratuitously sacrificial entanglements. A "progressive" party, that had no room for diversity of temperament and intellect, and whose leaders began to show symptoms of having captured the papal infallibility bacillus, would be a Gilbertian absurdity.

And now, please, we will pass round the hat. The new N.A.C. commences business, with the legacy of an empty exchequer. Organising and electioneering are alike in the way of total paralysis from immediate want of funds.

I beg to earnestly appeal to every friend of the movement to make an immediate response, however small, to a fresh Special Effort Fund, contributions to which will be smilingly received by Treasurer Benson.

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LEONARD HALL.

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## THE TEST OF DEMOCRACY.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

There has been too much importance, in the past few days, given to the "brains" of the movement. From one of the official leaders of the I.L.P., the rank and file has been told that it has its biggest intellectual asset in Mr. J. Ramsay Macdonald—and now the capitalist Press will not fail to point to the irreparable loss to the movement of the four "intellectuals."

As one of the rank and file, permit me to enter a protest against the possibility of our raising up more "Idols." As a Socialist, I have been proud to have been known as one who respected no authority. To me, and I am not alone, there has been no political or philosophical Pope. I have viewed the future of democracy with hope born of dependence upon the recuperative power of unlimited numbers.

We appear upon the eve of a new period. There may be germinating the birth of a new and great party—the one Socialist party, of which so many have dreamed. If that be so, let there be a warning. Build up no more idols. Let us remember that our hope lies in the army of the people, moving steadily and irresistibly onward; so well organised, that though leader after leader fall out, yet there shall be leader upon leader to come. Even our comrade, Victor Grayson, whose work is so much appreciated by the clearer and younger minds of the movement, if he wandered from the track or fell a victim to official egotism, even he could be done without.

The movement is everything—the leaders but instruments.

I am bound to add one word of thanks to you, Sir, as editor of THE NEW AGE, for keeping the principle of Social Democracy before the people—particularly in your recent pronouncements.

EDW. J. SHALLARD.

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THE I.L.P. STRUGGLE.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

A paragraph from a book ("The Problem of Parliament"), for which Mr. Victor Grayson and I are jointly responsible, has been inserted in the manifesto which Messrs. Hardie, Macdonald, Snowden, and Glasier have issued in explanation of their resignation from the leadership of the I.L.P. From the paragraph in question, they draw two conclusions: (1) That the trade unions are to be "rigidly excluded" from the proposed Socialist party; (2) that "this new Socialist party is not to concern itself with the advancement of Labour." Seeing that they are pleased to describe our words as an "official pronouncement" of the rebels' position, it is somewhat unnecessary to mention that their conclusions could scarcely be further from the truth. The answer to conclusion (1) can be found if they will trouble to turn over the next page, where they will read: "It is all-important to mention that a trade union which prefers the Socialist basis of the S.R.C. instead of the vaguer programme of the Labour party would be entitled to affiliate." The answer to conclusion (2) may be found on almost every page of our little book; perhaps the following quotation (page 78) may be sufficient: "It is unnecessary to point out that, of course, the Socialists would always be prepared to support any measure which the trade unionists desired; for the more extended programme of Socialism naturally includes the modest demands of Labour—the greater includes the less."

If Mr. Macdonald and his friends cannot meet their opponents' arguments, it may be necessary to misrepresent them. I bear them no ill-will if they give a somewhat liberal interpretation to the principle that all is fair in war. I merely write this letter as a gentle plea on the side of simple truth.

G. R. S. TAYLOR.

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PANIC V. PANIC.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

I challenged Mr. Norman to substantiate his absurd charges against the late Mr. Cecil Rhodes, and others. He contents himself, in reply, with hinting at what he could tell, if only he had time. He also has the astonishing temerity to quote the maxim, "De mortuis"—apparently under the impression that it relieves him of the obligation of proving his statements about a dead man to be true. If I did not know Mr. Norman to be an entirely honest and courageous critic, whose wildest inaccuracies are due to nothing more than excessive zeal, I should have some hard things to say. As it is, I will only add that I gladly admit myself to be outside the "well-informed circles" to which he refers.

CLIFFORD SHARP.

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WEBER AND DEBUSSY.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Considering the frank and outspoken nature of Mr. Herbert Hughes's disqualification of himself as a critic of Weber—first, by his genial acknowledgment of imperfect acquaintance with Weber's work; then by his confession that he

has an unconquerable prejudice in favour of French music, and refuses to recognise any other; and most recently by his candid disclaiming of knowledge of the circumstances in which Weber's work was produced—it would be ungenerous and ungrateful to press him too closely regarding these admissions, especially in one who has had as much pleasure as I have had in Mr. Hughes's sensitive and spirited estimates of modern music.

But I shall be glad if I may have this opportunity, through the hospitality of your columns, of thanking Mr. Hughes for his change of ground in his two letters with regard to Weber, and for the accompanying tacit acknowledgment of greater merit in Weber than he had previously allowed. Where he originally postulated fashionable insincerity in a shallow and mendacious soul, he now allows a sincere intention to evoke all kinds of supernatural phenomena, and an intention akin to that of M. Debussy; and where he originally sought to minimise M. Debussy's praise of Weber as a trivial desire for an effective foil, he now wisely honours M. Debussy more by granting that he has a professional admiration—the highest and most sincere tribute that one artist can pay to another—for Weber. It is needless to insist that a master of M. Debussy's subtle equipment would not care to express a professional interest in a composer whose significance could be contained in the gentle, but unfocussed formula, "Lumty, Lumpty, Lum."

It would, however, be preferable to leave M. Debussy's opinion of Weber to M. Debussy; but it is reasonable to assert that the sum of his printed utterances imply an expression of noble allegiance from the younger master to the elder sufficient to make peculiarly appropriate an association of their works in one programme.

The facts given in Mrs. Liebich's sympathetic letter are, at least, finger-posts to pages in Weber's life adequate to justify the claim that he was the initiator of the specifically Romantic music rather than a weakling imitator of fashionable Romanticism; and—to take the first brief instances which occur to me—such passages in his work as the preludes to the second and third acts of "Euryanthe," the orchestral introduction to "Wehen mir Lüfte Ruh'" ("Euryanthe," Act II), and Oberon's farewell (Act III of "Oberon," "cette œuvre testamentaire," in M. Debussy's words, "faite de la chaleur douloureuse des dernières gouttes de son sang") are surely sufficient to show him as a rare and magnificent master, from whose expressive, richly-coloured, and mysterious art issue all modern developments of poetic, and especially dramatic, music.

GORDON BOTTOMLEY.

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## A CORRECTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

If anyone has read my little sketch, "The Convert," in your issue of last week, they must have noticed an error in the penultimate paragraph of column 2. The printer makes me say: "I could see what was coming"; whereas, my MS. said, "I could not see what was coming."

W. L. GEORGE.

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