Our Friend the Tsar.
The New Age.


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Notes of the Week.

Never perhaps has Sir Edward Grey shown to such disadvantage in a first-class debate as on Thursday, when he defended his sanction of the Tsar's visit to England against the criticism of the Socialist, Labour, and Radical Parties. In the matter of the Balkans he was at least as lucid as Sir Charles Dilke, whom we cannot altogether acquit of a little of the expert's love of mystification. In the matter of the Congo, Sir Edward Grey's mental discomfort was reflected in feeble repetitions of the word embarrassing; everything was or would be embarrassing to somebody or other if somebody or other did so and so. But this hesitancy and repetition on the subject of the Congo became lamentable self-contradiction on the subject of the Tsar's visit. Each sentence received its death warrant from its successor; and the whole passage was, and is, a shambles of mutually destructive statements and conceptions.

For example, he deprecated not merely the discussion in Parliament of the internal affairs of foreign nations, but even an official knowledge of them. We were to regard foreign nations as ladies used to be regarded in the shambles of mutually destructive statements and conceptions.

That really, in plain and formal terms, is the position of affairs at this moment. Genuine representatives of the Russian people, whether royal or plebeian, would be welcomed by all classes in this country. If their lives were unsafe amongst us, it would be merely from over-feeding and over-fêting. Suppose the 200 members of the first Duma to be libérate and despatched on a mission to England, how many members of the House of Commons would vote against receiving them? Not one, not even Mr. Rees or Mr. Belloc. When, however, the English people have every ground for doubting the bona fide representative character of a visitor, their distrust of foreigners amounts to hatred. We undertake to say that the Tsar is at this moment more hated in England than any other personage in the world; and we defy Sir Edward Grey to deny it. Under these circumstances it is reactionary of the Liberal Cabinet to permit the Tsar's visit to take place; reactionary both in the sense that it is unpopular and in the more perilous sense that it involves a set back to the progress of democracy in foreign politics. And such a set back must necessarily affect not England alone but all the world.
Nine of the seventeen land clauses of the Budget have now been passed, though in a somewhat dilapidated form; and Ministers are to be given a brief holiday before resuming. Some talk was current last week that the land clauses might be entirely dropped in order to placate the Lords; and the “Westminster Gazette” was base enough to support the suggestion. Fortunately, Mr. Asquith is too good a politician and Mr. Lloyd George too good an electioneer to think of it. For, although the super-tax is, the land clauses represent much more than their face value. They are the first marks of the teeth of the people in the real problems of economics. To drop them would be to drop Liberalism for ever. We ourselves hold that the fear of the Lords is the beginning of foolishness. Nothing would better suit the book of genuine Liberals than a conflict with the Lords on the historic question of the land. But Lord Lansdowne, we imagine, however much he may feel mince, will never do more than wink.

Meanwhile, the decision of the Government to lay down the additional four Dreadnoughts will undoubtedly still further enhance both their own and the Budget’s prestige. The last refuge of the wealthy against the new taxes is removed by this concession. No more can they declare that the Budget is Socialism. It is a taking epigram, but, like most such mots, misleading. Nothing does it attack capital in the sense in which Liberalism professes to attack monopoly. Presumably an attack upon a monopoly is intended to destroy it. But Socialism does not attack capital to destroy it, but to socialise it. Nor is there any hope that when Liberalism has killed a monopoly the monopoly will stay dead. The same causes that produced it continue and infallibly reproduce it. The last death of monopoly is to be assumed by the State. But this is Socialism. Whence the fear of the Lords?

Both Mr. Asquith and Mr. Winston Churchill have been exercising themselves this week in the difficult art of defining Liberalism. Mr. Asquith succeeded in producing a colourable imitation of a worthy ideal, but its relation to fact is lamentably partial. Mr. Churchill only defined Liberalism by contrast with Socialism. Socialism, he said, attacked capital; Liberalism attacked monopoly. It is a takiag epigram, but, like most such mots, misleading. Nothing does it attack capital in the sense in which Liberalism professes to attack monopoly. Presumably an attack upon a monopoly is intended to destroy it. But Socialism does not attack capital to destroy it, but to socialise it. Nor is there any hope that when Liberalism has killed a monopoly the monopoly will stay dead. The same causes that produced it continue and infallibly reproduce it. The last death of monopoly is to be assumed by the State. Whence we may conclude that Socialism is simply Liberalism made finally effective.

The new tactics of the imprisoned Suffragettes have been so far successful that twelve of the fourteen have had to be released long before their sentences had expired. The cause of the woman has now been taken from their hand, and there is no longer any excuse for denying that the women have fairly won. Mr. Asquith had better make the amende honorable at once. Nothing does it but to the non-European inhabitants. Even the status quo is not maintained, since not only the native voters in Cape Colony are deprived of their right to serve at any time as members of the Commonwealth Parliament, but their simple vote may be taken away by a two-thirds majority of the all white assembly. True, the enfranchised natives have so far counted for almost nothing, and no one of them has ever been nominated in Cape Colony as a candidate for the House of Commons. But they are now robbed of the one splendid lie left to them: they are robbed of hope. Nothing would have been cheaper in every respect than the grant to them of this—partnership in perpetuity.

To Helen.

I.

Did she aspire the harder path to tread
To self-control, fulfilment, and the fame
Of being everlastingly the same,
Herself in power and pride, I should not dread.

The days to come. As every moment sped
To oblivion, I should see the sense of shame
Grow less; and on her brow the cloven flame
That saves a soul, and oft in its despite?

Perchance the gentler love that in her face
Timidly glows in moments of delight
May be salvation to her; and the cheer
Of victory wait her in another sphere.

II.

Her lambent eyes du tréfle, non declare
What in her blood is potent
The splendour and the passion that, complete
In their possession, make her life a lair
Of mastery beareth her crown of dusky air.
They gleam like stars at midnight, an effete
Pale glory that the nascent day will greet,
Extinguish, and efface it in her hair.
Her breasts are fresh and fragrant as a flower
Unsullied, nor displayed in a device.
Her lips are live with love, and ever our
Is hers for conquest; kiss with kiss she vies.

TRIMPHANT in her plenitude of power
That, swooning, yields a rapturous surprise.

Alfred E. Randall.
Our Friend the Tsar.

We must educate our masters—Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Asquith. They have forgotten or are reckless of England's history, of her good name among the nations, which is far above the value of allies. The English people whom Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Asquith rule will not long suffer her good name to be blemished by alliances with a Tsar who carries on a Government by imprisonment, torture, and murder. We shall say little now as to the fatuous policy of Sir Edward Grey has pursued in an attempt to isolate Germany by negotiating treaties with some of Germany's rivals. Were the Tsar's position secure on the throne it would be criminal folly to rely upon his word should we be ever engaged in war with Germany. A few years hence the English Foreign Ministers will be found again insisting that we have put our money on the wrong horse.

Says Sir Edward Grey: "To criticise the internal administration of a foreign country or to justify the internal administration is almost equally offensive to the country itself." This is insolence indeed from the successor to a party that was returned to office by "Bulgarian Atrocities." The old-fashioned Liberal Party made itself known where Greece and Italy, Armenia and the Congo were concerned. Nay, a few days ago Sir Edward Grey justified Russian intervention in Persia by reason of the disturbed state of that country, and that Turkey was damned because Turkey was understood to be tottering; Nicholas must be welcomed because his power is still supreme.

The Parliamentary Russian Committee, whose President is Lord Courtney, has just issued an account of the present state of Russia compiled by Prince Kropotkin. The Committee—an all-British one—write that "the statement is non-political, and deals with the question from a purely humanitarian standpoint. The sources of information are directly and indirectly stated, the facts recorded being based on official reports or extracts from Russian newspapers, which are subjected to a rigorous censorship, and on letters from correspondents whose testimony can be relied upon."

Kropotkin tells us that "the prisoners of Russia are so overcrowded at the present moment that they contain, according to official statements, something like 180,000 prisoners, though the utmost capacity for which they were designed is only 107,000. At the Ekaterinadar Prison the town authorities state "there is room for 360 prisoners, but the gaol contains 1,200 inmates, out of whom 500 are ill with eruptive typhus." Most of these lie with the others in the common room.

Th of the Tsar, to whom the City of London is about to give an Address of Welcome, take a fondish joy in torturing and ill-treating the prisoners, for "these torturers know well that they have the full approval of the Union of Russian Men, and as soon as this Union applies to the Tsar they will be pardoned."

Here are one or two instances of the treatment meted out to these unhappy persons by the Tsar's favourites: "The agent of the Secret Police, Linden, was examining a young woman suspected of robbery. She explained how she and the watchman were tied by the robbers. Linden did not believe her, and began to beat her with his fists on the breasts, so that blood flowed from her mouth and she fell in a swoon; a few hours later she had a terrible internal haemorrhage. . . . Three days later it was discovered the woman was absolutely innocent. The prisoner Gutin was beaten with sticks and thrown on the floor and kicked by the warders to the very day when he was hanged." Another, a youth of twenty-three, had all the hair pulled out of his head and beard and several of his ribs broken. "With the butt of a revolver polished, Azeff repeatedly asked that he was unrecognisable." Whilst some prisoners were under trial at Lodz "they were tortured during several days, they were beaten with nagaskas till in some places the flesh literally tore off in pieces; when they lay helpless on the floor their tormentors jumped from chairs on to their bodies; their heads were twisted round, their hair pulled out, their teeth broken."

After tormenting his victims we shall not expect to find the Tsar loath to execute them. In 1908 the number of executions rose to 825, as against ten in 1905. The number of exiles has now reached the enormous total of 78,000, most of whom are living under conditions of extreme misery.

These are facts which are not disputed; it is indeed almost unnecessary to re-present them to an English public, which is fully aware of the means by which the Tsar rules the country. Sir Edward Grey did not contest these statements, but pleaded on behalf of the Tsar that during the same period there had been a large number of Nihilist outrages. Every one of these outrages is due to the Tsar's government. With the revelations of the Secret Police spies, Azeff and Harding, fresh in our memories, it is an insult to our intelligence for Sir Edward Grey to mention the Nihilists as the agent-provocateur, who had taken the main part in the assassination of von Plehve, of the Grand Duke Sergius; Harding, decorated with the French legion d'honneur, who is proved to have taken a hand in such men as wounded and killed by order of the Tsar, we have the ever-fertile sources of murder and outrage attributed to the Revolutionists. The Tsar has himself paid men to murder von Plehve, Sergius, and then makes war on them for torture and execute his Russian subjects. Are we to be surprised that under such a régime some persons are driven to revolt and do, unpaid by the Tsar, seek to rid the world of some of his creatures? This is the man we are to welcome to our shores; this is the policy we are to help the Tsar to carry out. The Tsar's visit will be followed by loans from this country, and this money will be employed to maintain a further army of Azeffs and Hardings. The financial risks attaching to these loans it is not our part to dwell upon. We shall find, as the French have already found, that money lent to Russia is money lost; bankrupt Russia pays the French interest on its loans in France. Thus the French people find themselves actually committed to the maintenance of the Russian spy system in Paris. Clemenceau's threat to clear it out resulted in his immediate overthrow. If the French do not support him with further loans they are warned that every penny they have invested in Russia will be lost.

Sir Edward Grey is for committing us to the same disgrace. The King's visit was followed by an loan of 13 millions; the Tsar's visit will be followed by a larger borrowing, and very soon we shall find ourselves in it up to the neck. We shall have an army of Russian spies quartered upon us in London, paid for out of our own pockets, his agents plotting plots against the Tsar, that during the same period there had been a large number of Nihilist outrages. Every one of these outrages is due to the Tsar's government. We appeal to all lovers of liberty and progress for moral support in the struggle that is now going on for the conquest of political freedom. In the struggle for freedom each country must work out its own salvation; but we shall not forget that there exists a web of international solidarity between all civilised countries. It is true that the loans contracted by the heads of despotic states in foreign countries contribute to support that kind of policy which the Tsar has been using to support his own despotism. But Russian exiles also know from their own experience how the moral support which the fights for liberty have never failed to find in the enlightened portions of the civilised nations has been helpful to them, and how much it has aided them to
maintain faith in the ultimate victory of freedom and justice." Mr. Belloc and Mr. J. M. Robertson would bolster up the power of the Tsar by declaring that he represents the Russian people, that he is a symbol of Russian national pride for the Russian people in the same degree that the Duke of Westminster or Lord Rosebery stands for the English people. He is a symbol of tyranny, and as such must be hated by a people who believe in the pursuit of truth and justice, that truth and justice should be treated. Mr. Belloc's doctrine of the divine right of kings is an exploded one in this country. Mr. Belloc brings forward an expert to say that by our refusal to accept the Tsar's welcome the Tsar is facing death at the hands of the hangman. There is no sign of fear in his demeanour; he has the spiritual consciousness of the fanatic by which to support himself in the hour of trial and condemnation.

Sir Curzon Wyllie is dead; he has died as a representative of the Indian Government. His virtues were many, but his offence was that he was the agent of British rule in India. There are many close observers who are willing to point out the absurdities by which the barbarians, democrats, patriots, and imperialists are attempting in vain to destroy the significance of Dhingra's plea of justification. Mr. Hubert Bland is a writer who is always boasting of his faith in democracy and his adherence to the imperial and patriotic ideal. In a recent issue of the "Sunday Chronicle" he has tried to expound the moral line of Dhingra's defence. His article may be taken as a striking example of the hollow sophistries by which a man who is a Socialist, a Democrat, an Imperialist, and a patriot upholds the British rule in India. "Hubert" has joined the croakers, an ominous warning of old age; and the existence of a school of writers engaged in advocating the evacuation of India is the chief sign to him of national degeneration.

"Hubert" cites one nobility in his argument for British rule in India—the conception of Pax Britannica. This belief in peace is remarkable in an Imperialist; according to the Imperialists, what is bad for Europe is good for India. "Hubert" admits that the continuance of British rule cannot be defended on the grounds of "Self-Interest."

What has Dhingra urged in his plea? "Just as the Germans have no right to occupy India so the English have no right to occupy India." Let me put three political definitions: "Patriotism" means love of one's country. "Democracy" means the free government of a free people by rulers selected by that people. "Imperialism" is more difficult to analyse; but generally speaking, the Imperialist is a man who believes in glorifying his country and in spreading its theories and methods of government to other countries, peacefully or forcibly.

Dhingra is an inhabitant of India. He calls himself a patriot, a democrat, and an Imperialist. What does his duty as an Indian patriot, democrat, and Imperialist involve? As a democrat he must support anti-English propaganda, because his country is not a "free government of a free people by rulers selected by that people," which is what all democrats strive for. As a patriot he is in the same position; no man could call himself a patriot and consent to watch his country governed by an alien race. As an Imperialist, conduct compels him to be anti-English. Indian moral philosophy is entirely different from the philosophy of our country. As a proud lover of his country's ideals he must seek to spread the liberticides of Indian moral philosophies and Indian religions, just as the English Church has tried to convert India to Christianity by force of arms. He has been charged with being a cowardly assassin. Mr. Belloc is a writer who is always boasting of "his faith in democracy and his admission of one's country. "Democracy is not "cowardly," though he is a murderer. He is facing death at the hands of the hangman. There is no sign of fear in his demeanour; he has the spiritual consciousness of the fanatic by which to support himself in the hour of trial and condemnation.

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Dhingra is an inhabitant of India. He calls himself a patriot, a democrat, and an Imperialist. What does
Searchers after Reality.

I.—Bax.

When the clown at the circus puts his head through the paper disc, he appears framed in a ring of torn paper. This is the impression I have of Mr. Bax's position after reading the "Roots of Reality." He has certainly put his head through a previously unpenetrated system and has revealed a new point of view on the Hegelian panlogism. Why does Mr. Bax pedantically employ the word panalogueistic instead of the generally employed panlogistic? This attack, in its lucidity and directness, is infinitely superior to the fumbling controversial method of Mr. Schiller and the pragmatists, but its significance only comes out when one何况s up the philosophical assertion of the new point of view in the general movement of European philosophy.

This modern metaphysical movement seems as strange to the layman as the teaching of the simple life would do to a savage. You must have been sophisti- cated before you can experience the relief of repentance. You must first have been a Hegelian before you can get enthusiastic over the general anti-intellectualist movement in philosophy throughout Europe. Even Nietzsche admitted that it was better to have had the Wagnerian disease and to have recovered from it than to have merely been continuously healthy and unconscious. (The comedy of it is, however, that the anti-intellectualists are generally so lucid that a class of reader is drawn in which has not previously sinned with Hegel.)

The disease in this case is intellectualism. The method of all systems of philo- sophy, when all the decorations and disguises are stripped off, ultimately resolves itself to this. One takes a little bit of known reality and argues dogmatically that it is alone is the true analogy by which the cosmos is to be described. Good philosophy then consists in the choice of a good microcosm, just as surely as genius results from the avoidance of rashness and the development of one's grandparents.

Intellectualism takes a bad analogy, logic and the geometric sciences, which are in essence identical, and asserts that the flux of phenomena which apparently contradicts this is not real, and can really be resolved into logical concepts. Chance is abolished, everything is reduced to law, so that omnipotent intelligence, able to seize the entire universe at a glance could construct from that its past and future. Bax, on the contrary, asserts that there is an alogical element which cannot be reduced to law.

The great antithesis before modern metaphysics is thus the old one between the flux of phenomena and the concepts by which we analyse it in thought. Which term of the antithesis is real? Here I distin- guish four solutions. The Hegelian: that only the concept is real; positive significance only attaches to thought or rational elements as opposed to its alogical terms; the other side of the antithesis is argued away. The Bergsonian: that only the flux is real, the concepts being mere practical dodges. The pragmatist: that the concepts are only purposive instruments, but that purpose and will constitute the only reality. Then the Baxian: that both are real, and that the logical is like a serpent engaged in continually swallowing the endless meal of the flux, a task in which it can never succeed.

"Reality is the inseparable correlation of these two alternate terms." There are thus two roots of reality. Of these four solutions I am here concerned more particularly with the distinction between that of Bax and that of Bergson. There are two ways in which a man may be led to the denial of the possibility of including the alogical under the logical. If one empha-sizes the character of the flux as motion, then he sees that the static concepts cannot ever represent it. So Bergson. If one emphasises the infinity of detail in the immediately given, its grittiness, its muddiness, and hence the impossibility of pulling it in the smooth, tidy, geometrical concepts, one arrives at the logical. The difference affects their view of the function of concepts in the flux. This is a rough analogy for Bergson's view. When I see in the changing shape of flame something which resembles a saw edge I may solely for the purposes of communication call it a blade. But I have not by that altered the nature of the flame. So with concepts and universals of all kinds. We envisage the flux in certain static geometric shapes entirely for practical purposes which we leave ultimate reality at all.

Proteus is god, and he cannot be seized in any formula. Bax, on the other hand, assumes that these forms which describe the flux have some ultimate reality. They do really contain and control the alogical as the hexagons in the comb contain the honey. He refuses, however, to go to the length of the intellec- tualists, who would say that in the last resort matter is absorbed and absorbed in form. Bax's position is that there is always something left over, that when you dip the net of concepts and unconceptual thought you always escape through the meshes. He thus occupies a curious midway position which I think will in the end be found untenable.

Here we get to the actual frontier position of modern speculation. The anti-intellectualists, the lay theologians, having been violently expelled from their temple and the final admission that logical thought is by its nature incapable of containing the flux of reality, what remains? Are we to resign ourselves to ignorance of the nature of the cosmos, or is there some new method open to us?

Bergson says that there is—that of intuition. From a common origin life has divided in two directions; the "clan vital," in its struggle towards the maximum of indeterminism, has employed two methods, the one instinct, the other intellect; one exemplified in animals, the other in man. (Intellect being understood here in a definite way as the capacity for making models of the flux, of reasoning in logic.) But round the central intellect in man there is a fringe, a penumbra of instinct. This instinct, or, as it is better to call it here, intuition, is the faculty that we must use in at- tempting to grasp the nature of the cosmos, and carefully guard here against a sentimental use of the word. Bergson gives it a precise technical sense. By intellect one can construct approximate models, by in- tution one can identify oneself with the flux. Here Bax stops and parts company with Bergson. Philosophy, he says, "may not be inaptly defined as the last word of the logical." It is impossible for it to get beyond universals or abstractions. Both realise the unsatisfactory nature of the dry land of concepts on which philosophy has lived, and would not be content with it. Both set out and discovered the turbulent river of reality. Bergson jumped in and swam. Bax looked at it, then came back and merely recorded that the land was not all that there was. Bergson could not walk, a reality that the logical reason will never grasp entirely. But he forgot that walking is not the only method of progression, and that the logical method of thought may not be the only way of understanding reality.

By many tollsomes ways Bax, like Moses, leads us to the Promised Land; then, having privately surveyed it, informs us that, after all, it isn't really interesting, tells us to go back again, but always to bear in mind that there is such a place. That is, the intellect really for him the only way of getting at Reality, though we are always to remember that by its very nature it can never reach it. What did he see in the promised land of the alogical which prevented him from writing on it? We can only surmise maliciously that somewhere in its pleasant valleys he saw a woman. Is not intuition
A Visit to Gatchina.
By Francis Grierson.

Far from the madding crowd, in a lonely, isolated place, lies embedded in a pine forest the Palace of Gatchina. My thoughts take a singular turn as I approach the palace. The imagination, when this is entered, is enveloped each one that defied the sympathies of the visitor, however much one felt disposed to approach their personal history with feelings akin to kindness.

The following day was devoted to viewing the unique collections of artistic and historical objects in the art gallery, the Oriental museum, and other salons devoted to Imperial treasures. On the way to the apartments of state my distinguished escort, Prince Bariatinsky, stopped and, running his finger across a mahogany panel, said: "You see there is no difference whether the Emperor is absent or not, it is always the same." Every room, of which there are six hundred, is kept in rigorous cleanliness. In the art gallery the individuality of the Czar Nicholas was the most striking feature; a superb life-size portrait of a marble bust there, a bronze statue yonder, gave a good idea of the handsome man of his day. A veritable Apollo of physical perfection, with a calous face expressive of austere pride and the turned head of a republic—the face of a typical Romanoff, who could, if necessary, like Peter the Great, drink bumpers of wine to which he was used all day and would have more than once been asked to fit a style of art imported from the Orient; a German idea is woven into a Grecian fancy; Eastern pomp mingled with Western luxury, while betwixt and between were there Russia comes in spice of Oriental hospitality and the tender flesh of Slavonic progress quivers under the molten imprint of inexorable tyranny and insatiable greed.

"Ah! what sights this room has seen!" was the exclamation of my noble guide, as we hurriedly left the chamber to wander on and on through avenues of rooms seemingly without number.

It was a picturesque panorama of misery, combined with palatial magnificence, unrivaled by degrees with a dungeon-like realism which all the art and beauty of the place could not relieve. Many of the rooms were just as the Imperial household had left them in years past. Every piece of furniture was there, neat and clean, but the occupants, for the most part, had passed away never to return. The seal of tragedy is linked to the memory of everybody and everything; here it is a recital of the strangulation of the half-imbecile Emperor Paul, there it is a reminiscence of Alexander I, who was beaten by Bonaparte; a trilling relief recalls the passions and sorrows of a grandduchess; on the wall is a souvenir of the heartbroken Nicholas, who died of grief and humiliation because of failure in the Crimea, while a hundred tokens call to mind the frightful ending of Alexander II.

Nor does a promenade in the vast park relieve one of this mental depression. If the palace is like a gorgeous tomb, the park is a theatrical Yosemite. The tall pines, the lonely walks, the dreary water, the melancholy quiet tend to augment the feeling of desolation and unrest that never leaves one, and when I returned to St. Petersburg I appreciated more than ever its life and vivacity.
Melodrama.
By N. C.

Scene: Joint sitting-room of Hector Somers and Mrs. Juntas Fenton. Mrs. Juntas is sitting half in a round table, left. The young men have nearly finished eating.

Hector [helping himself to jam and pushing pot over]: This stuff is glorious. Try some more.

Mrs. Juntas: No, thanks.

[Jerks his chair back from table.]

Hector: I half expected a line from Margot this morning.

Jules [absently]: They are coming back in a week.

Hector: Are they? How do you know?

Jules [irritably]: Sybil told me, and—I mean she wrote it.

Hector: I didn't know you two kept up a correspondence—I thought you despaired all—

Jules: We don't, but since I painted her portrait I sometimes hear from her.

[Jules walks to window.]

Hector: [After slight pause]: I suppose they'll be back in time for the private view. Jules: I don't know. Yes, I suppose so.

[Lights cigarette.]

Hector: I say, Fenton. Don't you think Margot's sketches are rather decent? Jules: [shouting]: No! Dammit you, Somers, can't you talk of anything but those two girls, just because you're engaged to one of them?

Hector: All right, old chap. [Long pause.]

Margot: [absent-mindedly}: What is the matter with her? Is she ill? [Margot nods her head.]

Hector: Then oughtn't we to run quickly for the doctor—?

Margot: [shakes her head]: Sybil, Tor—

Hector: What is the matter with her? Is she well? [Margot nods her head.]

Margot: [With sudden divination}: She's not—

Hector: [with sudden divination}: She's not—

Margot: --?

Hector: [From this point the two seem to exchange their attitude. It is he who is rigid, while her words come in sentences, long.]

Margot: [very slowly]}: You must sit down, sweetheart. Sit down and tell me all about it.

[He pushes her into a chair and kneels down, his arms round her waist. Margot is forced to relax her rigidity by the movement, and she becomes a little more natural; the outward sign is the three lids drop for a moment over the strained, fixed eyes. Then she trembles again from head to foot. Hector holds her hands. As he takes them he notices for the first time, with a tremendous start, that she has a revolver in her right hand. He looks up at her as if to ask her a question, then closes his mouth and gently takes the revolver from her and puts it out of her reach at his left. She struggles.]

Hector: [quietly]: Tell me, darling, what happened.

Mrs. W.: You'd better answer the bell, Mrs. Withers.

Margot: I can't say it straight out at once, not to you or to myself. I'll tell you how it is. Sybil wasn't happy on our holiday. She took no pleasure in anything; she scattered in the garden she would wander away and come back with a look in her eye, as if she were on a path she knew, but she could not find it. She would sit staring. They meet Hector's naturally, but she seems to see, Hector, and miserable. I— I couldn't understand her. On Wednesday she said she would go up to town and change her library books. [Hector starts.]

Mrs. W.: I know she hadn't read any of those in the house. She gathered she wanted to go alone. In the evening she got back without any books and said she'd lost them in the train. One day I teased her about not eating, and said she'd lose her beauty, and she cried and begged me not to talk about her looks. She ran away from me all that day, and when I saw her next she was in bed. She must have crept in quietly and gone to bed without a light. I thought she was asleep; but later she sat up suddenly and said—just as if I'd been talking ever since—"It's my eyes that are beautiful, isn't it, Margot? There's nothing special about me otherwise—it's my eyes!"—Do you know, Hector, I felt somehow—I didn't know why—that this was a dangerous question, but it seemed foolish, so I said, 'Yes, darling; why?' And then she said: 'Yes; he always said my eyes were beautiful,' and lay down again. Then, Hector, I suddenly saw it all. I knew some man must have got her into trouble. That explained everything. I thought and thought, and at last decided I must ask her. I called to her gently, but she was asleep, or wanted me to think so. I could do nothing but wait till the next day. All the next morning I couldn't hardly get a moment with her. She kept on running off, and I was too nervous to keep her; but at
last, over tea, I forced myself to ask her if my guess was right. She admitted it at once and said to me, Hector, that she was going to have a child. But she would not say the name of the man, for she said it was all her fault. You know how religious she is—was.

She corrected herself with a sharp intake of breath.

She said it was her beauty that tempted him. Her eyes—it was always eyes—eyes, that she spoke of.

[Margot covers her own for a moment, then makes a new beginning.]

I saw her desperately restless, so I suggested we should come up to town. That was yesterday. We arrived late and tired, and went to bed almost at once.

As Margot approaches the end of her story her words come more slowly, and sometimes her tongue leaves to the roof of her mouth for a second, causing a stammer.

This morning I woke at about eight, and put out my hand to feel for Sybil—as I often did—but she wasn't there. I sat up quickly and saw her standing at the dressing table. Her back was turned to me and she was looking in the glass—she didn't hear me move, but turned.

[Margot stops for a moment and shuts her eyes.]

She was looking more wonderful than I had ever seen her, Hector. All her old colour had come back, and she was so much thinner that the richness of it seemed to make her transparent, and her eyes were like purple clouds with great stars shining in them. She smiled when she saw me, and then spoke: “Margot, it is my eyes that are beautiful, isn’t it?” I couldn’t speak, Hector, I held my breath and didn’t know why.

[Margot holds it now.]

“He always loved my eyes,” she said again.

[Margot speaks on a rush, her voice going up the scale without getting louder.]

My nail scissors were on the table, Hector. They are very sharp.

[Margot makes an odd sound, almost a laugh.]

She picked them up and struck out her eye—

[Gesture.]

and then fell, and Tor-Tor, she never uttered a sound.

Hector [whispers]: Dead?

Margot: No——

Hector: But I thought you said—

Margot: Yes, I know, but there’s more. She said fainting, of course, and I stood looking for a moment, and then seemed to know what I must do. I thought of her life for the future and the child’s, too, if it should live. You know that revolver I have. Well, I took it out and loaded it, and—

[Her voice becomes louder, as if she were making an announcement to many people.]

I shot Sybil as she lay there.

[For a moment Margot is silent, and then the girl turns to Hector, clawing his arm frantically.]

Tor—Tor, was I right? I knew then, but now—

Hector: Yes, sweetheart, quite right! And, Margot, are you strong enough to bear a little more?

Margot [shaking back]: More! If I’m with you, Tor, but not alone. I couldn’t bear any more alone—

I don’t think I shall ever bear to be alone again.

[She loses herself in a vision; her eyes become fixed and staring again.]

Hector: Margot, I know the man.

Margot: You know him?

Hector: Yes.

[He rises the bell. Enter Mrs. Withers.]

Is Mr. Fenton in, Mrs. Withers?

Mrs. Withers: Yes, sir; ’e’s in ’is room.

Hector: Will you tell him Miss Harcourt is here and wishes to speak to him?

Mrs. Withers: Yes, sir.

[She goes.]

Margot: Mr. Fenton—?

[Hector nods. They both wait silently. Jules enters hurriedly. He is obviously ill at ease.]

Jules: Hallo, Miss Harcourt. I hope there’s nothing wrong.

Hector: Sit down for a minute, Fenton. Margot has bad news for us.

Jules: I am afraid I haven’t time. I must——

Hector: I think you have time to wait for a moment.

[He motions Jules to a chair (centre). Fenton sits down, unwillingly, yet irresistible. Hector stands just behind him and Margot.]

Jules: I hope you are not ill.

Margot: No. It’s Sybil.

Jules [nervously]: Miss Sybil is ill?

Margot: No, not ill.

Jules [stammering]: She isn’t—she can’t be——

Margot: Yes, she’s dead.

[Jules shrinks back in his chair.]

Hector: Some scoundrel got her into trouble. She thought it was the fault of her beauty. You know how religious she always was, don’t you?

[Jules doesn’t answer. Hector taps him on the shoulder with the muzzle of the revolver. Margot starts, but Jules is staring in front of him.]

Jules: Yes, I know.

Hector: This chap had always admired her eyes, like you, Fenton. You always complimented her on the beauty of her eyes, didn’t you?

[Jules does not answer. There is a knocking at the outside door, and Hector taps him again.]

Jules: Yes.

[He is holding himself stiff now.]

Hector: Well, she took a sharp-pointed instrument and she struck out——

[Jules starts up with a scream, and as he turns he is shot. The door is burst violently in and an inspector of police enters, followed by Mrs. Withers, panting and mumbling, then a policeman. The inspector looks at the scene. The girl, the man with a smoking revolver in his hand, and the just fallen body, then back to the policeman. Hector puts down the revolver, and advances, smiling.]

Hector: No, Inspector. The young lady did not shoot both. I must come with you, too.

To Margot, as he still tries to smile.]

This is melodramatic, isn’t it, dear?

Margot: Yes, yes, melodramatic and——

[The girl breaks down, hysterically. The tension is relaxed at last.]
The neglect of music in the form of melodic words, embodying beautiful thoughts and generous sentiment, is strange when compared with the attention paid to what is technically known as music. An instance of the latter interest is afforded by Windermere, which has no fewer than five ‘musical societies’ at work. We wonder when so small a place will have more than one what is technically known as music. An instance of the latter interest is afforded by Windermere, which has no fewer than five piano-tuners once a quarter.

* * *

The mischief is that your average man or woman is apt to smile at the idea of any commonsense person getting up in cold blood and saying verse. I don’t gush, and then put on the air of a long and varied life, heard “Dover Beach” recited in a drawing-room. And yet a barber’s assistant could not make such an ineffable mess of “Dover Beach” as most drawing-room pianists make of the A flat nocturne.

To recite verse does not incur the need of a piano, three hours fingering a day for ten years, and a piano-tuner once a quarter. I would guarantee to teach even a publisher how to read verse respectably in any college, and I admire the energy and the originality of Mr. Galloway Kyle which brought it into being. If people will meet together for the pleasure of hearing music, why should they not meet together for the pleasure of hearing verse? One often hears in a bored drawing-room: ‘Oh! Do play us something!’ But one scarcely ever hears: ‘Oh! Do recite us something!’

One can hear the A flat nocturne of Chopin till one is ready to wish that Chopin’s parents had never met. But upon my soul I have not once, in the whole course of a long and varied life, heard “Dover Beach” recited in a drawing-room. The mischief is that your average man or woman is apt to smile at the idea of any commonsense person getting up in cold blood and saying verse. I don’t know why. Ask a woman to study the “Ode to a Grecian Urn,” with a view to reading it aloud, and she will reply that she “doesn’t like.” Ask her to sing some Schubert, or even some Teresa del Riego, and she will murder a masterpiece or spurt fountains of gush, and then put on the air of having benefited humanity. The chief aim of the Poetry Recital Society is to war against this attitude and to persuade men in the street to meet together for the purpose of listening to great verse. I say this is a fine aim. To the accomplishment of this aim the P. R. S. has offices at Clun House, Surrey Street, Strand, and a solicitor and bankers and a president and several vice-presidents, including Mr. John Galsworthy, Mr. F. R. Benson, and Mr. G. K. Chesteron. And it is going to have a number of local centres. And it will offer premiums for poetry and establish lectureships, and will celebrate the anniversaries of poets. The offices, the bankers, and the local centres will be necessary. As for the rest, opinions may differ. Opinions may also differ as to the value of certain matters in the first issue of the “Journal.” Lady Margaret Sackville’s presidential inaugural address is exceedingly pedestrian. She talks about the “dishevelled loveliness” of Swinburne and the “mystic sensuousness” of Rossetti. Phrases which read one to murmur simply, “Ah!” I do not understand why Lady Margaret Sackville’s own verse was recited at the inaugural meeting of the Society, nor why Lady Margaret Sackville should have been chosen as President. If a figure-head is needed—and perhaps a figure-head is needed—some distinguished poet should have been chosen. And if verse was to be recited at the inaugural meeting, verse with the reputation of immortality behind it should have been recited. Here, I think, I merely state the obvious. I have nothing against Lady Margaret Sackville except that she is a

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young minor poetess, and hence ineligible for the Presidency. Still, I am not inclined to make a fuss about figure-heads. My feelings have not yet begun to be mixed.

* * *

My feelings begin to be mixed when I reflect upon the following pregnant words: "The inaugural meeting of the Poetry Recital Society was held at the Eustace Miles Restaurant." These words irk me. Why? Mystery. I cannot explain in ten columns. Have I any prejudice against the Eustace Miles Restaurant? Nay! I admit boldly that I have been to the Eustace Miles Restaurant and eaten there. The result was that I went and ate there again. Despite the vast amount of propagandist and didactic literature on the marble tables of the Eustace Miles Restaurant, despite the pervading impression of a determined attempt to influence me for my own good, I went again, and I have been quite half a dozen times. The food was excellent and cheap. Nevertheless, I say that the geographical situation of the inaugural meeting of the P.R.S. marks the inception of the mixing of my feelings about the P.R.S. Those who have ears to hear will comprehend me, and those who have will not.

* * *

Again. The Reverend F. de W. Lushington, headmaster of Elstree School and a member of the Council of the Society, has drawn up a worthy course of reading in poetry. The scheme is distinctly stated to be "suggestive rather than obligatory." Still, I do not like it. A suggestive scheme would be helpful, but I do not like the Reverend F. de W. Lushington's. Here is his suggestion for the current week: "Read Tennyson, Songs from the 'Princess': 'Learn 'Come down, O Maid.' Read Browning, 'The last ride together'; learn 'What does it do to end.' Read Browning, 'Abt Vogler'; learn 'All we have willed' to 'musician know?'

Mr. Lushington's whole scheme is drenched in Tennyson and Browning, and it has other characteristics which affright me. What is the matter with Tennyson and Browning? Nothing. Yet I fear, I politely and respectfully fear, Mr. Lushington's influence on the Council of the Society. But he means the members to work! Ninety odd lines of verse to be learnt by heart in a week! Happily, as the members of the Society are not schoolboys, the prescription is not obligatory. Mr. Lushington's is a noble calling, but it has strange effects on one's perspective, as classical writers have noted.

* * *

Lastly, there are the P.R.S. Pilgrimages to the haunts of "world-poets." The first pilgrimages are directed upon Goethe and Schiller. Here, too, I perceive more classical writers have noted. This I decline to believe, for I wish the P.R.S. to be the haunts of "world-poets." The first pilgrimages are to me it has always seemed that humour is nothing more or less than an exquisite sense of proportion. It

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is indeed a saving grace in that it restrains an artist from extravagance and shows him clearly how far he may go with discretion and propriety. It is thus as much the function of humour to keep you from laughing as to make you laugh. For there are moments—crises—in the most lofty tragedies when the difference between pathos and bathos is so fine that only the humorist born can perceive it in time to avoid the danger of slipping over the borders of the one into the limbo of the other. One of the greatest humorists that ever lived spoke what seems to me to be perhaps the saddest saying in any language, and yet it is a saying tinged with a silver glint of fun. I refer to Heine’s “Dieu me pardonnera. C’est son métier.” There is dignity and humility, there is reverence and a sublime audacity—in short there is humour—in that simple profound utterance, which crystallises a philosophy and a religion.

And perhaps it is because, in his very different way, Neil Lyons has also this happy knack of a profound simplicity that my mind runs on the prisoner of the mattress grave just now.

I have lately been reading, and have re-read, and shall read again, a new book: “Sixpenny Pieces.” When I read “Arthur’s” I thought that nothing finer could be done in that particular genre. But in his last production Neil Lyons has achieved the seemingly impossible; he has excelled himself. And the devil of it is that, having exhausted all my superlatives on a former occasion, I am now bankrupt of adequate words and phrases in which to express my unbounded admiration for this fresh work of his distinctive and inimitable genius. I am, moreover, robbed of the last resource of the incompetent critic—not that I wish to criticise—in that I cannot compare Neil Lyons with anyone. He is not a bit like the rest of us. He is not even like that good old stand-by, Dickens. He is just himself. “And made himself (as Jenny Hill used to say) can be his horizontal.”

But—wonder if “Arthur’s” had (what is called) a big sale. I wonder if “Sixpenny Pieces” will reach the multitude. If it does not I am sorry for the multitude. I am sorry for them because here, surely, is meat to all men’s liking. I never felt I could compare Neil Lyons with anyone. He is not even like that good old stand-by, Dickens. He is just himself. “And made himself (as Jenny Hill used to say) can be his horizontal.”

Everybody ought to read Neil Lyons. He is at once a liberal education and an entertainment. Everybody would read him if they only knew his worth. Here I can imagine my reader saying: “I wonder if he really is all that this chap cracks him up to be?” To which I would reply, in sober sincerity, that he is indeed all I say—and something more.

Read that chapter in this present volume, entitled “An Interlude,” and if you have any flair for the literature that is charged with humanity you will acknowledge that it is poignancy of pathos—such pathos as only a true humorist is ever capable of—it touches a note of ecstatic pain that even a violin in the hands of a master cannot compass.

But it is all good. From the first line of that wonderful opening:

It was a beautiful evening in the month of May.

The stars were shining.

The beautiful moon looked beautifully forth from her beautiful throne.

A nightingale greeted her with a beautiful sonnet.

England—our England—bore upon her bosom the beautiful perfume of woodruff and the wild clover. In Bovingdon Street, London, E., a lover was kicking his sweetheart.

Thence—onward, to the final chapter, he proves him-
self to be not merely an artist, though he is assuredly that, but—if words have any meaning, and I have studied them all my life—a genius. So, if you read this book during your holidays, you will concenterate whatever place you go to.

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Some people will say that Mrs. Ellis has written no inherent force impelling upwards. It is Natural development. . . . is due to blind force. . . . There must be some potent force inherent in protoplasm or behind organisms impelling them upwards," is that it is a very important objection to the Darwinian theory—Selection would have chosen Buller for South Africa. That was indeed a blind selection. They must know this why did not they say it? This apart, the promoters of the Arbitration movement is largely due Sir Randal made repeated visits to the United States and Canada and to the United States, where he was brought into contact with men prominent since 1890 and diplomats. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1919, while he was living in the United States. This biography is the work of one who was associated with him during a long part of his career.

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**Socialism and Liberty.**

To the Editor of "The New Age."

Mr. Cecil Chesterton, with characteristic clearness, does good service to convinced and heathen, both in his efforts to show what is good Socialism, and what is something else. In the interest of both one can with difficulty wish he was more absolutely convincing. There does not seem to be much room for dispute that Socialism suffers because so many of the alleged progressive measures of say the last thirty years have proved in practice to be so negligible as to have not the slightest value in their epochs as they are costly to the "haves," and silly to the "have-nots."

It is beyond dispute "the point is worth elaborating, because many promising recruits are kept out of the Socialist movement, and some excellent Socialists leave it from a fear," etc. Exactly! It is the case, sir, that literally hundreds of intelligent, desirous, and conscientious persons of newness of Liberalism, but they fear that Socialism is not practical, and as a remedy may prove worse than the disease they all desire to remedy, and hence, if they are, have not the quality of Mr. Shaw's book. There is more special knowledge, I think, in the book from the first page to the last with nothing of the prose of an English which, during the expression of the ideas, the last is quick with the book, refreshing to the eye.

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The reasons why Great Britain should oppose a national militia are these:—

(1.) Unlike all Continental countries, the first line of defence in Great Britain is the Navy.

(2.) With a defeated Navy, a national militia would be useless, as blockade would soon starve Great Britain into submission.

(3.) With a victorious, keenly supported Navy, the Navy would need no auxiliary force, except for the purpose of preventing the simple capture of the ships and of the fleet itself.

(4.) That the Regular Army can never be got rid of, since soldiering is a trade which requires to be followed with the same application that is necessary in plumbing, mining, or weaving. If everybody became miners in addition to their ordinary occupations, mining would be as effective as a short period trained "national militia" is likely to be.

(5.) Unlike Continental countries, a national militia would involve a doubling of the "blood-tax" on national efficiency, because we should be supporting the strain of a double line of defence, whereas in Europe there is only the land line of defence.

(6.) It is obvious why Continental democracies are in favour of a national militia. They are giving it, to the extent of putting the demand for a military democracy on the tyranny of conscription. Having one line of defence, it is clear, with territories abutting on one another, a military service applied all round is forced upon European countries. Therefore the lessee of two evils is chosen by Continental Socialists, namely, the advocacy of a national militia. The only way in which such a "national militia" has been maintained effective is a long and perpetual service, which puts a tremendous strain on Continental vitality and efficiency, because there is no occupation for upwards of a quarter of a century I have had a very constant correspondence with Mr. Chesterston describes the four kinds of legislation usually termed Socialism, anarchy, and the larger part of Socialism. Respect for space forbids my dealing with dozens of illustrations, all going to prove how ill-digested and impractical legislation in intent is when applied to those directly concerned, and at the same time increases the doubts and fears of the "would-be excellent Socialists." Take one or two examples. In order to protect themselves from the effect of this benefit legislation, hundreds of these poor wretches have been driven to give false names and addresses to the factory proprietor or the landlord being brought to book for some fault or other. In order to protect themselves from the effect of this adoption all round is forced upon European countries. There-
so productive of immorality, due to enforced celibacy, as soldier-
Army, it would be much more to the point. The only Army
lent loose thinking on the liberties of the subject, which has led
to the compactness of his style, its clearness and terseness,
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**AMBROSE BIERCE.**

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

With reference to Jacob Toman's remarks upon Ambrose Bierce, it will please you to attract the attention of your readers to the fact that we publish a 3s. 6d. edition of Mr. Ambrose Bierce's "In the Midst of Life." This volume contains both the "A Horseman in the Sky" and "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge." We have pleasure in sending a copy, which you may like to forward to Mr. Jacob Toman, with our compliments.

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**THE POOLS OF SILENCE.**

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

On July 1st in "THE NEW AGE" published, under the guise of a review, a foolish and wicked attack on me and my writings. I replied to the person who wrote it, pointing out his misstate-
ments. He declined to answer, and in his answer he makes much worse for himself.

I take only two statements from his answer, and with these statements alone I will show to the readers of your paper the methods of the man who maltreated me:

(1) "We are shown that Meeus is the most stupid creature of Berkelium, and one of those who are too simple to obey a single glance from this tremendous personality." Contrast this with my statement about Meeus: "One might imagine the servility which this man would show to the all-powerful Berkelium, yet he showed no servility at all."""

(2) "The measure of Mr. Stackpole's sympathy with the Congo natives... may be taken all through his book. He speaks of them variously as niggers, animals, and things." I have spoken of them with pity as being penned like animals in house-houses by the Belgians; I have drawn the picture of them eating their wretched food like animals in the yards of the shrines. And, with regard to them, I have used the words, "poor things!"""

When your reviewer has learned the first elements of truth and fair dealing, let him set up as a censor of morals.

H. DE VERE STACKPOLE.

**VIVISECTION.**

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Mr. Robert Stewart informs your readers that I have made "inaccurate statements about Mr. Stephen Coleridge's Bill," but, unfortunately, he omits to specify them. He writes, however, that "it is incorrect for Miss Kidd to state that complete anaesthesia is at the present time enforced at all cutting opera-
tions." Can he prove my incorrectness by giving a single in-
stance in which the Government has allowed a cutting operation more severe than a superficial venesection to be performed without anaesthetics? He must be aware, from Mr. Coleridge's own experience in the law courts, of the utter impossibility of proving such a charge. Under Mr. Coleridge's Bill, with a friendly inspector and an operator to whom, to quote the Home Secretary, "it is sometimes impossible to tell whether the animal is suffering or not," anaesthetics would undoubtedly be given in exactly the same way and to the same degree as at present. With regard to incoherencies, it is true that Mr. Coleridge has failed to provide that the victim shall be killed "directly it begins to feel pain." But since the animal can neither write nor utter a complaint, and is employed to stand continuously beside it watching for signs of discomfort, it occurs to most of us to wonder how the fact of the commencement of its sufferings is to be communicated to the inspector.

It is quite unnecessary for Mr. Stewart to suggest that a person, who refuses to accept Mr. Coler-

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