

OUR FRIEND THE TSAR.

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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 barbarous days of chivalry: as entities, that is, with no internal affairs at all. Yet he not only admitted to knowing but added an of course, and, later, the remark that such reports as we received were private. Again, he denied that such visits as the King's to Reval thirteen months ago could possibly have any effect, good or bad, on the domestic policy of Russia. A few minutes afterwards he allowed that if the effect of such a visit were thought to be reactionary the Commons would be right to discuss it; and this in spite of his declaration that Mr. Henderson's speech had put the

Government into "an impossible position," and should never have been raised in Parliament.

* * *

Now what is the reason of this extraordinary muddle-headedness on Sir Edward Grey's part? Nobody accuses him of being a fool, or even a knave. We can only suggest that it arises from his attempt to ride at once two horses galloping in opposite directions: the obsolescent conception of foreign policy as solely an affair between monarchs, and the adolescent conception of foreign policy as mainly an affair between peoples. It is to this latter conception that democratic Socialists pin their faith, as may be seen from any Socialist debate on foreign affairs in the House or elsewhere. This, indeed, is the guiding principle of all our views of international relationships. But Sir Edward Grey has not detached his mind from the ancient aristocratic conception. Though compelled to pay homage to the new principle—since he is a member of a democratic and popular Chamber—he does so with difficulty, and only, as it were, after doing violence to his own traditions and prejudices. Thus it is true he explicitly includes the peoples of England and Russia in his statements regarding the visit and the entente; but actually it is never the peoples of whom he thinks, but only the monarchs and their immediate circle of official advisers. It does not occur naturally to him to admit that cases may arise of antagonism between a monarch and a people; still less that in such cases the people are invariably right and the monarch wrong. Nor does it occur to him to conceive that the English people may be completely friendly to the Russian people, but totally inimical to their titular representative, the Tsar himself.

* * *

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, elected or hereditary, 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 liberated 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. Popular as the supertax 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 wince.

* * *

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 popularity. The last patriotic refuge of the wealthy against the new taxes is removed by this concession. No more can they declare that the Budget would meet with their approval if only the Navy were increased. The Navy is increased, and they must be dumb unless with Lord Charles Beresford's stentorian assistance they can persuade the country to cry for four more Dreadnoughts, and yet another four. But this is scarcely likely. With the German war scare as dead as a door nail and a new lease of life given to Radicalism, Tariff Reform is bound to continue to dwindle in interest. Nor is Mr. Austen Chamberlain the man to revive it.

* * *

On Friday of last week the discussion of the Trades Board Bill was resumed. In the interval several changes had been made in its original shape. We agree with Mr. Barnes, who, on behalf of the Labour Party, regretted Mr. Churchill's decision to add trades to the schedule by Provisional Order instead of by orders of the Board of Trade. Provisional orders are slow, cumbersome, and expensive; a departmental order is immediate, easy, and costs nothing. It is true that Provisional Orders rarely fail to be ratified by Parliament; some ten per cent. only being challenged. But the past is no guide to the future. There is nothing to prevent a Provisional Order, all Provisional Orders, in fact, relating to the Trades Disputes Bill, being killed in passage through Parliament; and thus the extension of the Bill will be perpetually subjected to interruptions, if not to positive checks.

* * *

But on another issue also we think the Labour Party would have been well advised to differ from Mr. Churchill. Nobody in the party seems yet to have taken the trouble to think to the bottom of the Fiscal question; and in consequence, when a fiscal question of any kind arises, they take refuge in the most ancient citadel of Free Trade. During the discussion of the Trades Disputes Bill, Mr. Marks moved an amendment to the effect that arbitrators in the sweated industries should, before fixing the wages, take into account the wages paid in foreign countries for similar goods imported into this country. The Labour Party was apprehensive, of course, that such an amendment, if carried, might tempt the arbitrators to depress English wages to foreign levels; and certainly the amendment as drafted did not guard against that possible effect. But we suggest that the occasion might have been employed to demonstrate the need that will inevitably arise to protect our industries by complete prohibition of foreign no less than of home sweated goods. The time for taking this step has probably not yet arrived; but, whether Tariff Reform is ever seriously discussed again or not, Socialism will one day have to declare itself on this issue.

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 taking epigram, but, like most such mots, misleading. Socialism does not 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 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 last weapon of the Government 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 and bid that sentimental carpenter, Mr. Herbert Gladstone, cease his sobs and tears, and, above all, his mean evasions, and treat the women offenders in future as what they are, first-class misdemeanants. The vote will not be long in coming after that.

* * *

There appears to be no hope of amending the South African Union Act by including justice 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; 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—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
Proclaim her kinship with the risen dead.
And yet, and yet, who knows the subtle grace
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 do trifle, nor declare
What in her blood is potent: the full heat,
The splendour and the passion that, complete
In their possession, make her life a lair
Of mastery: 'neath her crown of dusky hair,
They gleam like stars at midnight, an effete
Pale glory that the nascent day will greet,
Extinguish, and efface in noontide glare.
Her breasts are fresh and fragrant as a flower
Unsullied, nor displayed in a device.
Her lips are live with love, and every hour
Is hers for conquest: kiss with kiss she vies.
Triumphant 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 temporarily rule will not long suffer her good name to be besmirched 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 that Sir Edward Grey has pursued in his 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 successors 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. Abdul could be 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 from which the information is drawn are indicated, 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 prisons 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 Ekaterinodar 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.

The agents and friends of the Tsar, to whom the City of London is about to give an Address of Welcome, take a fiendish 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 hæmorrhage. . . . Three days later it was discovered the woman was absolutely innocent." "The prisoner Gutmacher 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 he had had his head broken and his face so disfigured that he was unrecognisable." Whilst some prisoners were under trial at Lodz "they were tortured during several days, they were beaten with naigakas 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 torturing 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, and 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. Azeff, 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 against governors and others; in such men, paid and decorated 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 use of these murders to 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 by fresh borrowings 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 a 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, hatching plots against the Russian bureaucracy, for which innocent Russians will be tortured and executed. We who stand for England's traditional policy against her present masters have never dreamt of active intervention on behalf of the Russian people. We have recognised that we have too many difficulties of our own to face a policy that might call for further sacrifices on our part. But we do plead for non-intervention; we do plead that our name and our finance shall not be placed at the disposal of the Tsar, that we shall not offer him our friendship or a welcome to our shores. This negative policy is one which meets the full approbation of these Russians who love their country and have suffered for that love. Prince Kropotkin issues "a solemn 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 their own despotism. But Russian exiles also know from their own experience how the moral support which the fighters 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 the Russian people. He stands 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 like ourselves that has shown how tyrants 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 welcome the Tsar we shall alienate the Russian people. But Mr. Belloc's expert is an Englishman, the Hon. Maurice Baring. In this matter we prefer to put our faith in Russian experts—men like Kropotkin and like Aladin, whom we have learned to love and trust. The Russian people know full well that our sympathies are with them. They understand why we refuse to take the blood-stained hand of the Tsar; why we can extend no welcome to this perjured ruler.

Imperialism and Indian Patriotism.

THE assassination of Sir Curzon Wyllie by the Indian student, Dhingra, should have awakened England to the realities of the Indian peril; but the present writer has read with feelings of utter despair the comments of the English Press on this murder. The papers which most strongly support the Tsar's visit are united in denouncing Dhingra as a cowardly assassin. The Liberal Press are almost equally denunciatory.

Dhingra 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.

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 those whom Dhingra regarded as the oppressors of his country.

As a political writer who has no belief in the catchwords of Democracy, nor of Patriotism and Imperialism, I desire to point out the absurdities by which the 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 imperialist and patriotic ideal. In a recent issue of the "Sunday Chronicle" he has tried to explain away the cardinal 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 this country 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 an 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 to attain. 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 superior to any European moral philosophy. As a proud lover of his country's ideals he must seek to spread the liberalities of Indian moral philosophies and Indian religions, just as the English Church has tried to convert India to theological and moral Christianity.

"Hubert" has suggested that Dhingra's plea is "a plea that no Englishman, that no European, let us say, could possibly put forward. No European could possibly urge such a plea, because no European thinks in that way; the idea inspiring it 'is alien to the European mind.'" What do you think of the honesty of a journalist who could pen such a sentence as that? Dhingra's plea is a terse expression of European political science; it is a summing up of the teachings of the founders of representative government. Aristotle, the Gracchi, Caractacus, Queen Boadicea, King Alfred, Simon de Montfort, Charlemagne, Philip van Artevelde, Oliver Cromwell, Napoleon, Stein, the Kaiser, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Balfour, Lord Roberts, Joseph Chamberlain, Camöens, Shakespeare, John Stuart Mill, Goethe, Carlyle, John Ruskin, Machiavelli, Charles XII, Charles Martel, Maria Theresa, and many others who have deflected the course of European history preached one or other of these ideals, which "Hubert" has denounced as "non-European." Such are the shifts to which the political Imperialist is reduced in order to conceal the gravity of an act which cannot be ignored.

A word on the true view of the Indian problem. It is correct that material development and improvement, in the sense of orderly government, have been a result of British rule. Moral deterioration and weakening of moral fibre have been terrible and inevitable consequences of English rule. The economic drain caused by the vast expense of British administration has prevented the Indian people reaping the economic advantages of material prosperity.

Anyone who has had experience of testimony in law courts knows that the servant class as a rule are untrustworthy witnesses as compared with other classes of the community; service develops dissimulation and deceit. The Indians are a governed people in the same sense that servants are ruled by their masters or mistresses. Hence British government has brought upon India the stigma of servility. That is the moral indictment against Imperialist rule; moreover, it is unanswerable. The Anglo-Indian denunciations of Indian untruthfulness and habits of deceit are such overwhelming evidence of the awful truth of this moral deterioration that no further proof need be given. The conscience of Great Britain has to reckon with a continuous moral ruin of hundreds of millions of people.

"Hubert" has made one statement which should be glanced at; namely, that the British troops prevent "the Indians ravishing one another's women." This is a shocking misrepresentation. Has "Hubert" ever acquainted himself with the numbers of Anglo-Indian troops suffering from venereal diseases and the methods by which women are supplied to the Indian troops? A "celibate" army in India is another moral blight which British rule has caused to sweep across India.

What of the future? God knows the outlook is gloomy. The danger lies in hypocrisy at home. There is but one way of avoiding a frightful catastrophe, though many close observers tell me this opportunity has already passed: by gradual evacuation. That is, if the English Democracy really believes in the watchwords of Liberty and Freedom. We can hold India for years yet by force of arms; but Democracy should remember that the liberties of the Roman citizen were destroyed by the Roman Imperialist, just as the Anglo-Indian Imperialists of to-day are undermining the liberties of England.

C. H. NORMAN.

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, but he still remains surrounded by the ragged edges of the medium he has destroyed. His own original views appear surrounded with pieces of Kantian tissue-paper. There is no doubt that Bax has brought a really new idea into philosophy—the assertion of the ultimate reality of the alogical. But, alarmed at his own audacity, he seeks to make it perfectly respectable by giving it as a companion a curious mixture of all the German idealists. The frame in which he sets his new conception is antique and thoroughly orthodox, but it ill accords with the central picture.

He has made a brilliant and powerful attack from a new point of view on the Hegelian panlogism. (Why does Mr. Bax pedantically employ the word panlogistic 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 sees it in its proper perspective in the general movement of European philosophy.

This modern metaphysical movement seems as strange to the layman as the preaching of the simple life would do to a savage. You must have been sophisticated and have sinned 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 perhaps 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 philosophy, when all the decorations and disguises are stripped off, ultimately resolves itself to this. One takes a little part of known reality and asserts dogmatically that it 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 haste in selecting 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 distinguish four solutions. The Hegelian: that only the concept is real; positive significance only attaches to thought or relational 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 ultimate 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 emphasises the character of the flux as motion one sees that the static concepts can never 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 Bax. This 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 human communication call it that. 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 have no 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 intellectualists, who would say that in the last resort matter is abolished and absorbed in form. Bax's position is that there is always something left over, that when you dip the net of concepts and universals some of the reality always escapes 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 intellectualists, the lay theologians, having been violently expelled from their temple and the final admission made 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 "élan 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 attempting to grasp the nature of reality. One must 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 intuition 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 a river on which man 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 toilsome 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 is still 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 wandering there? We can only surmise maliciously that somewhere in its pleasant valleys he saw a woman. Is not intuition

too dangerous a process for an anti-feminist to suggest as the ultimate philosophic process?

T. E. HULME.

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 attempt a description of my visit and reception at the famous old structure. After a couple of hours' journey by train from St. Petersburg we reached the village of Gatchina, where the Emperor's carriage was in waiting, in which we were driven over rugged hills and through the great park into the spacious courtyard of the palace. The imagination, when this is entered, is in a state of conflicting emotions. An air of profound mystery shrouds everything; an atmosphere of illusive thought envelops the expectant mind as the tramping of the horses' feet breaks the deathlike stillness, and awakes the contrast of isolation and activity that unites the ideal with the real. I know of nothing comparable to this place unless it be the great pyramid. What the pyramid is to Egypt this abode is to the snowy plains of Russia. It is so far north for royalty to dwell, so utterly desolate and unapproachable, so singularly unlike all else of its kind. It seemed as if we had at last come to the regions of perpetual melancholy, where ambition may brood over nations won and lost, and every action is one of desolate unrest.

As we rose from a sumptuous table laden with every delicacy the palate could wish or culinary talent invent, I could not help thinking of some of Shakespeare's banquet scenes and wondering where the ghosts and daggers were; and the parqueted floors, the frescoed ceilings, arabesque walls and oddly shaped windows, by some unexplainable reason, made my thoughts revert to the distant and sombre regions of Siberia, whose very name is suggestive of Arctic dreariness and eternal farewells. This palace reflects the intimate tastes and habits of those who built it, as well as of those who have since sought a more exclusive life within its walls, away from the fashionable restrictions and etiquette of society at St. Petersburg.

As night came on a feeling of loneliness became more and more marked, but it was not until nearly midnight that etiquette permitted me to retire. Up quaint passages, over steps of solid granite, through winding corridors, at last we came to the apartment where I was expected to find repose during the night. The Grand Marshal now opened the door and let in the flickering light of a wax taper, which reflected on a quaint old painting of an ancient warrior, hung high on the wall, which in turn added a mystic charm to the ensemble and prepared one for other scenes and portraits in keeping with the peculiar character of the place.

I found little rest that night; scenes from "Macbeth" flitted before the mind's eye, and I seemed to hear the ominous colloquy: "Didst thou not hear a noise?" and the answer, "I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry," for the owl could be heard outside in the pine forest, with the moaning north wind and the rustling of branches. Old portraits looked down from sombre walls with expressions of pompous pride and cynical inquisitiveness, as much as to say: "You, sir, have come from the modern world; what do you want here?" Faces that reminded me of Senta and the Flying Dutchman peered from brackets of black marble or brass, while an indefinable sadness was impressed on every bust in the apartment. Yet none of these faces invited compassion. A spiritual coat of mail 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 dust here; it makes 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 I was the most striking feature; a superb life-size portrait here, a marble bust there, a bronze statue yonder, gave a good idea of the handsomest man of his day. A veritable Apollo of physical perfection, with a callous face expressive of autocratic pride and affected humility—the face of a typical Romanoff, who could, if necessary, like Peter the Great, drink bumpers of wine with one hand and decapitate with the other. It was the likeness of a type I had never seen in life, and only from the hands of antique sculptors had I witnessed it in the form of chiselled marble. A maze of surprises seemed to envelop me on all sides. An ancient quaintness mingled with modern forms, while olden memories harmonised with recent impressions.

All at once we entered the throne room! The throne—simple, classical, supremely regal—stood on a floor of magnificent mosaic. A cathedral window behind it let in a flood of mellow light, with rays of gold streaming across the purple canopy, forming a picture at once poetic and illusive. It was the throne room of Catherine the Great, but the daïs was vacant, the place was void. The illusion of light and shade, silence and isolation, made the heart heavy and filled the mind with a feeling akin to moral frenzy. The sound of footsteps seemed discordant, talking aloud was like a rude noise in the charmed precincts of a haunted chamber. It was the place for pantomime and whispers, and, as we approached the throne, the imagination, now wrought up to a sense of vivid realism, could picture the imperious gaze of Catherine or Nicholas, who, with a sweep of the hand, might consign us to the terrible bastions of Petropavlovsk or the fatal mines of Kara. The impression obtained here was not of India, or of Turkey, or of Spain; nothing purely ancient or mediæval or modern, but all of these combined, in which the aims, ambitions, trials, and triumphs of Russian potentates were indelibly stamped on every stone and pillar. A French decoration is made to fit a style of art imported from the Orient; a German idea is woven into a Grecian fancy; Eastern pomp mingles with Western luxury, while betwixt these two Russia comes in to affix on all the scalding seal of the Romanoff dynasty, 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, unrolling 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 trifling relic reveals the passions and sorrows of a grandduchess; on the wall is a souvenir of the heartbroken Nicholas, who died from 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 like a well-regulated graveyard. 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 Jules Fenton. Breakfast is laid on 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.

Jules: No, thanks.

[Jerks his chair back from table.]

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

Jules [absent-mindedly]: 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 despised 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! Damn 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.] Sybil's looking awfully delicate, isn't she? It quite gets on my nerves to—

[Jules strides out of the room, banging door.]

Hector: Well—

[He looks annoyed for a moment, then rings bell. Enter Mrs. Withers.]

Mrs. W.: Did you ring, sir?

Hector [looking at newspaper]: Yes. You can clear away.

[After a short pause he dashes down his paper as one who abandons an effort.]

Hector: Mrs. Withers, don't you think that Miss Sybil Harcourt has looked extra delicate lately?

Mrs. W. [with great satisfaction, and stopping all pretence of industry]: *That* I do, sir, and such a dear, gentle young lady as she is! You'd think there wasn't a drop of blood in 'er to see 'er paell faice and 'er 'ands and all, and she was such a religious young thing too, though they do say as she don't care so much for church going as she used. Not but what I'd be the same meself if I'd prayed ser regular and then got took with anæmics bad like that.

[A bell rings outside.]

Oh, drat that bell. I never starts to do a bit of clearing up but what it begins ringing. Yer know, sir, if yer ask me, Miss Sybil is getting worse and worse. When I saw 'er on Wednesday—

Hector: On Wednesday! What Wednesday?

[The bell is rung again, but louder.]

Mrs. Withers [after an indignant glance in its direction]: Why, last Wednesday, sir. I was surprised to see 'er meself, knowing the young ladies were on a 'oliday in the country. When I saw 'er on the doorstep it seemed as if she must faint. I thought she wanted you, and told 'er you was out, but she said it was Mr. Fenton, so I showed 'er up.

[Bell again, but Hector motions her to finish.]

She come down after about 'alf an hour, and she looked so bad—a'most as if she'd bin crying, too, that I offered 'er a cup o' tea, but she said she'd gotter catch a train and couldn't wait.

[The bell has been rung very violently during last few words.]

Hector: You'd better answer the bell, Mrs. Withers, or they'll ring the place down.

[His eyes follow her mechanically to the door, but one can see he is buried in puzzled thought. A moment later Mrs. W's. voice is heard outside.]

Mrs. W.: Yes; 'e's in, Miss.—I 'ope there isn't anythink. . . .

[Enter Margot Harcourt. She is a rather ordinary looking girl, but prettier and a little more determined than most. Now she enters oddly. Her movements are stiff and jerky, and it seems as if all intelligence were concentrated in her eyes, which are fixed and staring. They meet Hector's naturally, but she would find it difficult to shift them if he were not directly in front. She puts out a hand, as if to feel for him, in spite of the fact that her eyes are on him. Hector hesitates a moment, out of sheer amazement. She runs to him with a sudden jerk, almost tripping up. He takes her hand.]

Hector [to Mrs. Withers, who has remained gaping at the door]: You may go, Mrs. Withers.

[There is silence for a moment as she slowly leaves.]

Margot: Tor—Tor—

[The sound is stifled, almost inarticulate.]

Hector: What is the matter, sweetheart? Won't you sit down—?

Margot [shakes her head]: Sybil, Tor—

Hector: 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: No—no—it's too late—. Her eyes—!

[Her body shakes for a moment in convulsion.]

Hector: But surely I must run quickly.

Margot [fiercely]: It's too late—.

Hector [with sudden divination]: She's not—not dead—is she?

[He gibbers on the last words, for Margot has nodded before the question is ended. The blood creeps unsteadily under the skin, mottling his face, and then as Margot reels against him it is drained away again, and he is as pale as the girl.]

Hector [shaking her very gently]: 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 that her lids drop for a moment over the strained, dark 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 the right one. 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 on the table at their left. She makes no sign.]

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

[From this point the two seem to exchange their attitude. It is he who is rigid, while her words come in sentences, long drawn-out gasps, not picking them carefully, but trying to get them out quickly.]

Margot: I can't say it straight out at once—not to you or to myself. I'll tell you how it happened. Sybil wasn't happy on our holiday. She took no pleasure in anything. She wanted to be alone, and yet she was so restless that if I left her alone in some room or in a corner of the garden she would wander away and come back to me after a few minutes. She was odd, you 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.] I know she hadn't read any of those in the house. I 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 we'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 silly, 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 she told 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 corrects herself with a sharp inhale 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 she was 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 cleaves 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 in 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 had fainted, 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 [shrinking 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 reaches out for the revolver and slips it into his pocket.]

Margot [trembling again]: Did I bring that?

Hector: Yes.

[He rings 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 put 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.]

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Books and Persons.

(AN OCCASIONAL CAUSERIE.)

"THE neglect of music in the form of melodious 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 P.R.S. centre in full operation!" Now P.R.S. stands for Poetry Recital Society, and I have taken the foregoing extract from the "Journal of the Poetry Recital Society." My feelings about the Poetry Recital Society are mixed. I like the idea that underlies it, 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. 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. It is much easier to spoil music than to spoil verse. 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 a month of happy evenings with him. Further, those students of poetry who have not heard poetry read or recited (and how many have?) do not fully know what poetry is. Nearly all poetry gains immensely by coming into the head through the ear. To listen to poetry read even monotonously is a great pleasure, and a pleasure which improves on acquaintance.

* * *

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. Chesterton. 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 mediocre. She talks about the "dishevelled loveliness" of Swinburne and the "mystic sensuousness" of Rossetti. Phrases which lead 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 could not 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 not 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 weekly 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' to end. Read Browning, 'Abt Vogler'; learn 'All we have willed' to 'musicians 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 danger. The day of concerted pilgrimages is over. Only exceedingly simple persons in these sophisticated times are capable of making a pilgrimage self-unconsciously. If I found myself involved in a literary pilgrimage I should laugh, were it at the grave of Homer himself. I should be compelled to laugh. People no longer do these things, unless they happen to come from Arkansas or John o' Groats. The pilgrimage en masse has become either a picnic or a preciosity. And preciosity is the great peril that such societies as the P.R.S. have to run: the subtle temptation to be peculiar. Many succumb. I hope the P.R.S. will not. I did read in a newspaper the other day that the P.R.S. was contemplating an excursion into the Sahara in order that its members might be alone with nature. This I decline to believe, for I wish the P.R.S. very well. My counsel to its adherents is to imitate closely the ordinary man in all externals and to practise intellectual humility.

JACOB TONSON.

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THERE have been so many definitions of the word Humour that I hesitate to venture upon another; but 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, his 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 none but himself (as Jenny Hill used to say) can be his horizontal."

But—I 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 so strongly that a huge popularity was due to any writer as I feel that it is due to Neil Lyons. And it is one of the most mournful circumstances of an author's life that, though he knows his work will be likely to give pleasure to untold thousands, he has no worthy means of handing that pleasure on to them. Unless he booms and advertises himself, or gets someone else to do it for him, unless he shrieks and attitudinises, unless he hustles and walks wide, not only himself is robbed of his legitimate reward of appreciation, but hosts of weary, disconsolate people, swallowing with difficulty the gilded boluses of the frenzied log-roller, must live bereft of the blessing he holds out to them.

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.

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For upwards of a quarter of a century I have had a very considerable experience in the administration of each and all the statutes referred to in the first of the clauses in which Mr. Chesterton describes the four kinds of legislation usually termed Socialistic or Progressive, and intended to be ameliorative. Respect for space forbids my dealing with dozens of illustrations, all going to prove how ill-digested and impractical legislation, although beneficial in intent, acts as a costly irritant to those directly concerned, and at the same time increases the doubts and fears of the "would-be excellent Socialist."

Take one instance only, arising out of the orders made in respect of the inspection of the outworkers in sweated industries. To carry out the recommendations made after the last enquiry, one certain local authority, to its great credit, decided that whatever benefit could be derived from systematic inspection should be attempted. Their district, entirely industrial, mainly slum and poor, contained about 8,000 outworkers, i.e., those who took work out of the factories to make up in their "homes." About 90 per cent. were female workers, mostly lodgers occupying one or two rooms, and mainly married women with families, of whom they were in many cases the principal stay, the fathers being casual, dock, and other labourer. Almost every trade in the Home Office schedule was represented, and some of the worst-paid most highly sweated work included. Every outworker's "home" was visited twice at least in each year, the factory proprietors compelled to carry out the requirements, and any offences under the Factory and Workshop Act and the Public Health Act strictly and promptly dealt with. The result of a few years' working on these lines leaves these poor outworkers in a worse plight than they were at the start. They have had to suffer in many cases by being turned out because of the too frequent visits of the inspectors. Many others had their rents raised, whilst others got "drilled" in consequence of the employer or the landlord being brought to book for some fault or other. In order to protect themselves from the effect of this beneficent legislation, hundreds of these poor wretches have been driven to giving false names and addresses to the factory proprietors when taking out work; others pay a few pence for the use of one address that serves for several workers; others refuse to answer the door when the inspector calls; whilst others absolutely deny that the person enquired for lives upon the premises, or that any work is done therein. I could go on, sir, but for the present must refrain.

Mr. Chesterton will, of course, say this is not Socialism, and we may all agree. Remains the hard fact these and similar measures have been so dubbed by an indiscriminating public, and it seems to me that until Socialism sets itself right with that public, its cause must suffer, and recruits will not flock to the flag.

JOHN FOOT.

THE LIBEL LAW AS AN AID TO CORRUPTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

You of THE NEW AGE have frequently animadverted upon the cowardliness, the culpable reticence, of the English Press. I, as a humble journalist, have often been tempted to ask you to allow me to point out one cause of the conspiracy of silence—a silence that is undoubtedly undermining the morality of our Society. I do so now because I see in this timidity a graver peril than any conjured up by the Jingo. THE NEW AGE, almost alone, has made some sort of stand against this encroaching spirit.

We are far removed from those robust days of criticism that, with all their excesses, kept England sane and sound. To-day there exists a libel law, and it is a crime to tell the truth. Recent decisions in the Law Courts have narrowed the privileges of a newspaper; and editors do not yet know how contracted is their sphere.

I venture to think that my experience is that of every journalist who has come in close rough-and-tumble contact with public bodies. On every hand the slightest intelligent acquaintance with administrative bodies reveals anomalous methods of payment, suspicious intriguing, "old gangs," curious examples of privilege, strange whispers, sinister remarks, remarkable earnestness on behalf of certain articles and firms, extraordinary private abuse of each other, makes a journalist of discernment who has somehow got into the inner secrets, absolutely sure that our Society is permeated by corruption. But how dare one say so, except in the most general terms?

I maintain that it is this compulsory silence that is the greatest curse of the country. It is so easy to point to Germany, where anything approaching *lèse majesté* is sternly suppressed, and then contrast this state of affairs with our own "free" Press. But what does it really matter whether one is allowed to abuse the King or not? He is only a single individual, after all. In England he is almost the only person one can genuinely attack with impunity. The libel law effectively protects the iniquities of every one else.

No one wants liberty to play ducks and drakes with any man's reputation. The scandal-monger, who would not scruple to spread any lie, must be put under heavy penalties. But the sincere reformer, whose object is to purge and purify the community, should be permitted full play. A responsible journalist, who has enquired into any one of the hundred rumours that are always floating about every public body, and has verified its truth, should be allowed to give the result of his investigations the utmost publicity.

It is only publicity that will kill corruption. To-day things are done in the dark that would not be tolerated one moment if the Press were allowed to light up the shady places.

If I could disclose the fact that Alderman This is "interested" in certain slums that, curiously enough, are never dealt with as they might be, the position would not be tolerated. If I could show that Councillor That is a person who attends his duties when drunk, no self-respecting citizen would vote for him again.

If I might call attention to the circumstance that it is always the same group of persons who insist on some costly proprietary article; if I could enquire why sites and buildings proved so costly; if I and my fellows were given power to write honestly of a thousand and one things, how long would the corruption with which I believe we are now honeycombed continue? I venture to think an unfettered and honest Press, unafraid of the libel law, and intent only on the truth, would be the salvation of England. Scandals have been unearthed in certain quarters; but do you not suppose Pressmen had scented them from afar off? Do you not suppose a good journalist would not have detected and exposed the unsavoury thing long ago if he had been allowed? And do you not suppose scandals are as plentiful as blackberries?

The fact is, it is only our libel law that is responsible for a great deal of dirtiness in the public life of the country. It will never be cleaned away until the army of detectives—the only persons outside the circle concerned who know—I refer to the Pressmen—are granted leave to put their finger without fear on any plague spot in our midst.

You of THE NEW AGE are, I am sure, interested in securing public purity; and I shall be glad if you can find space for this plea for a Press undeterred by the libel law. Any one of my colleagues with whom I go home nightly in the train can always tell a story, sub rosa, of some scandalous condition of affairs that has come to his notice; but we are a nation of hypocrites, and insist on cloaking up the unpleasant. We bury our heads in the sand, and lop off every one's head who will not imitate the ostrich; and then proudly suppose there is no corruption.

J. SISLEY HUDDLESTON.

NATIONAL DEFENCE AND DEMOCRACY.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

The Socialist "silly season" topic, "national militia," has turned up again in the ides of July. I thought I had smashed it to atoms last August and September; but Mr. Richard Maurice is still trotting out the hoary fallacies of the eighties.

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

(1.) Unlike all Continental countries, the first line of defence of 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 Navy, a national militia would not be required, except for the purpose of plunging into a Continental war, which is opposed to the interests of the English democracy.

(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 groaning under the demands and 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 lesser of two evils is chosen by Continental Socialists, namely, the advocacy of a national militia. The only way in which such "national militia" has been made effective is by a long and perpetual service, which puts a tremendous drain on Continental vitality and efficiency, because there is no occupation

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so productive of immorality, due to enforced celibacy, as soldiering, which in some cases affects the whole future of the Continental conscript, as it does the British Tommy Atkins.

If the alleged democrats who talk nonsense about a technical and complicated question like this, where all the arguments are one way, would support the democratisation of the Regular Army, it would be much more to the point. The only Army Reforms worth discussing are those which would give the regular soldier a living wage, freedom to marry and live at home away from barracks, and that military offences should be dealt with by the ordinary civil courts.

That Socialists should propose a scheme which would place every Englishman under "military law," is typical of the prevalent loose thinking on the liberties of the subject, which has led to so many good reformers lending their support to the Webb Poor Law Reform, by which the unemployed will be treated with deterrent intellectual punishment at institutions, for the crime of not being able to find work. I trouble you with this letter, tired though I am of exposing these fallacies, because silence might lead people to think that Mr. Maurice's plausible arguments were sound. "STANHOPE OF CHESTER."

* * *

AMBROSE BIERCE.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

With reference to Jacob Tonson's remarks upon Ambrose Bierce, it will probably interest your readers to know that we publish a 3s. 6d. edition of Mr. Ambrose Bierce's "In the Midst of Life." This volume contains both "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 Tonson, with our compliments. CHATTO AND WINDUS.

* * *

"THE POOLS OF SILENCE."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

On July 1st THE NEW AGE published, under the guise of a review, a foully worded attack on me and on my writings.

I replied to the person who wrote it, pointing out his misstatements; he took a week to answer me, and in his answer he makes things 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 maligned me:—

(1.) "We are shewn that Meeus is the merest creature of Berselius, and so obedient as 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 Berselius—yet he showed no servility at all."

(2.) "The measure of Mr. Stacpoole'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 hostage-houses by the Belgians; I have drawn the picture of them eating their wretched food like animals in the yards of the hostage-houses; 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 STACPOOLE.

* * *

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 operations." Can he prove my incorrectness by giving a single instance 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 inoculations, it is true that Mr. Coleridge seeks 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 the inspector is not 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 him.

It is quite unnecessary for Mr. Stewart to suggest that "a personal objection" dictates our refusal to accept Mr. Coleridge's Bill, which would, in our opinion, strengthen the present system. I have never stated that we would be "willing to accept such a Bill." What I stated was that we might accept "instalments" on the way to total abolition, though we ourselves would not lower our demand. But "instalments," such as the abolition of the use of curare, or the stopping of demonstrations before students, are one thing, and Mr. Coleridge's proposal to increase the number of biased and interested inspectors to see that totally impossible regulations are carried out, is quite another.

BEATRICE E. KIDD.
Secretary British Union for Abolition of Vivisection, 32, Charing Cross, S.W.

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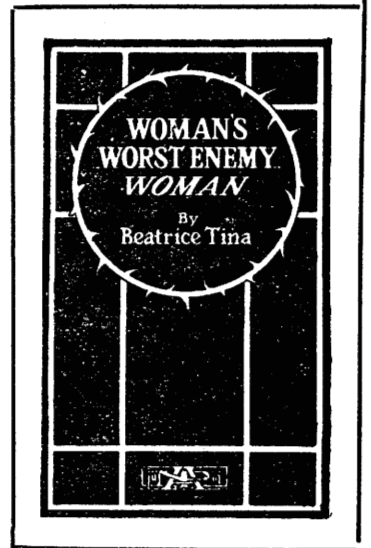
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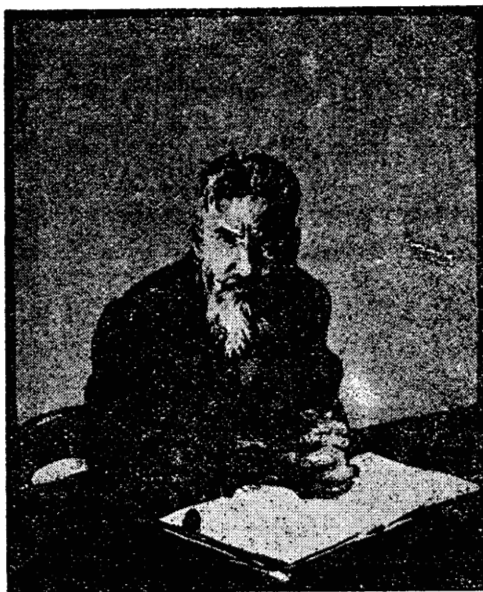


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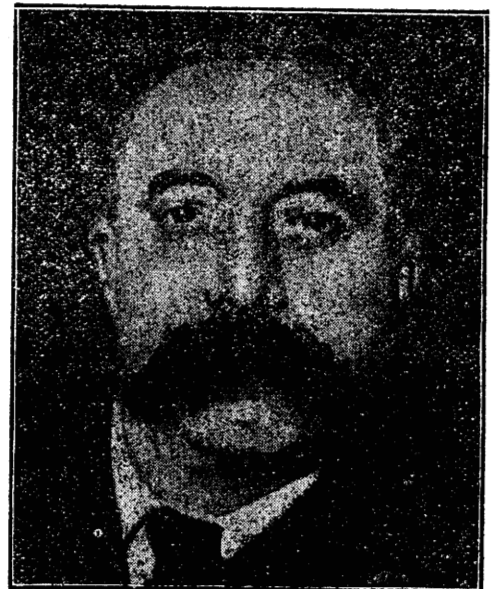
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