BUFFALO HARDIE & BABY WELLS.

THE

NEW AGE

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE AND ART.

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THE news that the German Emperor and the Tsar, each with a retinue of Ministers, are to meet for a three days' conference some time this month must be disquieting to the alarmists. Believing as we do that there will be no more great European wars our own withers are unwrung: and this in spite of the melodramatic attempts of Lord Roberts, caricatured by Lord Esher, to persuade us that England probably has not a Navy, and certainly has not an Army. At the risk of being called Little Englanders, we refuse to believe it: and in any event we put our money on the forces that make for peace rather than the forces that make for war.

* * *

Among the former we are afraid, however, we can no longer count greatly upon the English Labour Party. Obviously its strength in international affairs is just as strong as its international bonds: and it must be confessed that these have been strained by the impolitic conduct of the Labour delegates in their choice of a Berlin Reception Committee. Among that Committee was, to name the most glaring instance, Herr Karl Goldschmidt, the president of what corresponds in England to a Workman's Anti-Socialist League. Is there any wonder that the German Socialists—who are indeed Socialists—should object to receiving in such company: even though their visitors were, by decree of the International Bureau, Socialists sans phrase? We can only regret that our political compatriots have been so unfortunate in their blunders.

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The Imperial Press (Limited) Conference, at which Lord Rosebery made on Saturday an eloquent speech, amounting as usual to nothing, has drawn attention to another kind of bond of Empire: the prosaic bond that really binds. Undoubtedly the cables are or might be the great civilising channels of the world; and were they not, as they unfortunately are, confined in use practically to trading purposes, their influence for good might be enormous. At no time during the Conference, however, was the obvious suggestion seriously made that the cables should belong to the Empire whose well-being depends upon them. Such an idea appears to have entered no head or to have been scouted on appearance. Yet plainly an Imperial cable service is as necessary as an Imperial Navy.

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Or take another bond, the bond of ships. We have seen what the railways have done for England: every line of privately owned railway in England is the tentacle of a blood-sucker whose legalised voracity has at length succeeded in converting a rural into an urban population. A similar process is going on in the Empire at large; the great shipping lines while ostensibly they exist to facilitate international trade, in reality exist to exploit it. By means of "conferences," better named "rings," competition is rendered generally inoperative among the big lines: and by means of "deferred rebates" the shipping merchants are bound by cash nexus to their first choice. The total effect of both these systems is to procure the minimum service to the Empire at the maximum expense: a formula which holds good of every capitalist undertaking in the world.

* * *

The Report of the Royal Commission on Shipping Rings, which has been sitting for two years, has just been published. Nothing, perhaps, in recent Commission work is so feeble as the Report of the Majority, unless it be the Report of the Minority. Both Reports have practically nothing to recommend, the difference being that the Minority Reporters have the courage to admit their intellectual destitution. To what is such a wretched result due? We can only suppose either that the terms of reference were badly drafted or that they were fearfully interpreted. A bolder Commission would have worried somehow to the root of the problem; which in this case, as in the case of cables, is nationalisation. Until the Empire owns its means of inter-communication the Empire will not own its own soul.

* * *

A useful Review of Fifty Years of Social "Progress" has been prepared under the direction of Mr. Burns and issued by the Local Government Board as a Blue-book, under the title: "Public Health and Social Conditions."

Not the most optimistic of the Midas-minded citizens of to-day will be able to find in it much material for congratulation. It is true that slight improvements have taken place in various respects during the last half century: but they are both so small in themselves and so small in comparison with the progress of mechanical invention that we are entitled to repeat the dread formula: wages always tend to subsistence level. For example, the Report informs us that since 1860 wages have risen absolutely some 40 per cent., while prices generally have decreased by 24 per cent. But these figures, miserable enough in themselves considering the condition of the wage-earners 40 years ago, need to be compared with the increase in wealth over the same period due to mechanical invention and social organisation. Thus compared, we find that while wages have risen some fifty or sixty per cent., profits, interest and rent have risen some three or four hundred per cent.: with the final result that, as we have always maintained, the rich are growing richer about five times faster than the poor are growing less poor. The plain, staring fact is that the poor have now to be fed at the public expense when young, and maintained at the public expense when old; and that after fifty years of strenuous progress!

* * *

Some other facts are stated by a frank Canadian writing to the "Times" of Saturday last his impressions of England. "A Canadian visiting your industrial centres," he says, "does not need any statistics at all, for he sees only too much evidence of physical decline in the majority of the men whom he sees on the streets." Nevertheless, he gives some figures which we reproduce:—

Half a century ago the minimum standard of height for your infantry was 5ft. 6in. During the ensuing quarter of a century that standard was reduced to 5ft. 3in. During the Boer war it was further reduced to 5ft. 2in.; and before the end of that war it was reduced to 5ft. More than 50 per cent. of the soldiers in South Africa were below the minimum standard required of the recruits for the Crimean war half a century previously. About 50 per cent. of the recruits in the Boer war failed to reach the former minimum standard of chest girth, which had been 34in.; and about one-third of the troops in the Boer war fell below the former minimum standard of weight, which had been 136lb. During the Boer war the average British soldier was 2in. shorter, 1in. less in chest girth, and 15lb. lighter than the average British soldier in the Crimean war.

At present 2,500 persons (1 in 18,000 of the total population) own a little more than half of all the land of the United Kingdom. "These wealthy few who own so much of the land of England are presumably the most loyal subjects of the Empire, and yet their ownership of the land is the cause of the decline of physical manhood in the slums."

* * *

And this decline, if Leeds can secure it, shall continue. Clause 44 of the Government's Housing and Town Planning Bill forbids the erection in future of what are known as back to back houses: a type of human kennel for which Leeds is infamous. At the annual conference of the Building Societies' Association, held last week, various Leeds delegates rose to protest against the clause. One egregious person remarked that back to back houses maintained family life in Yorkshire; another affirmed that such houses in Leeds had separate bath rooms, and that tenants could bake their own bread. We care nothing for family life maintained under indecent conditions; the sooner one or other of them is abolished the better. The protest against the clause was carried, however, with only three dissentients; another proof that the jerry-builders of England are united in their campaign on behalf of ugliness and disease.

We cannot work up any enthusiasm over the "saving" by the nation of the Duke of Norfolk's Holbein. No picture in the world was ever worth £71,000; and only collector maniacs would ever think so. An anonymous donor has contributed 40 out of the 71 thousand pounds required to supplement the Duke of Norfolk's Sheffield and Strand rent-rolls. If the sale were any proof of genuine interest in art we could find some satisfaction in the sordid transaction; but art does not flourish on fancy prices. The fact is that England is æsthetically at a low ebb; her plutocrats, old and new, are impervious to beauty as to ideas; and the drain of art works from the country merely follows in the wake of our departing intelligence. Nothing short of a bonfire of the National Gallery will now save Art.

* * *

As an example of the folly of conjoining high prices with genuine appreciation we print the following circular, issued in despair by a young English painter whose work was recently exhibited at the Goupil and praised without exaggeration in THE NEW AGE by Mr. G. R. S. Taylor.

132, Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, S.W.

With the purpose of facilitating my return to Morocco and continuing my work I propose to hold a lottery or sweepstake of my unsold pictures, and being anxious to secure their immediate disposal, I am willing to sacrifice them at far lower prices than I should otherwise accept. There are 18 pictures, and provided that I can obtain 18 people, I propose to fix the stakes at 8 guineas a ticket. In this way every holder would be certain of securing a picture, and would have the chance of gaining the most important.

Of course, the pictures vary in value, but as will be seen from the catalogue, 8 guineas is far lower than the nominal prices of even the smaller pictures thus offered. My sole object, as before stated, is to realise a round sum to enable me to return to my work in Morocco.

I am desirous of holding the lottery at a date not later than June 16th, provided, of course, that I obtain the necessary number of subscribers.

The sweepstake will be conducted in the following manner: Eighteen numbers will be placed in a box and the person drawing No. 1 will be entitled to the first choice from the whole 18 pictures; No. 2, the second; and so on, in numerical order. HENRY BISHOP.

* * *

Mr. Leonard Hall, a member of the National Administrative Council of the I.L.P., criticised in the "Labour Leader" of May 28 Mr. Keir Hardie's extraordinary pamphlet: "My Confession of Faith in the Labour Alliance." We publish an article this week on the same subject; but meanwhile we draw attention to Mr. Hall's spirited protest against Mr. Hardie's hysterical appeals for "less toleration" in the I.L.P. Good heavens, the toleration exhibited by the officials of the I.L.P. could scarcely be less if they were Indian bureaucrats or Tsarist Black Hundreds. THE NEW AGE has already suffered so much from the boycott declared on it that we are in despair of ever reaching the intelligence of the rank and file. Nothing known to tyrants has been neglected to damage our reputation or our circulation. We warn the I.L.P. that in endeavouring to injure THE NEW AGE they are cutting their own throats. The movement can ill afford to ostracise its brains at this moment.

* * *

We are glad that Mr. Hyndman has at last begun his reminiscences. To "Justice" of May 29 he contributes an admirable article on Meredith, whom, it appears, Mr. Hyndman has known intimately for many years. We should be happy to reproduce the article here, but two extracts must suffice:

I remember sitting with him and two or three more in the early days (about 1860) on the beach at Seaford, then a very little place. We were throwing stones into the sea and lazily enjoying ourselves, whilst discussing nearly everything that could be discussed. Meredith was perfectly delightful. At last one of the four, Burnand I think, blurted out: "Damn you, George, why won't you write as you talk?" We all felt that then. I feel it now that my old friend has gone.

I have always believed that a long review of "Beauchamp's Career," by H. D Traill, in the "Pall Mall Gazette," then edited by Frederick Greenwood, was the first thing that brought him a wider audience. Meredith, at any rate, thought so himself, and asked me who wrote it. As a result, I invited Traill and Meredith to dine with me at the New University Club. We had a most pleasant evening, and Meredith begged Traill to come down to Box Hill. Traill went, and Meredith read to him after dinner, among other things, the Introduction to the "Egoist." Traill, so he told me, listened with all his ears. A look of puzzlement spread over his face, which deepened in intensity as the reading went on. When Meredith had finished, these signs of non-comprehension were still manifest. "You don't understand that," said the author. "No, I'll be d——d if I do," answered Traill. Meredith burst out into a hearty fit of laughing, and said, "Well, I suppose it *is* rather hard." Afterwards, he smoothed the creases out a little, but very little.

* * *

Chiefly for the sake of our foreign readers, of whom there are many, we reproduce Mr. Shaw's letter on the Dramatic Censorship which appeared in the "Times" of May 29.

Mr. Harcourt's question in the House of Commons, and the Premier's very gratifying answer thereto, will, I hope, help to clear up a much misunderstood constitutional position. I have just had occasion to make a public statement concerning the prohibition of one of my own plays. It was necessary for me to be scrupulously correct in defining the authority with which I was in conflict. As that authority happened to be the King, several journalists proceeded to lecture me severely, evidently believing that I had committed a gross solecism by mentioning the King instead of mentioning the Minister representing the Government, and responsible to the House of Commons. They also expressed a sense of wounded chivalry at the spectacle of a defenceless monarch attacked by an all-powerful and merciless playwright. A certain importance was given to all this nonsense by the fact that the "Times," though its traditions place it beyond all suspicion of being a respecter of persons in public questions, showed some doubt as to the constitutional position by omitting all references to it from my statement.

I therefore wish to point out that when we speak of Mr. Redford as the Censor, and the Lord Chamberlain's function as a Censorship, we are taking a liberty with these gentlemen which can only be excused by its convenience for purposes of discussion. To hold them responsible for the control of the theatres is really as great a solecism as it would be to hold the King responsible for the Budget. They act simply as officers of the King's Household. It happens that in the days of Shakespeare and his predecessors, players could escape being classed as rogues and vagabonds only by procuring permission to attach themselves to the household of some nobleman or of the reigning monarch. Thus a tradition grew up that this was the natural English way to keep actors and theatres and authors in order; and the only effect of legislation has been to attach all the theatres and all the actors and all the authors to the King's Household, to be controlled by him absolutely, like the rest of his houses and servants. The officials appointed to carry out this control are not responsible to Parliament. No really direct question as to their proceedings can be asked in Parliament: Mr. Harcourt was muzzled until he hit on the expedient of asking a question about foreign censorships. A vote to reduce their salaries could only take the form of a proposal to cut down the King's retinue. An attempt on the part of any playwright to treat a dispute over the licensing of a play as a matter between himself and the Lord Chamberlain would be as incorrect as an attempt to treat a dinner invitation as a matter between the guest and the butler.

The position is, of course, obsolete and unworkable; but it is not unreal, as I know to my heavy cost. If a cotton manufacturer or an ironmaster had been injured in his business, both as to money and reputation, as I have been by it, legislation would have been promised within twenty-four hours to remedy the matter. They tell me that the King cannot defend himself. I do not know that he has any cause to; what I do know is that I cannot defend myself. When a soap manufacturer is accused of giving short measure he is able to bring his accuser before a jury and recover damages that are not only adequate, but exemplary. When a precisely analogous injury is done to me, I have no remedy except to state my grievance; and because this grievance happens to lie technically against the King I am told that it would be in better taste for me to suffer in silence. I can only reply that suffering in silence does not agree with my temperament.

I now wish to call attention to a very remarkable example of the way in which every attempt made by the Lord Chamberlain to exercise the functions of Censor recoils on the King's Household in a cloud of discredit and suspicion. At the moment the play which is attracting most attention in London as an essay in serious drama is "The Earth," by Mr. Bernard Fagan, at Miss Lena Ashwell's Kingsway Theatre. Last night I was one of an eager crowd of people who witnessed this play. I found that its subject is the subject of Mr. Granville Barker's prohibited play, "Waste." It is the story of a Cabinet Minister who, on the eve of crowning his Parliamentary career by the introduction of a great Bill, is discovered to have been engaged in an intrigue with a married woman. So far the resemblance to Mr. Granville Barker's forbidden theme is complete; it even goes so far in detail that the injured husband is an Irish country gentleman. As far as the morality or immorality of the situation goes, the two plays are identical. But there are differences. In Mr. Barker's play the guilty lady is presented as a person of light and unworthy character, and the retribution that overtakes the Cabinet Minister is his utter political ruin, followed by suicide. In Mr. Fagan's play the lady is successfully thrown on the sympathy and admiration of the audience as a noble-hearted and devoted woman; the adulterous Minister recovers his position and brings in his Bill triumphantly without a stain on his character; and the man who has effected the exposure is forced to deny his own words (which are perfectly true), and is held up to contempt and execration as a scotched viper who has attempted to poison with his venom an exquisite and poetic human relationship. This highly unconventional version has been licensed without a word of demur, whilst Mr. Granville Barker's sternly conventional one has been suppressed; and as the suppression is widely advertised and the play remains buried, the public is left to infer that Mr. Granville Barker has committed the disgraceful act of writing an improper play.

But this is not all. If the case were merely one of a severely ethical play being suppressed whilst a romantic one was licensed, it would not be worth mentioning, as these occurrences are so common as to have become almost a matter of course. But in this case the anomaly is so glaring that it is impossible not to seek for some explanation; and, unfortunately, that explanation is only too easily found. Mr. Bernard Fagan's play is something more than a love story with a very unconventional moral. It is a furious attack on the halfpenny daily newspaper, made strongly personal by presenting, as the villain of the piece, the owner of several such newspapers. Now, if a play with a moral so conventional that the Archbishop of Canterbury might father it without discredit is prohibited, and precisely the same story with the moral turned in the opposite direction, and adultery left triumphant at the fall of the curtain, is licensed by the same official, is it possible to avoid the suspicion that these permissions and prohibitions, avowedly based on the conventions of religion and morality, are really based on private prejudices and political partialities which should have no place whatever in the Censorship of the stage? Here, at all events, is a straight case. Whoever prohibited "Waste" and licensed "The Earth" was evidently some one who may have loved morality much, but who certainly hated the halfpenny Press more. And we are all forced by the existing ridiculous state of affairs to assume technically that this prejudiced person is no other than the King. If that is not enough to convince all the authorities concerned, Royal, Ministerial, journalistic, and common, that the situation is altogether intolerable, nothing is.—Yours truly, G. BERNARD SHAW.

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Of the thousand and more voting papers received by us on the question whether THE NEW AGE should be raised in price to twopence, 97 per cent. were in favour of the increase. Despite this gratifying result, we have decided on mature consideration that it will be more in accord with the spirit and purpose of THE NEW AGE to maintain its present price. A penny review of the present character has never succeeded in England (more shame to England), and may never succeed; but the experiment is well worth continuing to make so long as it is possible. Without an organisation at its back, and in the teeth of the stupidest hostility, it is hard for THE NEW AGE to command success; but we can do more, we can deserve it. With an excellent programme of work before us, such as would justify any Socialist millionaire in instantly endowing THE NEW AGE handsomely, we appeal to our readers to do their best to procure new subscribers. A circulation of fifty thousand would enable us to produce the best penny review the world has ever seen; and the population of England is forty millions—mostly non-readers.

The Great Cable Scandal.

II.

THERE are a number of cable companies, but they are governed by about six men. The principal magnate in this Trust is Sir John Denison Pender, K.C.M.G., who is Managing Director of the Eastern Telegraph Co., the Eastern and South African Telegraph Co., and the West African Telegraph Co. He is Deputy Chairman of the Western Telegraph Co., and Chairman of the West Coast of America Telegraph Co. He is a Trustee of the Submarine Cables Trust. He is a Director of the following companies: The Spanish Telegraph Co., Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Co., the Europe and Azores Telegraph Co., Ltd., Globe Telegraph and Trust Co., Ltd., Pacific and European Telegraph Co., Ltd., River Plate Telegraph Co., Ltd., and the Direct United States Cable Co. Yet we are told there are no such things as monopolies in England! Who murmured "free competition"? Sir John Denison Pender has an affectionate regard for family ties, because we observe that he has the support of Mr. John C. Denison Pender, who is a Director of the Eastern Telegraph Co. and the South African Telegraph Co.; while Sir James Pender, Bart., is fortunate enough to hold directorships in the following corporations: Direct United States Cable Co., Ltd., Globe Telegraph and Trust Co., and the Telegraph Construction and Maintenance Co. Mr. A. G. Brodrick (now Viscount Midleton) is a Director of these companies: Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Co., Eastern and South African Telegraph Co., Pacific and European Telegraph Co., River Plate Telegraph Co., West Africa Telegraph Co., Western Telegraph Co., and Managing Director of the African Direct Telegraph Co. Sir A. J. L. Cappel, K.C.I.E., is a Director of the Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Co.; he is Chairman of the Pacific and European Telegraph Co.; he is Director of the River Plate Telegraph Co., Ltd., the Eastern and South Africa Telegraph Co., West Coast of America Telegraph Co., and the Western Telegraph Co. The Marquis of Tweeddale, K.T., with the modesty of a marquis, is contented with being a Director of the Eastern Extension, etc., Telegraph Co. and the West African Telegraph Co. Lord Balfour of Burleigh, who was the Chairman of the Committee which reported that "all proposals for a very large reduction in existing rates were quite impracticable," is a Director of the River Plate Telegraph Co., and of the Western Telegraph Co. Sir John Wolfe Barry is Chairman of the Eastern Extension., etc., Telegraph Co., of the River Plate Telegraph Co., and of the Western Telegraph Co. Mr. B. J. Wolfe Barry is a Director of the Pacific and European Telegraph Co. Lord R. H. Browne is a Director of the River Plate Telegraph Co. and of the Western Telegraph Co. Mr. F. A. Johnston is a Director of the Eastern and South African Telegraph Co., of the Eastern Telegraph Co., Ltd., the Europe and Azores Telegraph Co., Ltd., the River Plate Telegraph Co., the West Coast of America Telegraph Co., and the Western Telegraph Co.

The above-named companies include every important English cable company, and their government is in the hands of a few men who constitute a happy family of unscrupulous monopolists. Well may Mr. Henniker Heaton say: "There is a clear case for State purchase." It is a positive danger to humanity that such power should be vested in six or eight irresponsible men. These men can dictate what information should be disseminated through the Empire; they have an absolute right of rejecting or holding up any message. The Conservative Mr. Henniker Heaton has adopted one excellent Socialistic principle when he argues: "As I have often contended, where exclusive possession of a right by an individual means a deprivation of essential or valuable privileges to the entire community, the State should assume the ownership in trust for the citizens. A huge profit in cablegrams is as noxious and indefensible as one on conversations with friends and customers." If a labourer in England wishes to learn whether his son in South Africa had perished in some terrible mining disaster, he and his family could only purchase the sad information by sacrificing his wages for a fortnight or three weeks. As an argument for nationalisation of the cables this statement is unanswerable, and we leave the mere argument there.

This is a reform which only requires a Postmaster-General of strength and initiative to carry through to a triumphant conclusion. Will Mr. Sydney Buxton seize this opportunity of marking his tenure of office by conferring on the English speaking world the inestimable boon of penny a word cables? Mr. Sydney Buxton has the chance of redeeming his office from the taunt that the Postmaster-General is a mere figurehead to routine. The Postmaster-General, unlike other Ministers who have tried to nationalise monopolies, holds all the trumps. The Cable Companies are at his mercy; he could starve them into abject surrender, or compete them out of existence by constructing new cables. It would be right to give the Cable Companies a chance of being bought out on the average price of three years' quotations of their shares. This would be too generous compensation; but a great Empire cannot afford to be ungenerous. If these Cable Companies prefer to fight for so many years' purchase, then the Government could easily defeat them, because, as Mr. Henniker Heaton urges, "Yet the Postmaster-General has absolute control over the cables in his hands, because he holds (and will always hold) the landing rights and inland transmission for Great Britain, without which not a single cable message could be sent by the monopolist companies."

On the other hand, the difficulties of getting the Postmaster-General to stir on this vital question are, judging from past experience, very formidable. We suspect that past inaction has been due to backstairs influence exercised by the directors and shareholders in these monopolist companies. What has happened in the case of the Imperial "Press" Conference is an instance of what has happened before, and what may happen again, until this monstrous octopus, whose tentacles strangle the sources of information, has its life crushed out by the insistence of the people of England on their right to talk freely and cheaply with their cousins in the Antipodes.

Mr. Henniker Heaton has struck a note of sadness when he writes: "For forty years I have seen a quarter of a million of our sons and daughters leave their native land every year, never to return; but no effort has been made to cheapen and so encourage communication between them and the 'old folks at home.' For a quarter of a century I have watched the growth of an immense cable monopoly with enormously high charges to our Colonies and dependencies, yet not one word has been spoken by a British Postmaster-General in favour of reducing the high cable rates. I have sat at great State Cable Conferences side by side with representatives of the Government of Great Britain, and not one attempt was made by them to lessen the cost of cabling."

Mr. Sydney Buxton has his chance. This is not a party question, but the advantage of the whole people balanced against the huge profits of discredited monopolists. Let him take his courage into his hands and add the destruction of this unsocial monopoly to the good record of the present Cabinet. In so doing, whatever the dummy uproar of widows and orphans who, we shall be told, hold all the Cable Companies' shares, he will be conferring an incalculable benefit on 400,000,000 citizens of the King-Emperor and on humanity at large. Will he rise to this grand occasion?

"N."

Mr. Buffalo Hardie, M.P.

"The same instinct which leads a herd of buffaloes or a pack of wolves to follow the older and stronger members of the herd or pack operates in like fashion in a great democratic movement. It is the truest and purest form of democracy."

Mr. KEIR HARDIE'S "CONFESSION OF FAITH."

Mr. Keir Hardie has issued a rejoinder to his critics, amongst whom we modestly count ourselves. It is grandiloquently entitled

"MY CONFESSION OF FAITH
IN THE LABOUR ALLIANCE."

There is a warning in holy writ against writing books; we wonder with what shivering amazement the prophet of old would regard this tract. Mr. Hardie tells us that one of his reasons for resigning from the governing body of the I.L.P. was that:—

> I might be free to write a polemic like this pamphlet.

The spirit in which it is written is best illustrated in his own words:—

> I wanted to aid, as one of the rank and file, in combatting the spirit of petty meanness, of unworthy suspicion, of imputing unworthy motives, of putting a sinister interpretation upon everything of which you don't approve, or don't understand, which has been spreading like a dry rot in certain districts.

One or two other choice extracts enlighten us as to Mr. Hardie's unhappy frame of mind:—

> There are yet others, and not a few, not confined to any class, who are not selected as candidates because they are too well known. I could name, say, a baker's dozen of men who act as though their principal reason for being in the I.L.P. is that they may get returned to Parliament.

Clearly a most discreditable ambition—not to be ascribed to Mr. Hardie or his fidus Achates, Mr. Frank Smith. But these unworthy rebels apparently have some following. This is how Mr. Hardie regards them:—

> Their supporters in the I.L.P. are, to a larger extent, men just one degree removed from the artisan, who scorn membership in a trade union, and resent being mixed up with a Labour Party. They have yet to learn that Socialism means fellowship, and that the I.L.P. has no room for a set of superior persons.

This is very hard on the Fabian Society—ungenerous, too, coming so soon after that "set of superior persons" had financed Mr. Frank Smith's escapade at Taunton. Then there are other evil-disposed persons who are doing their best to foment strife in the I.L.P., and these can, in almost every case, be traced either to men who have taken little, if any, share in the drudgery of the movement, and who consequently know nothing about it, or to disappointed office seekers.

Mr. Hardie has his critics on the horns of a nasty dilemma: if they have taken part in the work of the party, then they are "disappointed office-seekers"; if they have had other things to do, then they "know nothing about it." There is nothing like Labour politics for sharpening one's wits! Of course, we do not escape:—

> The handful of irresponsibles who control the political policy of THE NEW AGE, most of them disciples of Nietzsche, —the neurotic apostle of modern Anarchism—who assail the Labour Party, they are thereby violating the canons of classical Socialist doctrine. . . .

It is a mere trifle that not a single member of our staff is a disciple of Nietzsche; it is even a less trifle that Nietzsche is not an apostle of modern Anarchism; it is a pretty little effort of imagination to assert that we "assail the Labour Party." We have always suspected Mr. Hardie of being a man of imagination. With him, truth

> "Starts and trembles under his feet,
> And blossoms in purple and red."

We have thought it necessary to quote these words of Mr. Hardie, not because they are silly or amusing, but because they reveal the real man. When we indited our open letter to him, many of the brethren were startled and pained. "Can these things be?" they asked in pained surprise. This tract proves beyond cavil that we then correctly diagnosed Mr. Hardie's true character. To drive the point home, we will cite another instance of really unscrupulous misrepresentation. Referring to Mr. Grayson's dramatic action in the House of Commons, Mr. Hardie says:—

> Nobody seeks to justify Mr. Grayson having acted without any consultation whatever with any of his colleagues.

Colleagues! Will our readers actually believe that the Labour Party had by formal resolution previously declined to accept Mr. Grayson as a colleague? Yet such is the fact. Nobody knows this better than Mr. Hardie; nevertheless, he does not scruple to pen this *suggestio falsi*. Of Mr. Keir Hardie's spiritual death, there can now be no doubt; like Max Nordau he is dead and doesn't know it.

Now THE NEW AGE has consistently advocated the organisation of conscious Socialism. We have necessarily been forced into sharp criticism of certain aspects of the Labour Alliance. We have been candid, but we have never hit below the belt. It would be a pleasure to us to meet some consistent and clear argument for the Alliance in its present form. But how are we to deal with such a preposterous effusion as this from Mr. Keir Hardie? In a sense his position is impregnable. He believes that every Socialist who does not agree with his policy is politically damned.

> That policy is also mine, and I want the party to grasp it more fully, realise it more in practice, be *less tolerant* of those who are opposed to it. . . .

As we do not agree with that policy, it is clear that we have no right to utter another word. Mr. Hardie's proclamation convicts us of *lèse majesté*. "I am Sir Oracle; when I speak, let no dog bark!" Does it not occur to thousands of the rank and file of the I.L.P. that this dogmatic and malicious leadership must inevitably land the party on the rocks? Mr. Hardie himself knows it:

> The secret of our success has been our ability to unite men of diverse gifts, giving each an outlet for his special talents.

That was true of the I.L.P. ten years ago. To-day it is the simple fact that Socialists of diverse gifts and special talents are giving the party a wide berth. Again we quote:

> A broad tolerant catholicity has always been a leading characteristic of the I.L.P. . . . It has always recognised that only by encouraging freedom of thought and activity could growth and expansion be expected.

It were surely significant that it is only *since* Mr. Hardie and his *entourage* adopted the frankly intolerant attitude towards those Socialists who believe in a Socialist Party that the I.L.P. has ceased to grow and expand. The tragedy of the situation is that we cannot effectually appeal to dead souls.

We will, however, endeavour once more to state the case as it appears to us. Mr. Hardie thinks that we crave for excitement and fail to realise the need for detailed constructive work. As usual, he is wide of the mark. We heartily supported Mr. Grayson when he flouted the House of Commons. We think his intervention was timely and salutary. We are certain it heartened the rank and file. But to live on that kind of emotional excitement would be to live on sponge-cake and champagne. It is good and delightful in its right degree. We want, however, intelligent legislation. Take the Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission. It is clearly an historic document of first importance. It has captivated both Mr. Winston

Churchill and Mr. Lloyd George. THE NEW AGE has positively devoted at least twenty times more space and fifty times more consideration to it than has the "Labour Leader." Judging by his public utterances, it would seem doubtful whether Mr. Hardie has ever read or understood it. He is certainly the last man in the Socialist movement to complain that his critics disregard constructive details. He has been in Parliament for twelve years; and his legislative output is *nil*. We do not complain of this, for Mr. Hardie has never been in power. But he has no kind of right to assume because we want an aggressive Socialist Party in Parliament that therefore we only crave for unhealthy excitement. It is an insult to the intelligence of his readers. Our contention is that aggressive politics is practical politics; that the more unrelenting our pressure on the Government, the more fruitful the legislation. We further contend that it is impossible to maintain that pressure unless the party is actuated by a body of doctrine that clearly distinguishes it from Liberalism or Toryism. Nobody who has closely watched the Labour Party in Parliament can truthfully affirm that it is moved by any kind of political or social doctrine: it lives from hand to mouth; it is opportunist to the core. Again, we do not complain, for the Labour Party is not and has never pretended to be a Socialist Party. All we ask is that there shall be a Socialist Party alive to its own body of doctrine and mindful of its great traditions.

Mr. Hardie reiterates the absurd contention that

> the Labour Party is the only expression of orthodox Marxian Socialism in Great Britain.

If it were so, why is Mr. Hardie in that galley? He has been a bitter opponent of Marxian Socialism ever since we can remember him. We do not think he could successfully undergo an examination in "Das Kapital." That is, however, an unessential detail. It is the vogue in this country to criticise Marx without reading him. But it cannot be too clearly emphasised that Marx's attitude towards the working-class movement was conditioned by his belief in the necessity of a conscious class-struggle. This is precisely what Mr. Hardie and his colleagues emphatically repudiate. But even if Marx were alive to-day and were to be found supporting the Labour Party, our position would be unaffected. Much water has run under the bridge since the days of the International. The real condemnation of this ridiculous claim is found in the simple fact that the Labour Party, so far from helping Socialist candidatures actually discourages them—indeed, renders them almost impossible. We again quote from this "Confession":—

> Why, then, it may be asked, is it that no middle class man has yet been returned to Parliament? My reply is that that is a matter for the constituencies which select and return the candidates.

This is disingenuous. Mr. Hardie knows perfectly well that in at least twenty constituencies definite Socialist candidatures would have been preferred were it not for financial considerations. "We wanted So-and-So, but had to take So-and-So, because his Union could find the money," has been the cry throughout Yorkshire and Lancashire. We go further: we know at least half-a-dozen Labour candidates who would infinitely prefer to hoist the red flag, but they have had to toe the Labour line exclusively for monetary reasons. In the Labour movement, "money talks"—and Mr. Hardie knows it. Incidentally, this disposes of his ignoble jibe that the new Socialist movement is being advocated by men who want to be adopted as Parliamentary candidates. With an elastic conscience nothing is easier than to kow-tow to the present Labour leaders and obtain a nomination. Openly to advocate the formation of a Socialist Party is a sure way to a prolonged sojourn in the wilderness. And this is why Mr. Hardie does not favour payment of members:—

> I, personally, would regret to see this important and desirable measure forced to the front by the Labour Party. He seeks, not the discipline of principle, but the discipline of money. He is a political capitalist.

Nothing is more distressing in this "polemic" than its manifest indications of intellectual bankruptcy. There is not to be found in it a glimmer of inspiration or a spark of clear thinking. From beginning to end, it is an inconsequent flow of vindictiveness, misstatement and false suggestion. The old Hardie was a man of insight, generosity and something of a prophet. His virtue has gone out from him, and so he has descended to these depths. We sincerely hope that for the credit of the British movement as a whole, our comrades in other countries will not see this most unhappy tract. "If this is written by a British Socialist leader, what must be the condition of the movement in Great Britain?" they will ask. And who shall answer save sadly?

Unfortunately, Mr. Hardie gives us the key to his creed. Buffaloes and wolves follow the older and stronger members; and this is—so he tells us—the essence of Democracy. Analogies between Man and the brute creation are never perfect, and always dangerous. In this instance, the statement is only partially true of wolves, and not at all true of buffaloes. But let Mr. Hardie pursue the subject. He will discover that wolves habitually kill their worn-out members. So, too, do buffaloes, though more rarely. Does Mr. Hardie remember goring to death an old buffalo named Benjamin Pickard? Does Mr. Hardie remember an old member of the herd named Broadhurst? Does he remember his relentless feud with him? Was that also "the truest and purest form of Democracy"? *Absit omen*! We have no wish to see Mr. Hardie consigned to the Arcana of the Pickards and Broadhursts. But he is asking for it. However, is it true democracy "to follow the older and stronger members"? We have repeatedly heard this argument advanced for an aristocracy or a plutocracy: in its present guise it is a novelty. Wherever in practice the principle is adopted it leads to ancestor worship. Now we see the reason for so many heart-breaking appeals for those "who have grown grey in the movement," or for "the old warrior."

We do not yield to Mr. Hardie in our acceptance of loyalty to the democratic principle; but our conception of Democracy is widely different. We believe that Democracy can discover and faithfully follow the truth, whatever may be the opinions or interests of "the older and stronger members of the herd or pack." We believe that Democracy is ever ready to fight and suffer for great ideas, and that it will never for long submit to the dictates of the political machine. The history of Democracy is the putting down of the mighty from their seats, and the exalting of them of low degree. Democracy forgives mistakes; its punishment of the arrogant is swift and condign.

Mr. Wells's Polity of Babies.

A Retrospect.

By C. H. Norman.

Mr. H. G. WELLS has chosen "The Christian Commonwealth" as the organ for his latest outburst on the iniquities of his fellow-Socialists. It is a fitting vehicle for a heaven-sent critic to ride in; it is like hitching a waggon to a star.

It is astonishing to think that Mr. Wells should have written "Mankind in the Making" so recently as 1902-1903. In a sense, Mr. Wells has a strong claim to be regarded as the Eighth Wonder of the ancient world, for in "Mankind in the Making" he has reverted to Sparta for his scheme of life.

My reflections on this book are not based upon any belief in "the sentimentalised affinities of young people in the spring," nor upon any regret at seeing poor Cupid dethroned from his regal position in the scheme of creation in favour of a stallion and stud eugenics. It is founded upon the carefully formed judgment of the writer that Mr. Wells, in this book and in his later works, is seeking to entice us on a vain chase after the beckoning phantom of Physical Regeneration. We are invited by Mr. Wells to transform the world into a huge baby manufactory; in fact, Mr. Wells demands, in a squeaky but clamant voice, that the production and perfection of babies should be the Alpha and Omega of the future Anglo-Saxon polity. What has happened to the romances of Mr. Wells? Listen to these words:

> Any collective human enterprise, institution, movement, party, or state, is to be judged as a whole and completely, as it conduces more or less to wholesome and hopeful births, and according to the qualitative and quantitative advance due to its influence made by each generation of citizens born under its influence, towards a higher and ampler standard of life.

Again he exclaims, "Life is a texture of births!" which sums up the point of view guiding the argument of the book. If this theory of a procreative State had been advanced by the dullest rioter in sexuality, its delightful insolence would have justified a full hearing. But when one of the most original and ingenious English thinkers fathers upon an astonished though somewhat wearied world a new suckling polity of babies —a morning of babies, an afternoon of babies, an evening of babies, a howling wilderness of babies!—it is time to collect one's scattered wits and examine the proposal with some care.

From the seed contained in this sentence Mr. Wells's wonderful theory of the over-all supremacy of procreation has taken its growth:

> Take away this fact of birth, and what is there remaining? A world without flowers, without the singing of birds, without the freshness of youth, with a spring that brings no seedlings, and a year that bears no harvest, and without defeats, a vast stagnation, a universe of inconsequent matter —Death. Not only does the substance of life vanish if we eliminate births, etc., etc.

Dear me! "A world without the freshness of youth" would be sad indeed; but a world without the peevish arrogance of middle age and the self-importance of converted Big men, judging from Mr. Wells's tasteful displays in the field of Socialist politics, would be quite a tolerable place.

Unhappily, a few doubts occur to a humble and inquiring mind. True, it may be that on taking away "the fact of birth" there only remains "a universe of inconsequent matter—Death"; yet, if there be no Life, there can be no Death. So the gloomy picture fades. What appears at first sight to be an unanswerable proposition reveals itself, when followed by criticism to its logical conclusion, as one of the oldest fallacies. How worn and threadbare is the gown of procreation will be seen by the application of the gentlest strain to its texture. Are we to assume that the country lawns, highways, and bye-ways are peopled by that erratic wanderer of the night, a "daddy longlegs," as this strange insect, a seeker after light, by whimsical fancy of the countryside is titled, in order that it may procreate? It would be as reasonable to ask the shades of Diogenes and Romulus to bless Pomponius Laetus as to expect the enlightenment of this age to greet with rapture, or with anything but revulsion and contempt, the ideal of a social polity saturated with and enwrapped in the multiplication table—and possibly a promiscuous multiplication table! Behold! the red rose of love, the lily of the valley, emblem of happiness, "distilled from liquid-music of the grove by nightingales," the glorious rhododendron, the gay buttercup, and the elegant bluebell of constancy—do they exist to procreate or to enchant the eye and inspire the mind? Let him who dares analyse the garden of Nature on the principles of procreation!

Mr. Wells and Ignorance have, in this passage, marched arm-in-arm to herald the pronouncement that Life is more wonderful than Death. The audacity of the modern pseudo-scientific writer is really marvellous. In all humility, we inquire from Mr. Wells why he, knowing nothing of the spiritual mystery of Death, should invite us to abase ourselves at the altar of a vulgar procreative Life? The magnificence and the intangibility of Death, though they may not attract Mr. Wells like the wonders of Life, are more splendid than the solidarity and objectivity of Life-progression.

Death is the apparent victor in the combat of the world. The spear of Hela pricks the tree of Ygdrasill, claiming a victim with each stab; but, then, fresh shoots spring forth in fair array to replace the dead twigs; so the battle is renewed. As the late Prince Hohenlohe remarked sadly in one of his letters:

> Human life is a strange thing. A man lives 51 years happily and contentedly, and then comes the wreck which destroys everything. And for this was man created; yet it were better for him never to have been born. Sophocles said this centuries ago, and everyone knows it, and forgets it every day, while life draws to its close, while man receives stars and orders, and is then forgotten.

This philosophy of Procreation is a denial of Religion, of Virtue, and of Constancy; it is a satire on Love. It is giving practical effect to Schopenhauer on Women; Mr. Wells is marching in the rear.

In awarding the laurels of progress to Life, in the sense of Birth, Mr. Wells has assumed unto himself the office of umpire or judge of the universe. Nowadays he has left the universe to arbitrate in the Socialist movement as to who is right or wrong; of course, he is an arbitrator whose award is final. There is no appeal from a decision of Mr. Wells.

But Life and Death are in eternal conflict. Though Death may gain the day, the triumph is a temporary one, for the legions of Life are innumerable. Still, in deciding this world-contest (which is fought, in reality, in the pre-natal and post-mortem periods) in favour of Life or Birth, Mr. Wells has promulgated a decree without hearing the merits of the contending parties; for what can we poor humans appreciate of these terrible issues? A human being is the shuttlecock tossed between the battledores of Life and Death. Mr. Wells has approached the problem of Life in the spirit in which a village schoolmaster corrects a paper on geography. "The Map of Life" is nothing to him but a squeaking multitude of babies; just as geography is nothing to the rural schoolmaster but a collection of towns, counties, capes, rivers, and mountains.

In presuming "birth" to be the chiefest "fact" of the universe, we assert that Mr. Wells has fallen into an error which vitiates his whole thesis. Birth is only incidental to the scheme of the universe; it is not, and cannot be, *the* scheme of the universe. Science has vaguely chattered for decades of the Darwinian theory, as Religion has lampooned God, in the Immaculate Conception, through many centuries; but, when we have implicitly accepted all these various theories and beliefs, how much nearer are we to understanding the flight of a daddy longlegs, the psychology of a magpie, or the utility of a black beetle? The objectivity of Birth illumines the subjectivity of Death and Time—the riddle of creation—in the same degree as the grasping minginess of a Harpagon or the vindictive savagery of a Barère interprets the generous prodigality of a Goldsmith or the noble chivalry of a Chevalier de Maison Rouge.

In another chapter Mr. Wells drives home his contention:

> Any collective human enterprise . . . . is to be judged as a whole and completely, as it conduces more or less to wholesome and hopeful births.

He admits that the science of heredity is a dim light to guide one on these serious questions, and he agrees that the mating of two noble beings will not necessarily produce a perfect child. The offspring of the philosophic Marcus Aurelius and the beautiful Faustina was the wretched, maleficent weakling, Commodus. Any eugenist would be hard pressed to explain why the austere virtues of Marcus Aurelius and the gallantries of Faustina, when combined, failed so miserably. The truth is, however rigorously and selectively the first generation be mated, we cannot know what the second generation will be. Yet Mr. Wells calls upon the world to adopt his baby-manufactory polity, at once, in the present order of society. To do so would be to sow the wind. The betterment of the stock must automatically follow on the beneficial change in the economic basis of society for which Socialists are agitating. Away with these myths of "wholesome and hopeful births," and on with the economic revolution!

Mr. Wells appeals to us

> To reject . . . . all such ideas as Right, Liberty, Happiness, Duty, and Beauty, and to hold fast to the assertion of the fundamental nature of life as a tissue and succession of births.

Mr. Wells may reject all these "ideas" if he likes; but we decline to swallow such tommy rot. Per contra, we say that procreation is secondary. The legacy of happiness is what we should leave to the world, not a multitude of unhappy babes. When the New Republican has improved on his contemporary standard of art, happiness, and joyous gaiety, then he may regard himself as having played an heroic part in the advancement of the new Republic towards the perfection of Individualism; not merely by fulfilling the natural duty of fathering children.

There are other passages in this volume which cannot be passed over. For instance:

> I would even go so far as to suggest that it is only within the last hundred years that any considerable number of thoughtful people have come to look at life steadily and consistently as being shaped to this form; to the form of a series of births, growths and births.

Also, "it is only within the last hundred years" that the regulation and limitation of families have become important social factors. Putting aside the Malthusian theory of population, the leisured and middle class women of the civilised peoples are bearing fewer and fewer children. But these are the classes to which Mr. Wells must look for his improvement in the stock, since the working classes are unable now, for economic reasons, to amend the conditions under which their children are born. Moreover, among the skilled artisans, as education spreads, there is the same tendency towards limiting the family. Mr. Wells has failed to connect the limitation of families with the emancipation of women. He roams at large in the realm of motherhood, spinning pretty phrases about "the duty" of women to be mothers, concluding with this inimitable futility: "It is only the young fool and the brooding mattoid who believe in a special, separate science of 'women.'" Such is Mr. Wells's swan-song on the vanishing and misused supremacy of men over women. His music is somewhat screechy. Obviously, women, as they obtain economic and personal freedom, will limit their families, because they will decline to submit too frequently to the pain and suffering which they undergo in the agonies of child-birth. Mr. Wells should read M. Brieux's play, "Maternité." As it is, his utterances on the Woman question remind one of the speeches of a certain politician, in which there is a Brock display of epigrams and witticisms, which the industry of a secretary has garnered from Swift, La Rochefoucauld, Comtesse Diane, Oscar Wilde, John Oliver Hobbes, or the Duke of Belle Isle—they ring false. They pretend to a nobility of ideal, but if we adopt them, smirking and grinning, we shall find our women condemned to a worse fate than the Circassian slave, the signora of the night, or the Japanese geisha. Mr. Wells has constructed a new Doll's House which would enslave women more than that house from which Nora fled. We stand fast against this ghastly figure clad in the garments of Progress under which the vile corruption of Procreation in perpetuum is concealed. The number of children each woman should bear is the concern of each individual woman; certainly not of the man nor of the man-governed State. One would hope that Mr. Wells has lost his baby-obsession by now, otherwise he must find the Reform Club somewhat uncomfortable.

Mr. Wells has this ignoble comment on the attitude of the Liberals who criticised the South African concentration camps:—

> The same men, who spouted infinite mischief because a totally unforeseen and unavoidable epidemic of measles killed some thousands of children in South Africa, who, for some idiotic or wicked vote-catching purpose, attempted to turn that epidemic to the permanent embitterment of Dutch and English, these same men allow thousands and thousands of avoidable deaths of English children close at hand to pass absolutely unnoticed.

This is strange writing from the hand which drafted a manifesto in favour of Mr. Winston Churchill. It is a charge that the Liberals who opposed the concentration camps have deliberately winked their eyes at "avoidable deaths"; it borders on a charge of constructive murder! As a matter of fact, this is an absolutely false statement. The alleged motive is a cruel and wicked libel on many honourable men and women. The critics of these camps "spouted," to use Mr. Wells's elegant word, the excellent common sense that if a lot of children were herded together in a place where sanitary arrangements were very primitive or non-existent, an epidemic was bound to ensue. Anyone outside a lunatic asylum, except "the pantaloons in putties," knew some calamity would occur, and these dismal forebodings proved to be correct.

We refrain from commenting at length on the slipshod way in which this book is written; but "all conscious human will and act *is* but the imperfect expression and realisation" jars on one as too much of a verbal singularity. Again: "The point of view which will be displayed in relation to a number of wide questions in these pages is primarily that of the writer's." The possessive here is too objective. Then: "One forgets that this present German efficiency was paralleled in the eighteenth century by Prussia, whose aristocratic system first winded Republicans at Valmy." The "wind" has blown up "the spout" on this occasion, to adopt Mr. Wells's brilliant choice of words for the moment, because we seem to remember that Kellermann routed the Prussians at the cannonade of Valmy, so checking the allied Powers' invasion of France. Mr. Wells's history is as novel as his theories. Both have the common factor of having no relation to the realities of history.

His intolerance of thought is confirmed by this shocking slander on Atheists:

> That is the downright atheist, the man who believes sensual pleasure is all that there is of pleasure, and virtue no more than a hood to check the impetuosity of youth until discretion is acquired, the man who believes there is nothing else in the world but hard material fact, and who has as much respect for truth and religion as he has for stable manure.

The vulgarity of this rant is beyond condemnation. The brazen impudence of a writer whose essential thesis invites us "to reject . . . . all such ideas as Right, Liberty, Happiness, Duty or Beauty"—for what? the procreation of babies—is only equalled by his colossal impudence and self-satisfied vanity. Bah! let us get into the fresh air and breathe the purity of summer breezes untroubled by any thoughts of this rancorous and misguided man. One may accept the materialistic conception of history; but not the materialistic conception of babies.

C. H. NORMAN.

America and the Chinese Problem.

By Francis Grierson.

PERHAPS the curse of our time is detachment—detached politics and detached patriotism keep pace with the penchant for detached villas, and principals and parties hang together much as a string of mottled beads, without harmony or design. Take twelve educated men coming together by chance, take any subject, political, social, or religious, and see how much unity of judgment you will find among the twelve. On one question there will be absolute agreement—the firm conviction that the company, taken separately, are composed of detached units, each man determined to take care of himself, secretly detached from the opinions of the others. It requires no subtle reasoning to see that in time of grave disorder and trouble the nations destined to win are the nations with the greatest attachment to unity. Where are those nations? The people of China are the most unified people in the world to-day. The Japanese come next. In Europe the Germans are without doubt the people with the most political and intellectual concentration. France and England seem to be at this hour vieing with each other in how best the individual can become detached from patriotism, from religion, and from common sense. In time of trouble conflicting sentiments and interests must lead direct to disaster.

In the progress of a people there are two elements which constitute what may be called their destiny—material force and spiritual power. Experienced politicians frequently foresee commercial events with striking accuracy, because they reason from a visible cause to a direct and logical result; but the material eye, no matter how keen, fails to penetrate the world of spiritual will, where the elements at work are invisible and silent, and out of which grave events often occur without any warning whatever. It is this that lends a sort of blind meaning to the word Fate.

Physical needs precede intellectual necessity, and from the physical arise the humane, the philosophic, and the intuitive; and just as soon as a nation ceases to display a sustained and sober energy it begins to lose on the side of the spiritual aspirations of Will and Intellect. India attained intellectual power after she had risen to a certain plane of material development. She rose to philosophic heights, but in the ascent she forgot the needs of the material. India was caught in a metaphysical slumber, and was conquered; and China, after producing her philosophers and lawmakers, lapsed into a long and peaceful lethargy. The Chinese are now awake.

"Place your ear to the bosom of earth and you will feel the living throb of the universe," says the Celtic seer, Lamennais. And similarly, if you sit perfectly still in a room in some isolated palace, you will feel the present gradually fading into oblivion, and out of the strange silence visions of coming events will mingle in a sort of whispering gallery of portents and impressions, until it seems possible to sense the destiny of empires. I have not forgotten the impressions created by a sojourn at Gatschina, when the old Marshal of the Palace, Prince B———, one of the heroes of Sevastopol, in escorting me through the immense structure, on arriving at a small iron bed in one of the most interesting rooms crossed himself, bent his knee to the floor, and remarked: "This is the bed of my beloved master, Nicolas I." I stopped, and while looking with surprise at the hard, uncomfortable-looking couch, the Prince coolly remarked: "He had his mind fixed on Constantinople." My escort gave a slight shrug of the shoulders, as much as to say he failed, and he died of a broken heart; and the Prince added as we walked away: "But we shall have Persia, and we have an eye on Manchuria." My escort led the way upstairs to the Chinese museum. When we arrived among the splendid objects which filled a great gallery, he said again, with a wave of the hand: "There is something worth fighting for," meaning the Chinese Empire. Then I began to realise what the Eastern question meant for the people of Russia. But when we entered the throne room of Catherine the Great, with its maze of mellow light, its wonderful calm, and its fascinating simplicity, all this, united to something singularly Oriental, made me realise how unnatural Russian dominion is in Western Europe, and how much in harmony it is with Eastern thought and religion. There will be no Russian question in Western Europe, but the time will come when Germany will possess the whole of Northeastern Russia, and Constantinople will belong to Austro-Germania. And here we have the question of the yellow races pressing home closer and closer. In Russia there is a Far Eastern question, which means China and Japan; in Australia and New Zealand there is the same question, but more imperative; while on the Pacific Coast of America, from Mexico to British Columbia, the question has even now shaped itself into one of imminent peril. The whole thing seems so remote from the England we are living in that to fear trouble from that source seems like an idle dream. And yet that is where our future troubles will be found. Our very existence is bound up in this question of China and Japan because of Australia directly and the United States indirectly. In case England went to war with some great European nation, the Japanese could land in Australia unless America took the part of England.

One never sees an Oriental question clearly unless one has some knowledge of the people under discussion. It was in San Francisco in 1875 that I first had an opportunity of studying the Chinese character. There was at the time a population of 30,000 Chinese, with two large theatres of their own; but not till I crossed the Pacific on the "City of Sydney" in 1877 from California to Australia did I get a real vision of a Chinese horde on the move from one part of the world to another. The steamer was the largest plying between the ports of San Francisco and Sydney, carrying hundreds of Chinese en route for Honolulu. A huge hole in the middle of the steamer permitted one to contemplate the wonderful scene. The weather was very warm, and down below, so far that it looked like another world, hundreds of limp and listless Chinese fanned their feverish faces with great coloured fans, and from the bunks, which rose tier upon tier, hung the legs and arms of the half-stifled horde as in a picture out of Dante's Inferno. Most of them were reclining, while some sat cross-legged on the floor. As I stood there, faint waves of weird Chinese music were wafted up with whiffs of sandalwood, odours that became lost in the stronger scent of tobacco smoke on deck. Then, with the setting sun, came a scene of transcendent magic. A voice rose from somewhere below, it may have been a chant of jubilant prophecy or it may have been a song of encouragement and hope, accompanied by Chinese fiddles, the rasping tones subdued and modified to a sort of uncanny wail by the partitions separating the invisible musicians from the deck; and as the song continued the colours in the sky slowly spread out into thousands of small cloudlets, filling the western heavens with a blaze of molten gold, the sun sank below the waters, the moon rose in the east, the ship glided on, the voice came and went, as if in keeping with the long, monotonous roll of the ocean, and it seemed as if I were sailing the Pacific with a band of Argonauts from the Celestial Empire in search of a new Golden Fleece in the vast untrammelled spaces of worlds yet to be conquered. I had caught a glimpse of the Chinese avant-guards. I had seen the first off-shoots of a people endowed with a patience, an endurance, and a sobriety unknown to any of the nations of the West. No one who sits at home can possibly realise what the great world-movements are. They must be seen, heard, and sensed. To understand them we have to enter into their rhythmic action. It is not enough to read about them. All primitive national movements are symbolical. They symbolise a greater and a vaster future, and every act has a special significance.

The greatest living authority on China and the Chinese is Sir Robert Hart. "The words 'imperil the world's future'," he says, "may provoke a laugh, but let the words stand. Twenty million or more of Boxers, armed, drilled, and disciplined, animated by patriotic motives, will take back from foreigners everything foreigners have taken from China, and will pay off old grudges with interest."

The Chinese are now, like the Japanese, fully aware of their importance, not only in the future, but in the present. A Japanese Ambassador has recently declared that a triple Alliance composed of England, the United States and Japan could dominate the world. It is easy to see that in the near future new and startling Alliances will be formed, but any combination that seeks to separate England and America will be directed not only against the peace of the nations but against Anglo-Saxon civilisation in the West, and a combination that would debar either of the great English-speaking countries would speedily inaugurate a series of wars and revolutions that would devastate the whole civilised world.

Before the Strike.

By George Raffalovich.

A WEEK before the first elections of the Duma a thousand workmen were listening in a distracted sort of way to the speech of their chief's brother. The chief had said: "You must go there, my little brothers," and they had gone.

It was nothing more than an orthodox sermon—nothing magnificent; all the commonplaces, all the official lies, had found their place in it.

"My very dear friends, I am happy, extremely happy, to see you here. We are going to speak together a little about our very dear Russia and our very good little father the Tsar. I know that there are enemies of Russia and of God who want to push you to do things which are forbidden, real sins, but you must not listen to them. It is even your very sacred duty to denounce them, whoever they are, Poles, Jews, students, or even men from among your own ranks, because they are wicked rascals. You must denounce them to the police, and then you will receive money and our thanks, and the eternal benediction of God.

"But perhaps you will say to me: 'Your Excellency, we are not intelligent enough to discover when they tell us evil.' That is true, my little brothers, but it is exactly that which I am going to explain to you.

"Those you must denounce are those who make trouble. They are discontented, the wolves, and when they are sure that nobody hears them they shout that they want to kill the Tsar, that they have no need of the Holy-Synod which prays to God for them and works for your eternal salvation, that they will destroy the Government and kill the nobles. Well, it is very horrible, and they have learned this of those good-for-nothings, the 'zamouskaia pfitza,' who kill the kings in their god-forsaken countries.

"Think of it, to live without a Government! Eh! it would be pretty. Foreign nations will come and take our villages and our towns, and we shall have to pay heavy duties. And who would direct you if the nobles were no longer there? The enemies of Russia will tell you that all are equal, but that is impossible. Are you the equals of my brother, are you worth as much as we? We are nobles, men of standing, with a perfect education, and God has himself forbidden us to work. You are the posterity of Ham, who was punished for having mocked his father, while we descend from Shem and from Japhet. Your tribe has been given over to us that you may work for us. You are absolutely illiterate, and you want to be our equals! It is stupid. There is no equality. We are more than you, and you are more than the Jews and the Poles, who throw bombs and shoot at the police and the soldiers.

"Now you know what to answer to those enemies of Russia who come to disturb order amongst you, all those students whose brain has given way because, not being born noble, their intelligence was not strong enough for the instruction they received, and those workmen of the great towns who are idlers, whom the Tsar is going to chastise with an exemplary rigour."

And he continued some time in this strain; then, satisfied with himself, he retired with his brother and the foremen. By little groups the workmen went out, and later, the same evening, a large number of them came together again in another meeting place.

"Hein, how well he spoke; his tongue is well oiled. 'We are nobles,' that's what he said, 'with a perfect education.'"

But a workman got up and began speaking.

"My little brothers," said he, "you see how they speak to you, eh? He said nothing of the misery in which we live, nor of the famine among the peasants. Why do we die of starvation? Why is the people given up to misery? Why are vast Russia, unhappy Poland, the Caucasus, the Baltic provinces inundated with the blood of the people? The generals who caused our defeat at the war have placed themselves on their return to Russia at the head of the punishing detachments. These detachments hang workmen and peasants, whip them to death, set fire to the villages. And the cause of all this is that our brothers will not live as they have done up till the present. They have seen that the functionaries of the Tsar, and the Tsar himself, have made themselves the defenders of the rich, whom they help to rob the poor people, and they have decided to sacrifice their lives if necessary to establish a new and better order of things.

"Brothers, a great epoch has come for the Russian people. He who for centuries has supported his serfdom without a murmur is revolting against the evil. Everywhere throughout vast Russia peasants and workmen, with the students, and even nobles also, rise up to ask happiness and rights. And everywhere blood flows. That is how the Tsar loves us! He received with bullets and grape-shot the workmen of Petersburg who went towards him without arms, asking liberty for the people. The business chiefs and proprietors refuse to give up anything, and they ask for soldiers and Cossacks from the Government to shoot the unarmed people.

"Brothers, we must also enter into the movement. We must go with the Russian people. We must stop working at the signal if they refuse to let our elected act for us. And we shall have to struggle to the death against those who oppress us, and we must conquer the land and liberty. It is in order that our souls may be free. Come, little brothers, let us all shout together. Down with the bloody Tsar, with all his agents; his minions, and all his authorities."

Some students then made a collection, and they all separated. The workmen racked their brains to try and understand which of the orators was right.

"Eh? it would be curious to see them arguing together. How he would know how to answer him, the comrade. 'We are not equals, and we are illiterates, but *I* can read,' he would say."

"Yes, for sure, and the Excellence would not be able to answer him. Perhaps he is a liar—the brother of the chief. The father says he is not at all of noble race, but only the son of a merchant, and that his grandfather was also of the class of peasants. Then what can we know, we others?"

"All the same, it would be good if we could live better. And why hang the Poles and the Jews? They are men also.

"All that is too complicated for us. We must go to work to-morrow all the same, because we must eat. The baboushka must have gruel for the children."

"Well, then! Will you strike when they say?"

"Well, perhaps! Like that, you know, one must think of it. And if the little brothers stop working also, it is too sad to go all alone to the factory."

"Yes. Good night to you, brother."

"Good night, my little brother."

Whited Sepulchres.

By Beatrice Tina.

CHAPTER VII.

SHE flung the telegram away as though it were a death warrant; and sitting huddled up, clasped her knees and grieved, rocking herself to and fro and uttering sounds which she had to choke against the bed-clothes. "I can't," she moaned at last—"I can't!"

Yet, withal the misery and private degradation implied in her resolution, Nan Heck knew that she preferred that sort of misery and secret shame to the spleen and public shame her kin and her friends would cast at her.

She longed for Raymond's flowers to come, and the letter—and just as much she dreaded. When two o'clock of the afternoon had struck, and there was still no message from him, a revulsion from the importance of her proposed salvation seized her, the old cold proudness set in, and she decided that since Raymond Cattle neglected her nothing mattered much: she would just go on living with Tom Heck as usual. But three o'clock brought the bouquet and the note, and her panic returned. She rushed up to her room to read:—"Dear Mrs. Heck: My mother begs me to send you some flowers from her green-house. She hopes to see you at church parade to-morrow.—Yours sincerely, RAYMOND CATTLE."

Nan studied the strategic epistle. It was, of course, he who hoped to meet her at the church parade!

His fidelity determined her to be relentless. Again, she began to wish Tom Heck would come—come back—and let her feel herself secured and able to defy those cold grey eyes of the sarcastic Reverend Wales. She thought of the child, and in imagination she posed it beside her: a shield and a defence, installing her beyond all criticisms as a virtuous wife.

Tom Heck came in about six o'clock. "Hurry up the dinner—I want to get up to town for an hour," he ordered. His wife hastened to obey. She returned to the dining-room with a vase filled with her lover's flowers. "Aren't they beautiful? Mrs. Cattle sent them."

"H'm!" he grunted.

She went round to him, and laid a hand upon his shoulder, beginning in the way she had worked out the scene. He looked up, just blankly staring at her.

"Tom—Tom, dear," she said. "I'm afraid I haven't made our home what it should be. Don't go out again to-night."

"Anything else?" he returned. "Get the dinner in."

His indifference positively terrified her. Unaccustomed to this particular sort of wifely guile, she knew none of the pretty tricks with which wives ordinarily disarm a husband of contempt. She was clumsy.

She slipped her arm tightly around his neck and pleaded: "Tom, I do want our lives to be different in future. Stop at home with me to-night." He jumped up and eyed her over.

"Damme—I don't mind if I do!" he exclaimed.

At church parade next day, Mrs. Tom Heck promenaded beside her husband. To her friends she accorded her stateliest greetings, her chastest expressions. She kept her impatient escort as long as possible upon the Common: for Raymond Cattle was late in arriving. At last Tom swore he would return without his wife if she did not mean to leave immediately. So she had to go back, resentful that half her triumph over sin had gone uncelebrated. No wracked man's heart was dragged along by her retiring feet. Her lover did not appear.

By the time she reached home she had concluded that he had expected her to answer his note, and was piqued at her negligence. It was better so!

On the Tuesday evening she went over to the monthly "At Home" which was held at the Reverend Wales' house. There she saw Mrs. Cattle, who mentioned that Raymond was abroad, had gone last Saturday, and was not returning until the autumn. Mrs. Cattle intended visiting him shortly.

From that night the amazingly swift deterioration of Nan Heck began. When, in the course of a few weeks, she discovered herself to be pregnant, her chagrin and terror were agonising to bear. She shut herself up in her house and became a prey to every feeling of abandonment and despair. She could no longer doubt that Raymond Cattle had fooled her, and of the honours upon which she had reckoned for her future, all seemed to have slipped as worthless sand through her hands.

She had expected that Tom Heck would be wild with delight at the prospect of paternity. He appeared nothing of the sort. He received her intelligence with surprise, incredulity, and a certain positive irritation. As a matter of fact, a certain anonyma in the West End had already presented Tom Heck with three little beefy replicas of himself.

Paternity was at least no novelty to him; and his wife's querulousness compared intolerably with the other lady's attitude.

"Dam!" he swore, at length, "don't plague me." He did not come home at all for several nights after this.

She wept and raged. Moping and miserable she lived from day to day, growing weak and harshly ugly. Her mother, who came with much display of grandmotherly authority and fussiness, was received with a burst of ill-temper and incoherent accusations. She departed to send a maid to her daughter with the warning that Mrs. Heck was suffering from delusions.

Thus the months dragged down, until one day a son was born at 24 The Gardens. It was the tiniest creature, and seemed not nourished enough to survive. But all the aid which money could procure was at its service, and its foredoomed and blighted life was retained for it.

Gradually Mrs. Heck began to take an interest in the baby. The fact that Mr. Heck preferred it to remain in its mother's bedroom incited her to make a good deal of fuss about it. She ordered the most gorgeous robes, and as it was such a little thing, she kept it in long clothes until it was six months old. Every few days the doctor still called to see it, for some mysterious ill troubled its little frame. It wailed incessantly, so that Tom Heck declared the house uninhabitable, and took to staying away for a week at a time.

After some months Mrs. Heck recommenced to receive on Thursdays. But since the first few visits of curiosity people ceased to foregather at 24. The "genius" of St. Paul's had changed into an ugly and peevish matron.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE Heck child was howling like three enraged puppies all together, and scratching and biting wherever his puny teeth and nails could take hold of his mother. She dared do little more than avoid his onslaughts, for the boy suffered still from that mysterious disease which the family doctor, for fear of its more offensive name, described as neurasthenia.

Little Eric Heck was fighting for possession of a very lacerated and sanguinary dead white mouse.

At length the mother gave in to the hysterical little boy, and went away to her bedroom in tears. But Tom Heck, who arrived a few moments later, took a different method with his son and heir. He seized the mouse and smacked the child in the face with it. Then he kicked him out of the dining-room into the passage, and left him there to wail.

It was now the mother's part to creep downstairs with an orange and decoy the poor little fiend up to his nursery. Eric, glad enough to escape the neighbourhood of the dining-room, allowed himself to accept the orange and go upstairs, where he flung the fruit through a window-pane. He picked up a fragment of the glass and began to chew it—a weird appetite for such delicacies as glass and slate pencil being one of his milder idiosyncrasies.

"You musn't do that, Eric," said his mother. "Now, put it down at once, or I shall call father. Naughty boy, to break the window!"

"So are you a naughty boy—hate you!"

"Don't talk like that to mother."

"I want my mouse," wailed the child.

"Cruel boy—you shan't have any more mice. Fancy killing the dear little mousie!"

"Never killed him. I gived him to the kitty to kill. I'll kill the kitty, too, cos she scratched my fingers."

"Oh, you dreadful boy."

"So are you."

The mother lifted her hand to slap him, but he set up such a scream that she feared her husband would rush up and beat him; so she held her hand over his mouth and promised to get him another mouse; a promise which, to do her justice, she had not the least intention of keeping.

It seemed wise, indeed, to promise him anything. His little, ugly head was streaming with perspiration, and in a few minutes he had collapsed into quiet, and lay, a small bundle of gasping iniquity, upon his mother's bed. She patted him, and sat beside him until, at last, he sank into a slumber, with both his pitiable, twitching hands clasped against his face. Mrs. Heck then went down to pour out tea for her husband.

"Why the devil don't you manage that boy better?" he demanded. "The house has been one long hell ever since he was born."

"Well, Tom, don't be too hard on him. Doctor Wright says he is in a very dangerous state, and anything may happen."

"Good job, too. Damned little weasel."

"He may grow stronger and better if we are very careful with him."

"Pigs might fly. Keep him out of my way—that's all He ain't more than half right."

Tom Heck was too rich now to care a great deal whether

or no Crone knew of his peccadilloes. He attended services on Christmas Day and Good Friday, and gave considerable sums to charities—and Crone demanded no more. Indeed, after the disappointing metamorphosis of his wife had become generally recognised, Crone, in its ineffable way, had begun to criticise and blame her. And had she attempted any act of separation in these later days, she would have gained no sympathy, but absolute disapproval. Mrs. Heck was obviously not the woman she had pretended to be: further, she had aged frightfully, and seemed to have lost her manners.

Her Thursdays were the joke of the parish. Nobody ever went except Mrs. Wales, who paid a duty visit once a month; and even that lady's pious intentions had been unbalanced by the introduction of Master Eric. The boy acted as if he espied in her some natural enemy, and the mild reproofs of his mother failed to make him behave. When, at last, he had snatched off the visitor's spectacles and broken them, the order had been reluctantly given to remove him.

"I am so devoted to my child," simpered Mrs. Heck; adding, by way of apology, "He is delicate, you know, and I dread to lose him."

"But just a little discipline might not hurt him," ventured Mrs. Wales.

"Oh, I couldn't bear to beat him. He is my one jewel. For his sake I'm afraid I neglect everybody."

It was balm to the deserted genius of St. Paul's to suppose that she created an impression of being too wrapt up in her child to wish for any other society than his. Besides, had not his birth been the means of saving her from sin!

The poor little scapegoat was, happily, not destined to grow up to bear his full burden. One day—it was his fifth birthday—he was brought home ill from one of his rare visits to his grandmother's house. Mrs. Heck received her son from the terrified old dame with a glare of suspicion, intended to hint at any accusation from witchcraft to poisoning—and without vouchsafing a word, carried him upstairs. He moaned and clutched his burning head incessantly, breaking forth now and again in a heartrending scream.

At eight o'clock he began to choke in a convulsion, and soon after he ceased to breathe, having practically cried himself to death. Mrs. Heck flung herself upon the floor and wailed and beat her hands, and when her husband returned that night he found a trained nurse in possession of the bedroom, from which loud and long cries issued. Mrs. Heck had excited her nerves into a state of tension from which she could not relax them.

It was a bright day in June when she left her bed for the first time after nine weeks. She would scarcely have been recognised. She seemed a very aged woman, for her golden hair was all cut off, and only a few wisps of grey showed under a white cap she wore. She sat before the fire, shivering a little, for nothing seemed sufficient to warm her, and the nurse watched for any sign of undue fatigue.

"And so Eric is dead," she said, suddenly gazing at the wall. "Poor little boy. His father never cared for him."

The nurse was pouring out a cup of tea. She handed it to the forlorn woman, saying gently: "Earth-life is not the end of all our hopes."

"No, there is the judgment—and justice will be done." Nan drew a deep breath, as though fetching a blade from within herself, and her poor withered mouth set in a fierce line.

"Has my mother been?" she asked, sharply.

"Oh, yes! Many times, and she has sent every day. These are her flowers."

"Take them away. I think I'd better get back to bed. I'm weary."

But the unhappy heart seemed not too weary to go on beating, nor the warped mind to continue its ever-smouldering resentment. Daily she grew stronger. At length she expressed a desire to see Mrs. Wales.

And so, the next afternoon the pastor's lady bent graciously over the wreck of womanhood who had once been "our clever Mrs. Heck."

"We are all so delighted to know you are well enough to receive."

"I hope to come to divine service next Sunday."

"Not so soon? Our Father does not expect such sacrifice."

"I have a good deal of time to make up. I am anxious to resume my work in the parish."

"Oh, really! Well, by God's grace, your old district, the one you had before dear little Eric was born, is without a worker. I will keep it open for you."

"Thank you. I intend to bring about some changes in the lives of those people. They are very thriftless and loose. My duty has been neglected."

"Persuasion is the only way—as you know, of course, my dear."

"Yes. the poor of to-day are too independent for one to be able to help them much. You can only teach them their duty."

"My dear Mrs. Heck, I hope you will pray about it."

"I have prayed. If only I could get well at once!"

Mrs. Wales rose. "All in God's time," she said, benignantly.

"You will come again, soon?" asked the sick woman.

"As soon as you like," returned the minister's wife. "Good-bye, my dear. I feel you will become my right hand in the parish."

A few Sundays later Mrs. Heck was leaving St. Paul's after service. On her way out she came face to face with Raymond Cattle. Her eyes glittered out from their weary lids. Mr. Cattle looked at the witch-like "angel," hesitating.

She bowed and he lifted his hat—all in accordance with the rules.

[THE END.]

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

Tom Paine.*

THESE volumes are by way of a threefold vindication. The first is Dr. Conway's memorable defence of Thomas Paine. To him fell the congenial duty of rescuing the real Paine from the lumber of archaic beliefs, and unmentionable calumnies, and handing him over to enlightened minds as a reliable guide for the present and future. His task was formidable. No one can read "The Life of Thomas Paine" without feeling that the writer is all the while fighting his way through immense difficulties. But he succeeded. Under his transforming hand Paine emerged no longer the "dirty little atheist" of Roosevelt the woad-stained, but a broad-minded theist and humanist.

The second vindication is contained in Paine's "Rights of Man." This work, it may be remembered, was called forth by Burke's "Reflexions on the Revolution in France." It sums up the author's political ideas which were largely the fruits of his experience in the War of Independence. It serves, moreover, to express and emphasize the ideas of the French Revolution, and thereby, as Mr. Robertson points out in his telling introduction, has been the means of making a great revolutionary movement an evolutionary one also. Though the work is not faultless, though its ideas are not original, seeing that they had been in the air in France, fired by the blazing needs of a starving and bankrupt nation, yet with them, Mirabeau and his pupil Sieyes—who differed from Paine on a point of kingship—had paved the way for Robespierre and Marat. With them the leaders of the Convention had quickened their own patriotic ambitions. Though its aims to promote efficiency as a form of government to be preferred to superstition (divine right of kingship), and power (physical force), are not unassailable, seeing that efficiency tends to convert governments into armed camps, and excludes the wisdom of Fenelon in Telemachus, where he counsels basing government on peace, not on war; yet whatever the particular defects of the work, they are far outweighed by its excellence as a whole. We feel that it was inspired by hatred of a government which sought to imprison the mind of the people for seeking light, just as a certain king imprisoned Plato for teaching the aristocratic form of government. We know that it gave a lasting, ever-widening impulse to the cause of democracy. We can see this, to-day, in three countries at least. In America, where corruption is rife, democracy dominates in bastard form; in France, where rapid extremes are the rule, it governs as anarchy; in England, where we move slowly, and materialise as we go, it seeks supremacy in true and permanent form. Thus Paine gave the stream of democracy direction in this country, and, we trust, nothing can stem the flow.

The third vindication we find in the "Age of Reason." It is a defence of the Religion of Humanity. In it Paine appears as a theist and affirms a God. But we know that in reality he is not a theist, unless he is

*"Works by Thomas Paine." With a biographical Introduction by J. M. Robertson. "The Life of Thomas Paine." With a sketch of Paine by W. Cobbett. (Watts. 2s. 6d. net each.)

false to his reason, or is inviting the question, upon what reasonable ground can we reason? His real aim is to take the place of the Deity and interpret His activities in terms of humanistic activities. He refuses to regard him as crude superstition's God of battles, murders, and seductions. He is willing to sacrifice even His omnipotence to humanity. This instinct for a reasonable Deity impels him to demand a clarified Christ. So he returns to the Christ of the first century, to the Jesus of Rousseau, Voltaire, and an unsymbolising Campbell, to the type of the highest and sanest sample of man on record. Briefly, his God and his Jesus have the qualities he prefers in himself for the good of mankind. His "theology" is the New Theology of the early nineteenth century—a rational theology which had long been feeling its way towards a broader platform and freer air. It is simply *honest* Campbellism. The new movements of popular religious freethought thus initiated by Paine, both in this country and America, are many and varied. The wave of the philosophy of doubt has been an all-embracing one. It has touched the whole circle of the sciences from Astronomy to Sociology; has civilised ethics; rationalised art, poetry and literature; democratised politics; vitalised economics; and made non-deistic the problems of sex. It has brought new and vigorous propagandist associations to view. Foremost among these is the Rationalist Press Association, which in unflinching pursuit of an enlightened policy now strengthens its undoubted claim to recognition by placing two remarkable works well within the reach of all who care to read them. That they will be widely read is beyond doubt. They will be read by the retrogressives, those who are still in the Age of Unreason; by the stationaries, those who have entered the Age of Reason; and by the progressives, those who, not unmindful of the past, are entering upon the New Age—the age of poetry, perception, and proportion. Poetry, says Emerson, is the only verity; it is science, and the poet a true logician. For this age Paine and his stalwart vindicator, Moncure Conway, have prepared the ground. These solid men have revealed the fundamental moral and spiritual truths; the poet must fill in the sky.

HUNTLY CARTER.

REVIEWS.

The Confessions of a Beachcomber. By E. J. Banfield. (T. Fisher Unwin, Adelphi Terrace, London. 15s. net.)

"Does the fact that a weak mortal sought an unprofaned sanctuary—an island removed from the haunts of men—and there dwelt in tranquillity, happiness, and security, represent any just occasion for the relation of his experiences, experiences necessarily out of the common?" This question, to which we eagerly answered Yes! opens Mr. Banfield's book.

The great expectations, however, raised in us by this "just occasion," after careful reading, remain unfulfilled. Mr. Banfield is so excessively modest and reticent that in his dread of the charge of egotism he says almost absolutely nothing of the undoubtedly rich subjective experiences of his unusual situation. Here a man and his "lifetime partner"—we are left in ignorance as to whether this lifetime partner was a faithful hound, a horse, a wife, a brother, or sister—"not youthful enthusiasts, but beings who had arrived at an age when many of the minor romances are of the past, after sedate and temperate ponderings upon all the aspects of voluntary exile," by arrangement with the Queensland Government obtained a lease of the lovely little uninhabited island of Coonauglebah (Dunk Island), situated in semi-tropical regions off the northern coast of Queensland, and there lived, "indulging an inordinate passion for freedom and fresh air," for nine or ten years, still finding it good. Truly in this experience there is material for a great book on the philosophy of life. For it was in no spirit of misanthropy that Mr. Banfield left "the weariness, the fever, and the fret" of civilisation. He was not dead, but exhausted for want of "freedom and fresh air." He

understood himself, and knew not only what he wanted but what he needed. He wished to be responsible for himself, and his healthy instinct drew him to the rich virginity of nature and life on Dunk Island. His instinct led him aright, and he found the life idyllic, but the book resulting therefrom is hardly an idyll. The author is the last person in the world to suggest such a thing. But his culture and intellectual calibre are such that we are sorry he did not attempt a higher flight. After ten years in comparative solitude, voluntarily chosen and loved, in a state of nature almost, we feel justified in expecting an account of his "spirit-life" —his subjective experiences. But of these important inner transactions nothing is said, and there is very little of human interest or criticism of life. Of the topography of Dunk Isle, its flora, fauna, and objective features, we get a full and loving account. On this score alone the book is a good and valuable one, and it is enriched by illustrations of great excellence. But it could all have been done by a far inferior hand, and done almost as well.

We hope Mr. Banfield will write another book. Thoreau's experiment was nothing to his, and Thoreau's popularity is increasing. We feel sure Mr. Banfield could say something valuable, suggesting the indecency of wearing clothes, the impurity of living and sleeping in houses, the loss and gain of his way of life. He could tell us something good, no doubt, of Jefferies' cries in the "Story of my Heart." And, oh! let us have something more of the doubts that become exalted and glorified, the hopes all rapture, "when long, serene days are spent alone in the contemplation of the splendours of sky and sea and the enchantment of tropic shores."

Ten Personal Studies. By Wilfrid Ward. (Longmans and Co. 10s. 6d. net.)

Mr. Wilfrid Ward is, we believe, the son of "Ideal" Ward of Tractarian fame; and, not unnaturally, the Catholic notables of his collection of "Personal Studies" stand out more prominently than such lesser Victorian lights as J. T. Delane, Sir M. E. Grant Duff, and Robert Earl of Lytton. The first essay is a skilful, but not very interesting, defence of the scientific dawdling of Mr. Arthur Balfour, Fabius Cunctator of Unionism. Mr. Ward, however, admits so much of pessimism in the character of his subject as to leave us in doubt as to whether the "passionless aloofness, leisureliness of aim," etc., may not be the signs of a political Diogenes quite as much as of a slowly-moving but unerring Leader. The sketch of Sidgwick is an excellent presentation of the perfect sceptic of the nineteenth century, in whom a certain speculative pessimism was married to practical contentment. Sidgwick never for a moment envied the success of idealists like T. H. Green, only wishing to train the faculties of his hearers, not to guide their judgments. "I would not if I could, and I could not if I would, say anything which would make philosophy—my philosophy—popular." Candour and humility could scarce go further. In strong contrast is the description of that "exile from eternity," J. H. Newman, wherein Mr. Ward is evidently on more familiar ground. Sidgwick stands for those who contentedly disbelieve, Newman for those who believe discontentedly. The secret of Newman is still a secret, though M. Brémond, Mr. Ward, and others have lifted sections of the veil. He will be remembered when all the rest of nineteenth century religious history has passed into oblivion. Like most of the mystics, his writings contained as much of agnosticism as of definite faith: Huxley was probably perfectly correct in saying that he could compile a primer of infidelity from Newman's works. It is curious that no one has yet seen the possible connection between the "illative sense," of which he dreamed, and that superconsciousness which—by the offices of psychical research—is now passing into common talk.

Mr. Ward charitably ignores Purcell's notorious biography in his estimate of Manning. He writes soberly and restrainedly, without any undue bias. If his book is somewhat unequal, it was well worth publishing for the sake of three or four of the studies.

Unemployment. The results of an Investigation made in Lancashire. By Prof. F. J. Chapman and H. M. Hallsworth. (Sherratt and Hughes. 2s.)

In view of Mr. Churchill's State Insurance Bill, this is an extraordinarily up-to-date book. It sums up the whole situation in the following terms: "For many years at least, nevertheless, encouragement of insurance and providence may be essential; but it is urgent that we should bear in mind that, in view of the dispositions of many of those who suffer most from unemployment, the provision of work is as important almost as the provision of income." On the question of seasonal employment, the authors are in favour of reducing the whole body of workers, and not giving employment to some only (153). This distribution of employment is to be worked through the agency of Labour Exchanges (152). The book's clear statement of facts on Lancashire Unemployment, together with its close bearing on the aforementioned Government measure, should ensure a very wide reading.

Junius Unveiled. By James Smith. (Dent. 2s. 6d.)

We are not convinced that Mr. Smith has solved the authorship of Junius. We feel he has been led by mistaken zeal to adopt an erroneous hypothesis. In the first place, he is mistaken in believing that his is a new theory. Edward Gibbon is one of the many persons to whom the Junius letters have been from time to time attributed, and one who has not had very considerable claims to attention on this subject. Mr. Smith bases his not very strong case in favour of Gibbon on a number of startling resemblances in style, knowledge of French and military matters, social position, attainments, and so forth, which he claims are consistent with Gibbon having been Junius, but which, we maintain, prove nothing except that such resemblances do occur even in the works of the best regulated writers. In support of his arguments he is careful to quote from the works of Gibbon written long after the letters were published, and which might, therefore, have been influenced by them. Before we can regard Mr. Smith's theory seriously we shall require proof of at least two things—that the internal evidence which the letters contain in regard to the age and experience of Junius does not point to a much older person than Gibbon, and that the psychology of the handwriting reveals the mind of an amanuensis, whose handwriting Mr. Smith declares it to be, and not that of Sir Philip Frances, whose handwriting others declare it to be.

Random Recollections of a Commercial Traveller. (Sherratt and Hughes. 3s. 6d.)

In reading these illustrated "Random Recollections," we are reminded, a very long way off, of that rather dull work, "The Poet at the Breakfast Table." The author modestly characterises his recollections as nothing "very profound or heroic," but "the experience of a very ordinary commercial traveller who has a full knowledge of his literary deficiencies." His book resembles "The Poet" merely in plan—the wander-talk of a bagman raconteur holding forth on "commercial" and other subjects, while threads of associated poetry are woven into the fabric. Though the author fears that "the rather profuse use of verse" tends somewhat "to convert the journal into an Anthology or Dictionary of Quotations," we can assure him it reveals a mind open to the best poetry, and should ensure the success of his book among a class of readers for whom his tales and statements of facts can have no significance.

Pamphlets on Co-Education. By Mrs. E. Richmond. (Street. 3d. each.)

There is little need to detail the contents of these clearly written pamphlets, which aim—and this successfully—to present the case for co-education. The subject is well known by this time, and there is, we believe, a growing disposition in its favour. This is as it should be. It is time that an attempt was made to do away with the present unnatural accentuation of sex, which is set up, in the first place, in our educational institutions, and, thereafter, continued in our social and other institutions, and which manifests itself in barracks-full of venereal-diseased soldiers and convents-full of nuns

with pale, anæmic, sexually starved faces. Co-education will serve to restore the balance of life, which the unnatural segregation of the sexes, with its tendency towards sex-mania, would destroy. Mrs. Richmond writes from the standpoint of a schoolmistress who has had a practical experience of the subject with which she deals. Though she nowhere goes deeply into the psychology of co-education, and we are left wondering, for instance, how she meets the objection that with the awakening of puberty there should be segregation of the sexes, she touches and illuminates the most essential points of a most important question.

DRAMA.

Admiral Guinea (His Majesty's).

IT'S a pity that the last act of this play cannot be given alone. The scheme of the whole is rather ragged, whereas all the elements that go to make it up are to be found in this act.

At the Afternoon Theatre the performance was a one-man show. The blind man is the only part, and Hearn is undoubtedly the man to play it. It's an extraordinarily difficult part because of the endless repetition. Only a tour de force prevented this fact from becoming apparent to the audience. Mr. Hearn's Pew was reminiscent of some of Irving's playing, curiously enough too, because so unlike. If he had ever played it, a comparison would be interesting. The slimy brutality of that filthy old rascal, Pew, which might so easily have seemed melodramatic, was entirely convincing from Hearn. Never have I seen anything more horrid than his blind spring on to the back of the tall, strong youth he means to strangle. His sudden terror at finding a lighted candle in the room that he thought was dark, the mad exasperation at not being able to see and clear up the mystery when he sees the Admiral walking near him and yet saying nothing—these effects were produced with exceptional force and sureness.

Edmund Sass and Amy Lamborn played the Admiral and his daughter. Restraint is an excellent quality in emotional acting, but one could have wished rather less of it than in their performance. It was astonishing to find Miss Lamborn tackling fear, love, pity, and resignation, one after another, in the same calm, musical voice. Miss Agnes Thomas, the tavern keeper, was excellent, as usual.

The Dryad (Miss Dora Bright).

I waited for the curtain to go up with miserable anticipation of a broken idol—a feeling that Genée the incomparable would find her limitations. The fear was an asinine piece of faithlessness. I might have known she could do the Maud Allan business on her head. Indeed, I maintain that if this lady chose to dance on her charming blonde head she not only could do so, but would convince the majority of her audience that it was the best way of doing things.

Who shall say that Dryads did not dance on tip-toe? And if the County Council insists that we should assume that they wore clothes, why not silver garters?

Her love-making would have seduced Adonis where Venus failed, and would have sent any less preoccupied man off his head. There is a dance of triumph when the Shepherd promises to return after her ten years of imprisonment in the oak tree; the tearing, rippling joy of it wrought one to tears, but the unforgettable moments were those when she looked for her lover, just beginning to doubt him a little. The ten years are over, and she runs in and out of the trees, searching the distance for signs of him. Genée made us forget that we already knew the plot, knew that he would presently appear, unfaithful, a Shepherdess on his arm. We held our breaths to see from behind which tree she would peer and run next, and to know what hope she had gathered or lost.

When the couple have come and gone, and the poor little dryad is left alone with her broken romance, Genée tries a big effect. She has fallen on her knees, and she shuffles along the ground, pitifully and desperately keeping the same position. This effect did not produce the impression it should on the audience. I believe that the slight failure was entirely due to the way the artist had arranged her hair; it was too unsophisticated. If she would only let it fall straight and loose each side, her head, with its big eyes and elfin features, would look far more fairy-childish. At

present there is a touch of Parisian chic, which, charming enough in its way, is rather out of the picture. We frequently mark the difference between elfin sprites and civilised sprightliness by varying arrangements of the hair. For instance, take a head from Helen Stratton's illustrations to the "Ice Maiden," put on it an elaborate coiffure and a Paris hat, and you'll have something uncommonly like one of Willette's or Steinlen's women.

Mr. Gordon Cleather, who assisted Mlle. Genée as the songster shepherd, did well. The clear, unforced quality of his voice was pleasing. I wished the dryad had spared the garland of flowers which she added to the other raggle-taggles hung about his person.

A Merry Devil (The Playhouse).

A dramatist is allowing himself great indulgence when he borrows from the treasures of Italian mediæval tradition. Half the work is done for him, and so one expects the rest to be very fine, very accomplished. Think of the jewels and the lovers, the poets and poisons, the free-hearted ladies and their dark slaves, and a hundred other assets. Then, too, the pleasures of the table constituted a whole range of drama and taste—as a contemporary remarks, Mr. Fagan "derives much from the elegant Florentine setting."

Many facile writers have fallen heavily on this treasure-trove, Maurice Hewlett and Max Pemberton, for instance, but no man of them has laid it about more freely than Mr. Fagan.

Madonna Giralda Capponi is an attractive widow, who lives alone with her cousin Cassandra, chaperone and protegée. Giralda is the merry devil. The two women maintain the fact by their continuous mirth—there was no single demonstration of humorous appreciation to which they did not treat us. Clear, bell-like laughter, the feminine substitutes for roars and guffaws, giggles and chuckles, all these they lavished, and other variations of merriment for which I find no name. If, at last, we were not convinced that the lady is a merry devil and a gay dog to boot it was not for lack of telling.

This merry widow has scandalised the city by her conduct. She appears to be respectable, but has three suitors, whom she encourages to wait upon her—Sir Philip, the English "bully" bulldog hero; Count Silvio, love-sick poet; and Captain Bambazone, roistering out-at-elbows. Her uncle, an elderly gentleman with choleric inclinations, has threatened to poison the one of these who proves to be the lady's choice. Why he does this is not clear, but probably it is to uphold his attribute of avuncular mediævalism. Bambazone, who provides a backbone of humour to the piece in an inordinate love of his stomach, has annoyed Giralda out of her dainty, rollicking devilry. She conceives the idea of giving him an indigestible meal, and when the inevitable pain arrives tells him that he must have taken poison.

When the jest is at its height and Bambazone rolling on the floor, Sir Philip enters. Hearing the supposed truth, his law-loving nature is shocked, and he demands from Giralda the right to avenge her guest. The suggestion is received with peals of merriment. He is horrified, and calling her a savage he departs in dudgeon. The lady falls into a mediæval passion, and swears revenge. Bambazone shall be reported dead and a dummy corpse prepared. Then she will work on the Englishman with her fears of legal complications, and so persuade him to condone the crime by burying the corpse. The ruse succeeds admirably, and Giralda leaves Sir Philip to swallow the jest. He stands thinking a moment, then comes to a sudden resolution. One can see by the straightened shoulders that it is a significant one, worthy of a bully bulldog hero. He snaps a slender twig from an orange tree and strides after the lady. He must be going to beat her. For a few moments we were left to breathless and horrid imaginings. Then she dashed in, victim to another mediæval passion. These assets were well-worn by the end. "He has whipped me! me!! me!!! but I will be avenged—I will get some of my own back—he shall return, and my servants shall hold him while I lay on till I drop. . . . ." This was her speech, more or less word for word. So the end is prepared for.

The merry one succumbs to her conquering bully. The last scene was almost as charming as it should be. The lovers juggle prettily with the words master and slave. Finally, when Sir Philip begs forgiveness, his lady murmurs: "I won't forgive you, I'll marry you."

Miss Winifred Emery, who played Giralda, "did do her part most excellently well as I have heard a woman in my life," and Mr. Aubrey Smith made a splendid British hero. Once or twice he even succeeded in making the play and its emotions seem almost real. Mr. Cyril Maude made as jolly a roisterer as ever trod the boards.

N. C.

Many people who are interested in the art of Madame Yvette Guilbert are sorry that she has usually confined herself lately to light comedy songs. They should visit the Palace now, for she is giving one which is quite as grim in its humour as any of those she used to sing.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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

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

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

SOCIALISM AND THE CHURCHES.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

As an officer of the British section of the Christian Socialist Fellowship, I feel it is very necessary to say a few words in defence of our society and against the unfair and unkind remarks of your correspondent, F. G. Howe.

In the first place, the address of the Rev. J. Stitt Wilson was a very explicit analysis of the present capitalistic system of production for profit.

He explained that the cause of all poverty was the fact that one portion of the community had the power to enslave another and larger portion of the community for the benefit of the smaller class.

He elaborated the development of society from its infancy, and drew this great conclusion, namely, that all poverty and suffering was caused by the power of the few over the many.

He also prophesied that unless Great Britain once and for all decided that her people should have free access to the soil and to the means whereby they could obtain the necessities of life, her days as a great nation were numbered.

If your correspondent wants a better definition of the Socialist position than Mr. Wilson gave, then he had better read the "Christian Socialist," where Mr. Wilson explains his position more fully.

For our part, we are out to capture the great Christian Church for Socialism, and I suggest to Mr. Howe that the best way to do that is to teach the elementary truths of the Socialist ideal. Is this the new rallying point amongst Christians?

The Rev. Stitt Wilson said: "Never have the workers of the world received the just reward of their labours."

"Social injustice has been the greatest sin on the page of human history."

Rev. Will Reason: "We must capture the churches for Socialism."

Rev. W. E. Orchard: "Socialism is the carrying of religion into the sphere of economics."

Rev. Conrad Noel: "No religion is worth anything unless it expresses itself in outward acts."

Rev. J. E. Rattenbury: "Socialism is the only real theory of society which can face the problems of society."

If this is the new rallying point amongst Christians, then let us thank God that at last the Church has awakened from her slumber. At last the Christian ministers and clergy have ranged themselves on the side of justice and truth.

The Christian Socialist Fellowship is not a soup kitchen society. We stand for the revolutionary principle of Socialism as the only hope of the world. We believe that the application of the principles of Jesus Christ to society must result in the overthrow of Capitalism and the substitution of a co-operative commonwealth, under which the means of life would be co-operatively owned, and controlled, and administered.

The Fellowship, in a word, represents an international Christian revolt against orthodox and conventional economic and social ideas, and the tendency in the Christian Church towards first principles. JOS. REEVES.

(Correspondence secretary of the C.S.F.)

* * *

WORKERS' EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

We notice that in your issue of the week before last you state that the Workers' Educational Association is "a purely private body eked out by subscriptions from such trade unionists as Lord Londonderry." As members of Labour organisations, of Socialist organisations, or of both, who are at the same time members of the executive of the Workers' Educational Association, we desire to state:—

(1) That the Workers' Educational Association is as much, or as little, "a purely private organisation" as a trade union or a co-operative society.

(2) That it consists of some 60 branches, including not less than 800 trade union, co-operative, and other working-class organisations.

(3) That its executive, which is democratically elected by the members appointed to the council by the branches and affiliated societies, includes, out of 20 members, 14 members of Labour and Socialist organisations. The remaining six are connected with definite educational interests, viz., the Working Men's College, Ruskin College, Directors of Education, Social and political Education, and Toynbee Hall.

(4) That the report on "Oxford and Working Class Education," which you say "was never put before the trade unionists of the country," has been submitted to the 200 societies sending delegates to the conference, at which the committee by whom the report was drawn up was approved.

(5) That the Workers' Educational Association has no responsibility, direct or indirect, for the proposals put forward by Lord Curzon in his memorandum on "Principles and Methods of University Reform."

Unless we were convinced that the association was a thoroughly democratic body, capable of making much-needed educational facilities more available for the work-people of this country, who control its policy, we should certainly not serve on the executive, and we desire to repudiate your ill-informed suggestion that, in some way—which we notice you do not define—it is hostile to the interests of the working classes.

We rely upon you to give this letter as much publicity as the statement to which it refers.

WILLIAM TEMPLE (Fabian Society).
GEORGE ALCOCK (Trustee Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants).
W. A. APPLETON (Secretary General Federation of Trade Unions).
JESSE ARGYLE (vice-president Working Men's Club and Institute Union).
ELEANOR BARTON (I.L.P.).
W. H. BERRY (Co-operative Union).
GEORGE DEW (Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners).
J. H. EDWARDS (S.D.P. and Boot and Shoe Operatives).
TOM JONES (Fabian Society).
MARGARET MCMILLAN (I.L.P.).
JULIA P. MADAMS (Co-operative Union).
W. A. NICHOLLS (ex-president N.U.T.).
JOHN E. SWAN (I.L.P. and Durham Miners' executive).
R. H. TAWNEY (Fabian Society).

* * *

THE JACKAL AND THE DEAD LION.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

My attention has been drawn to a paragraph by C. H. Norman in THE NEW AGE of April 1st, 1909, re Cecil Rhodes' conduct during the Boer war. The actual fact of Mr. Rhodes' courage is too well known to require any refutation of the lies repeated by C. H. Norman. For instance, we have only to remember Mr. Rhodes' action in facing 2,000 armed Matabele warriors with nothing more than a riding whip in his hand, and forbidding his escort of two men to carry any arms. At that momentous interview he secured peace from the Matabeles when all other means had failed, and when they were actually in open hostility.

As to Mr. Rhodes' behaviour during the Kimberley siege, every eye witness can tell you that he disdained even the most ordinary precautions for his own safety, while at the same time using every means and endeavour in his power for the safety of the helpless women and children. Mr. Rhodes received public acknowledgment and thanks for his services rendered to the distressed within the town, and also for the spirited way in which he assisted in the sorties. Where was C. H. Norman at that time, when England needed men? There was, as there always is under such conditions, friction between the military and civilian factions during the siege, which is to be regretted, and may account for the slander.

As to Mr. Rhodes being responsible for the war, I know from my own personal knowledge that no one regretted it more, or used greater effort to guard against it, than he did, and I refer you to his attitude at the time of the Jameson Raid (which he did his best to avert) to show how strongly he desired to maintain peace.

In conclusion, you will always find among a nation some like this man Norman, who resort to the weakness of defamation as a means to much-desired publicity, and like the Jackals, when the Monarch lies dead, they rend the carcass of the Lion. FREDERICK RHODES.

* * *

THE CABLE COMPANIES.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

As a man of considerable expert knowledge of the cable business, I was astounded to read Mr. Norman's article on the agitation for cheap cable rates. It has been my business to keep in close touch with this movement from the beginning, and I unhesitatingly pronounce the scheme to be one set on foot by a certain number of business men whose principal aim and object is to have their cablegrams sent cheaply at the expense, either of cable company shareholders or of the taxpayers.

In a movement of this sort it is just as well to examine the provenance of the thing, and I should like to refer you to a meeting which was held at the Mansion House on December 11th last. We find that the chair was taken by the Lord Mayor, and he was most admirably supported, from their own standpoint, by such good, sound democrats as Sir Edward Sassoon, the Duke of Argyle, Mr. Jesse Collings, M. Lemieux, the Canadian Postmaster-General (who made a long and florid speech, and said nothing), the Earl of Jersey, and Lord Milner. The irony of the situation was provided by the silent presence on the platform of Lord Strathcona, himself a director of a cable company! Despite the fact that Sir Edward Sassoon protested that "he was not fighting for privileges for the rich merchant, to whom a large or small cablegram bill meant little or nothing, but for the small trader and for the artisan whose sons and daughters were far away in some remote outpost of Empire," I think we know what importance to attach to public utterances of gentry of their description. Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.

As for the cable ring, of which we hear so much, it is all moonshine. Anyone who knows anything about the cable business at all knows that there is no such thing as a cable ring. And as for Mr. Henniker Heaton's reiterated statement that cables are idle during the night, I would simply recommend Mr. Heaton to take a few elementary lessons in geography. If he did this, he would know that when it is midnight in London, it is seven o'clock in New York, six o'clock in Chicago, between half-past three and four in the afternoon in San Francisco and Vancouver, one o'clock in Honolulu, and "to-morrow morning" in the Australasian continent. And all this time messages are filling the cables as fast as the operators can key or punch them. Personally, my own regret is that Mr. Henniker Heaton, who has done undeniably good work in the area of postal reform, should have been so innocent and short-sighted as to allow himself to be made the cat's-paw of the guileless and disinterested gentlemen I have enumerated. EXPERT.

* * *

"QUAINT DANCES AND LUSTY AMAZONS."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

This was one of the attractions advertised by the Imperial International Exhibition—what an amount of brain power is used up in searching for words which will dimly suggest indecency without offending our English consciences. These lusty Amazons are to be found in "Dahomey."

There was a circular railing penning in twenty or thirty men and women. Though I stood close and saw clearly, the thing seemed impossible in its shameless ugliness! The quaint dances turned out to be an incompetent performance of the danse du ventre. If the authorities admitted the show as such, they would probably justify themselves by a plea of "native dances," but these dances were certainly not native to Dahomey; they were tainted by European notions of suggestive movement. The women trailed round and round, never glancing at their audience or companions, like sullen beasts, but the men twisted their necks about, casting shifty looks at the white women on the other side of the railing. Some seemed blind with misery, but from the eyes of others blazed an ecstacy of hard, naked contempt. And they flung the ugly gestures at the crowd knowing that that was what it had come and paid for.

Half-past ten had just struck; there was in the atmosphere an aching sense of dreariness born of the chilly air and the discordant noises from the enclosure. Dotted about in the "village" were mud huts where these people lived, and outside them the babies lay—tiny wooden figures with monkey's eyes. Tortured pity, more than half loathing, sank into my heart, and my legs swayed under the cold weight of it. I hurried back towards the entrance—a black man passed, and the hatred in his eyes burnt through me and melted the cold weight, and my heart shrivelled. There seemed no certainty that he would not murder me, and no possibility of blame if he should.

Round the pen the crowd had grown larger. A low moan cut the air close beside me, and I shuddered, guessing what it was. A small child—of the audience—stood there. The white face was sick and miserable, and I watched while he pressed knuckles in his eyes (fiercely), believing, as children do, that the horror lay there, and could be rubbed off. His parents looked on at the dances, their chins dropping loosely. The mother, hearing the tiny moan, grabbed the child by the hair and rumpled it soothingly. "There, there; did the black man frighten him? Never mind, he won't hurt you if you're good." These phrases reached me as I went out. I wonder how long they kept him there?

C.

* * *

THE DRAMATIC CENSORSHIP.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Possibly this interview, which the original Mr. Daly granted me, will add interest to the censor controversy.

Mr. Arnold Daly, actor-manager, whose production of Bernard Shaw's "Mrs. Warren's Profession" was stopped by the New York police, has arrived in Paris from Carlsbad in quest of a new play for New York this fall.

"What I want to talk about, however," said Mr. Daly, "is the suppression by the London censor of Shaw's new play, 'The Showing-up of Blanco Posnet.' Isn't it ridiculous?

"The minute anyone attempts to really benefit the public he is declared immoral. Look at the case of Ibsen. When his plays first appeared even the dramatic critics declared he was a degenerate, and he nearly died before gaining recognition. Anything is permitted on the stage as long as one does not make the public think. But if thinking is immoral in England, then it is high time the country became immoral.

"Half the people don't know what is immoral. Here is my definition: That is immoral which tends to corrupt or debase in any way that which is finest in any one. That is moral, no matter what, which tends to encourage, uplift, and enlighten that which is best in you. But let a man to-day paint vice as disgusting, bestial, and working harm, and he is dubbed immoral; let him make vice attractive, charming, and wholly romantic, and he is hailed with delight. Note some of the suggestive musical comedies, for example. Or take 'Raffles'—there's an immoral play, for it makes crime attractive.

"Certainly, the censor ought to be abolished. I refuse the right to any one man to say what should be played in the theatre. When every actor-manager in London, some time ago declared for the censor, they thereby declared themselves grocers, and the only reason can be that they were afraid of offending the censor himself for fear of his retaliating by shutting down on some of their plays.

"I say openly that Shaw should now annihilate this British censor with ridicule. Ridicule is the only way, and Shaw is master of this weapon. And when a man is so ignorant, so asinine, he should be shown no mercy.

"In America, on the other hand, Mr. Taft did quite right to leave the theatre if he thought the play was vulgar. This is the way to censor a play, and others should emulate his initiative.

"My fear, however, is that if a play in America is declared vulgar, the people will go, instead of staying away." F. H. BURLINGHAM.

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(To be concluded.)

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