BUDGET LOVERS.

THE
NEW AGE
A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE AND ART.

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CONTENTS.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT.—With the first number of the new volume of THE NEW AGE, beginning on Nov. 4th, the paper will be considerably improved in quality and enlarged in size, the number of pages increased to twenty-four, and the price raised to Threepence. The Editorship and policy of the paper will remain the same.

All communications for the Editor should be sent to 38, Cursitor Street, Chancery Lane, E.C.

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

WHY does the Press protest so much that the King is not taking a hand in the political game? For once, the King's interest is obvious, and his concern clear to everybody. He has no desire to be the sole remnant of hereditary privilege in the Constitution, and consequently the Lords must be left very much as they are. This, we imagine, was the King's warning to Lord Rosebery, Earl Cawdor, and to Mr. Asquith. If there has not been a "deal" in the horse-sense, there has at least been under the King's direction a discussion the outcome of which will probably be the passing of the Budget through the Lords. This will stave off a constitutional revolution, and meantime leave the threat of the Lords' veto still always hypothetic, even on Finance Bills.

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Certain Liberal papers are anxious, however, to precipitate a General Election, even if the Budget is passed by the Lords. This is not policy, though disguised as such. What excuse can they give for throwing up the sponge before they have been seriously hit? The Budget rejected, there would have been not merely excuse, but necessity for a General Election à outrance: but with the Budget safe, who in the country really cares for the moment about the Bills which the Lords have mangled? We would not declare war on the Lords' veto on account of either the Irish Land Bill or the English Housing Bill: and not because we should be afraid of losing, but lest our victory should prove empty. There is not enough in these Bills to move the country to abolish the Lords' veto, and nothing short of that is of the slightest value to us. For the present it is enough to know that the Lords will probably pass the Budget even though it contain several Bills within its intricate folds. Surely that is the real Liberal lesson of the whole affair: to incorporate more and more Bills in the Budget. We shall shortly be preparing Mr. Lloyd George's next Budget.

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Suppose the "Nation" and the "Daily News" have their way, however, and an election is fought even though the Budget be passed, the prospective issues will not be to-day what they were yesterday. Yesterday we should have put the issues of the election in the following order of importance, Lords, Budget, Tariff Reform, Socialism. To-day we should be inclined to reverse the order. After all, you cannot fight an election on your own terms, and when one issue which promised to be predominant has dropped, the minor issues must scramble to the front as best they can. And in that scramble Socialism, we know, will not be the least successful. At any rate, the "Nation" may be warned that the atmosphere will change at once when the Lords pass the Budget. A reaction in their favour will set in, and people will be saying the dukes are not such bad fellows after all. They fight for their rights, of course; but they abide by the law at the last. In such a popular mood the proposal to end or even mend the Lords would be suffocated with sentiment.

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We do not underestimate the perils of delay, but they are at least as great for the other side. No doubt it seems bad tactics not to strike while the iron is hot. Twelve months ago the Liberals would not have been returned: twelve months hence, argue some of them, the Liberals will not be returned. But to-day there is no doubt of it. Therefore, to-day is the time. Yes, we reply, to-day is the day if the Lords reject the Budget, but not if they do not. If they do not, next year is the time for the election, and meantime the promised legislation on Poor Law Reform may be got through. Who doubts that if the Unionists are returned they will balance their Tariff Reform by Poor Law Reform? With every certainty we may say that they must do so or perish. Why, then, should not the present Government with a year of life before it anticipate the Unionists, and lay down the foundations of the reformed Poor Law on the lines of the Minority Report? We undertake to say that the Government in that case would be quite as popular this time next year as now. Failing the adoption of some such plans, we shall infallibly conclude that the Government has either lost heart, or that it never seriously meant business. A General Election, if the Budget is passed by the Lords, ought to be made finally disastrous to the Liberal Party. That is our view.

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We do not quite know why we should be anxious to continue in power a Government like the present.

Perhaps because it contains such excellent elements. But it also contains elements so bad as nearly to nullify its better parts. We have had our say about Mr. Herbert Gladstone, for instance, whose constant harrying of the Suffragettes goes far to disgrace not merely the Cabinet, but, in the eyes of the world, England herself. Does the Cabinet mean to say that it has handled the Suffragette movement with skill? Not one of them has in our opinion behaved better than the usual masculine noodle in the presence of women with a grievance. Both Mr. Asquith and Mr. Herbert Gladstone in particular have behaved distinctly worse. Pet lambs of the Government, like P.W.W. of the "Daily News," may see something heroic in Mr. Asquith being bundled through a pneumatic tube to escape a few Suffragettes, or in Mr. Gladstone "facing the ordeal" of explaining to the House that he was reduced to employing a stomach pump as a political instrument; but the plain man is simply enraged at the incomparable folly of it all. Apart from policy, it is not masculine cricket: it is making our sex a laughing stock. We would willingly drop the Budget to escape the humiliating spectacle. Great gawks! Without humour, wit, imagination or commonsense. The woman might abandon bricks for bodkins with these creatures.

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What none of them seem to realise is that the women have been driven in sheer despair to the use of tactics of violence. It is perfectly monstrous to suppose that women like to interrupt meetings or to throw bricks at Mr. Asquith: still less to starve themselves, or to be tortured by prison wardresses. Not for nothing a week, or even for £10 a week, could we find men of the same class willing to undertake the risks and endure the certain hardships undertaken and endured by the Suffragettes. Not, that is, without a passion for a cause: and passion dispenses with payment, counting it at best no more than means. The "Nation," we observe, falls into the error this week of attributing the initiation of violence to the Suffragettes in breaking up meetings and the like. If questions at question time break up a meeting, such a meeting should be held in a church, and no questions asked. In the early days, the Suffragettes asked questions of a legitimate character in a legitimate manner and at the legitimate time; and it was only when Liberals refused to reply that they took to asking questions more inconveniently. As a matter of fact, no woman can legitimately ask a question at a political meeting, at question time or any other time. In short, she has no legitimate political weapon whatever.

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If we dwell rather at length from week to week on this topic of the Suffrage we do so because the movement is rapidly becoming formidable not only to public life but (and we say it seriously) to civilisation. When an English Government allows itself to be driven to methods of barbarism in the suppression of its political enemies, we may be sure that the cause is not only strong, but strong enough to ensure reprisals constantly mounting in the scale of violence. We believe that there is literally nothing at which the women will stop in the efforts to gain their end; and if it should so happen that the Government will stop at nothing either, then we are in for a very terrible form of civil war, which may easily become a sex-war. So far, the militant Suffragettes have done their best both to avoid violence and to confine the issue to the political vote; but we think too well of their spirit and of their intelligence to believe that the bounds of their propaganda will not be widened together with their tactics. We repeat that it will be the Government and not the Suffragettes who are to blame. For the present state of affairs we hold Mr. Asquith and Mr. Gladstone personally responsible; and if affairs become worse, it is they who will have butted the State into barbarism.

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And this attitude we should maintain even if we were not, as we are, in favour of extending the franchise to women. Granting the vote to women may conceivably in our opinion be wrong; but denying it contumeliously is ten thousand times worse than any error involved in granting it. So far as we can see, there has not been a single argument brought against the Suffrage that women have not completely answered. If there is nothing weightier against Votes for Women than the objections of Mr. Belfort Bax the cause is intellectually won. It may be that the real objections to women's franchise have not yet been articulated. In that case the sooner they are the better. What we ask is that the demand of the women shall be fairly met, their own views thoroughly understood, and the contrary case, if it exist, fairly and openly made. Should reason prove in vain, there is still another alternative to be tried before the desperate remedy of force, which is no remedy, is resorted to. Suppose, for example, that the real motive of the women's movement is economic, would it not be possible to drain off its energy by opening up to women more favourable economic conditions? In other words, if men would legislate for women, possibly women would not be so anxious to legislate for themselves.

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Mr. Lloyd George is sometimes Mr. Lloyd, a Welsh Liberal attorney, and sometimes Mr. George, a descendant of the great Henry. At Newcastle on Saturday he was each in turn. There is no doubt, for instance, that in raising the question who ordained that a few should have the land of Britain as a perquisite and made 10,000 people owners of the soil and the rest trespassers in the land of their birth, it was the spiritual descendant of Henry George that was speaking. But when he declared that the Budget was not an attack upon property, and that the rich Liberals who voted for it did so unselfishly, it was unmistakeably the Welsh Liberal attorney who spoke. We are under too many obligations to Mr. Lloyd George to be unduly critical of Mr. Lloyd; but we regret, all the same, that Mr. George is not more often with us. If the Budget is not an attack on private property, albeit a feeble and timid attack, it is nothing to us. We would not write a line in defence of a Budget that proposed to leave private property intact. And it is sheer muddleheadness in Mr. Lloyd George to pretend as Mr. Lloyd that what he does as Mr. George is not precisely this.

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At the same time, we cannot too often repeat that taxation even of unearned incomes, of land values, and all the rest, is only a means to Socialism: it is not Socialism itself. Mr. Lloyd George sometimes appears as willing to tax and yet afraid to take. He would tax the fruits of private property, but he would not acquire property for the nation. It is, however, precisely this latter intention that gives Socialist taxation its raison d'etre. But for this, taxation involves no more principle than any other means of raising necessary money. When, however, taxation is definitely regarded, as it is by Socialists, as the means whereby the State can acquire complete ownership of the means of production, it becomes of the highest practical importance. Given the Socialist investment of the national revenue and we would undertake in ten years to abolish taxation altogether. If the nation owned all the land, all the railways, and a fair proportion of the national industries, it could easily run the Government on the profits that now go into private pockets. The income from a nationalised railway-system alone would build half a dozen Dreadnoughts a year without the imposition of a farthing of tax or the raising of the cost by a penny of railway fares or rates.

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That is the line that Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Winston Churchill will take if they are wise. And there is not a doubt about the country being behind them. Every single genuinely Socialist proposal is absolutely certain to be popular if only it be understood. What militates against us is the interested misunderstanding that is so sedulously manufactured. Lord Resebery's fatuous remark that Socialism means the end of all, of faith, family, Empire and King, is an example of the manufactured misunderstanding. If Lord Rosebery knows no more of Socialism than that,

he should really be confined in Epsom ; for such folly is dangerous when loose. But, of course, Lord Rosebery does not mean that land nationalisation, railway nationalisation, or the municipalisation of the milk-supply involve atheism or republicanism. What he means is simply that he dislikes the idea of a considerable change, and any proposal for such a change finds him shocked into inaccurate though purple epigrams. But epigrams do not kill ; and we still believe that our legislators having begun to tax like Socialists will find themselves driven by sheer common sense to spend like Socialists, by acquiring profitable property for the enrichment of the State.

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The Bishop of Truro was very eloquent at the Church Congress on what he called the anarchy of Socialist thought. But our own misunderstandings of Socialism are nothing to the misunderstandings of Socialism which prevail in clerical minds. There is anarchy of Socialist thought, if you like. One set regarded Socialism as Christianity in practice, another set regarded it as anti-Christian in both theory and practice. The Bishop of Truro opined that we might safely be Socialists to-morrow if only we were Christians to-day : to which we reply that we might safely be Christians to-morrow if only we were Socialists to-day. Dr. Shadwell of Ham had the agreeable task of playing devil's advocate in a meeting inclined to sentimentalise Socialism. He declared it to be materialist, selfish, etc., etc. What a waste of words over a simple theory concerning the best means of creating and distributing wealth.

Reflections on Revolutions.

I WAS asked, a few days ago, by a puzzled politician : what course but dissolution of Parliament would be open to the Government, if, instead of passing or rejecting, or offering to amend the Finance Bill, the Peers should politely decline to give it a second reading until after the country should have been consulted? My political friend seemed to think that such a resolution of the Upper House would be an ingenious and quite constitutional master-stroke, and that the Government would have no alternative, but must dissolve Parliament accordingly.

My reply took him by surprise, being to the effect that, though dissolution might appear an easy way out of the corner, it would be, in my opinion, as contrary to the spirit of our political Constitution as any course which the Government could adopt, excepting perhaps that of resigning office. I argued that it would amount to accepting and sanctioning on behalf of the people a double disruption of our modern constitutional practice. First, it would assume and establish a right of the Lords to meddle with the national finances, whenas the Commons have denied them any such right (excepting that of formal assent), and all constitutional authorities, including Peers of both parties, have admitted and maintained that to allow such right is impossible, since the exercise of it would bring to a stop the entire machinery of government. Secondly, it would grant and establish a right of the Lords to interfere between the Commons and their constituents—the electorate and its representatives, and thereby to assume a supremacy which no House of Peers has ever yet dared to claim, and which even the Sovereign, who possesses it nominally, has long ceased to exercise, excepting by the advice and as the act of the Ministry in office.

To a suggestion that, whatever the practice and practical objections might be, the Lords would still be within their legal rights—that there is only precedent against the suggested action—I replied : that precedents are the very blood and flesh of the Constitution, by virtue of which it is a living growth, and without which it would be a mere inanimate skeleton hung on wires. Precedents, in fact, are established practices based on agreed principles, and are extended and varied from time to time by general agreement. Take away precedent—deny the obligation of it, and we shall find that we have abandoned almost all that separates us politically from autocracy, and the peers themselves could not depend on receiving their writs of summons by virtue of which they appear in Parliament.

That would be a revolution in being, a veritable somersault of the Constitution ; whereas the Rosebery-cum-Tory palaver of revolution by the Finance Bill is unadulterated humbug, conspicuous for its impudence even among the multitudinous effusion of that product of despair which now distinguishes the organs of privilege ; for the only novelty in the Budget is the special taxation of land values, and the principle of this is not novel, but has been approved by a Royal Commission and more than one House of Commons, and, if not by the House of Lords, at least by some of its most eminent members, who are now loud in denouncing their former desire. It has been demanded by many municipalities and other governing bodies, not to mention labour organisations, etc., for a generation or longer, and was foreshadowed unmistakably by the late Prime Minister (of whose admirers I was never one) in his public-speech-manifesto before the last dissolution. Everybody who has any considerable brain-power, and has applied it fearlessly and freely to the subject, refusing to be blinded by personal greed, has been desirous of seeing land-taxation begun at any time during the last twenty-five years.

To talk of referring such a matter—not to say the whole Finance Bill—to the country by dissolution of Parliament is arrant nonsense. The Referendum is entirely foreign to our existing institutions and practices—'tis pity, but 'tis true—and, in order to adopt it, we must either legalise it by constitutional co-operative act of those institutions, or overthrow them in favour of it by defying precedent. There is no present power in the Constitution to refer any financial question or group of questions separately or together to the electorate so as to obtain a verdict thereon apart from other influences. The electors are not asked or competent to decide such questions, nor do they appoint delegates to do certain pre-ordained acts : they elect representatives, who, from the first assembling to the final end by dissolution of the Parliament to which they are elected, have full power of attorney to legislate in accordance with their personal judgment. The will of the people, for the time of that Parliament, is legally and practically that of the elected representatives of the people. How could it be otherwise in a world of continually changing conditions and circumstance? The Tories, at least, had no doubt about the principle when, during several Sessions of the last Parliament, by-elections were going against them wholesale ; and their opponents need have none now. This may be good or not good ; but it is the unwritten law.

To permit the Peers to decree that the Commons do not represent the electorate would be to give them power to dictate a dissolution at any time. To regard the result of a General Election as a definite answer to a definite financial question would involve regarding it as nothing more than that, and the Commons as mere delegates, who, like those appointed to elect a President in the United States, should disperse after having discharged their immediate function ; or, at the most, as soon afterwards as the Peers might determine by refusing supplies. Once admit such a claim, and who could prophesy to what it might not lead? It would be the near way to plutocratic oligarchy? What assurance would there be that the Peers would not repudiate the supposed mandate of the Commons immediately after the next dissolution, for instance, on the ground that the financial questions had not been submitted to the electors apart from other considerations ; or that conditions had changed ; or that the majority in favour of the Government was factitious and contrary to the real will of the people ; or that—whatever else might serve the occasion? The Lords have no more right to go behind the scenes (so to speak) of the House of Commons than they have to refuse supplies granted by the Commons.

"What, then, could the Government do to end the deadlock (supposing it to be produced) if they may not

dissolve Parliament in order to obtain the opinion of the electorate?" That, said I, depends on the Government personnel: to what degree it is united and resolved and strong. I am unable to answer that question; but I can tell you with some confidence what it would do if each of the members of it were mentally a facsimile of the elector before you. Assuming the Lords to have disregarded precedent and suspended the Constitution in the manner proposed to them, the method which I, as the Cabinet, would adopt is the simple one of accepting the suspension of precedents and following the Lords' example by making such further precedents as the welfare of the country might seem to demand. In time of revolution the party in control of "the spigot of taxation" has, necessarily, command of "the rudder of government" also, and is master of the situation until dispossessed; and the peers and those who are offering to "hold their collars" on condition that they "fight to a finish," know well enough what would be the result of an attempt of the hereditary part of the Legislature to dispossess by force the elected part and the Government of its choice.

My first step would be to obtain of the House of Commons a resolution declaring that the House of Lords, by exceeding its function and refusing supplies granted by the Commons according to law and custom, had violated the Constitution and made the ordinary methods of government and legislation impossible, and that, therefore, the affairs of the nation must be carried on by the Ministry in accordance with resolutions of the Commons during the interregnum. I would then deal with the Lords by drastic resolution and plebiscite, submitting the matter to the people for approval or disapproval—not by dissolution of Parliament, but by direct vote of the entire electorate, taken ad hoc. The case being one of Privilege versus People, there can be no doubt what the answer of the people would be. The Peers, if they have still somewhat more discretion and self-control than a herd of swine, will think twice, and many times more than twice, before they quit the highway of precedent and run into the sea of revolution towards which many, blinded by false conceptions of their own interests and disinherited of patriotism and common sense, are urging them.

But now, assuming that the Lords, recognising the limits of their function in finance, pass the Bill (with or without formal and futile protest), but reject, or by "amendment" emasculate and make unacceptable the other measures of the Government, what can the latter do effectively in order to assert the will of the people? To dissolve Parliament under such conditions, and presently find themselves with a larger or smaller majority, would decide nothing. The Peers would be little less potent than they have been throughout the present Parliament, for their power as regards non-financial business is not limited by precedent; and, when a mixed multitude of questions are in dispute, it is impossible to regard the result of an election as conferring a mandate with regard to any particular one, and still more with regard to all of them. To claim that any possible majority so obtained would entitle the Commons to alter the Constitution without the approval of the Lords would be as revolutionary as the deprecated action of the Lords in attempting to force a dissolution. The prudent and most constitutional course for the Government to pursue in such case would be that of bringing in and pressing forward a Bill to establish a direct reference to the Nation of all questions between the two Houses, and, if the Lords should refuse to pass it in an acceptable form, to dissolve Parliament and appeal to the electorate on that question alone: "The whole Bill and nothing but the Bill."

If, as result, the country returned (as it surely would) an overwhelming majority determined to pass the Bill, and if the Lords still refused (as they would not) to accept it, the Government would then be justified in taking on behalf of the people such action (not necessarily unprecedented, but undoubtedly revolutionary) as might be needed to effect the manifest desire and will of the people.

As for the Lords, unless they are foolish past redemption, they will not set themselves to thwart the Commons in the way suggested, but rather will pocket pride and ignore privilege, and make haste to re-create and re-establish their own House by clearing out the foolish hereditary element altogether and substituting men of proved ability and experience and self-sacrificing patriotism from all parts of the Union of British Peoples: constituting thus a true Aristocracy, a House of Capables, which should be endowed with power to fill its vacancies by itself, summoning other such Capables on occasion; unable to interfere with financial matters (they must always be dealt with by the Government which has the confidence of the Commons); but, in all other matters, of equal authority and power with the Commons, all questions in dispute between the two Houses being subject to a referendum by plebiscite. Let the Lords make their House worthy of the nation's respect and confidence, and they need not fear being flouted as they have been.

These are revolutionary times, when much is possible to creative imagination and resolution, but in which apathy and stupidity and cowardice are doomed to the ditch.

FLAVUS SECUNDUS.

Budget-Lovers.

CHARACTERS:—

HARRY: An Artist.
LUCY: A Duke's Daughter.
DICK: Her Cousin.

Scene: Outside Rouen Cathedral.

HARRY (*who is seated on a camp stool, sketching. He wears a seedy suit of clothes, a slouched hat, and a red necktie*): The last of my happy days! To-morrow night I shall be back in London. And what am I going to take back with me? A few miserable sketches and the heart-ache. I shall never be happy again! Never be able again to take pleasure in my work! I shall be a miserable failure! Oh, how I wish I had never met her! But then——

LUCY (*entering*): Good morning! (*Looking over his shoulder*): Oh, it's quite beautiful! And is that young person with the parasol intended for me?

HARRY: Yes, if you like.

LUCY: And who's the young man?

HARRY (*handing her the sketch*): Look and see.

LUCY: Why, it's Dick!

HARRY: I thought I saw you go into the Cathedral with him just now.

LUCY: Well! (*About to return to the sketch*).

HARRY: You can keep it if you like.

LUCY: That's sweet of you. I do indeed like it. Mayn't I go into the Cathedral with Dick?

HARRY: No! That is to say, yes! And I am going home to-morrow.

LUCY: So soon?

HARRY: Yes! My sketches are finished. My holiday is over (*sighs*).

LUCY: (*laughing*): What's the matter?

HARRY: It is only natural, I suppose, that I should feel a little depressed.

LUCY: When you paint so beautifully?

HARRY: Oh, bother my painting! I have lost all interest in it.

LUCY: How strange! I wonder why.

HARRY: I wish I had the courage to tell you.

LUCY: Now you are fishing for another compliment.

HARRY: No! I have done with compliments.

LUCY: That's unfortunate for me. Ha! Ha!

HARRY: I can bear this suspense no longer!

LUCY: Am *I* your "suspense"? Ha! Ha!

HARRY (*with passion*): Miss Smith—forgive my presumption—Lucy! Oh, I'm the most audacious of beings!

LUCY: I begin to think you are. You take my breath away.

HARRY: I must tell you. I can't go away without saying it. Lucy, I love you! Oh, how I love you! Can't you see——?

LUCY: Not if you make me cry (*breaking down*). My Harry! How could I have admired your beautiful sketches without loving you, dear?

HARRY (*seizing her hands and smothering them with kisses*): My darling! Oh, you have made me so happy.

LUCY: How blind of you, Harry. I am sure everyone else must have seen it.

HARRY: You know, they say that love is blind. But it seemed to me so impossible. There was your cousin——

LUCY: Why, Dick saw it the first day he came here, and has teased me about it ever since.

HARRY: Oh, if you knew how unhappy I have been about him. I was sure that I had been forestalled, and that you were lost to me for ever.

LUCY: How absurd! Why, he's engaged to a Gaiety girl in London. And, Harry dear, I want you to be nice to him. He is very clever, you know, and his advice would be useful to us.

HARRY: You would rather that I spoke to him before speaking to your father?

LUCY: Well, if you don't mind. The course of true love, you know, never does run smooth.

HARRY: But ours will, darling.

LUCY: Dick's father and mine are neighbours, and in order not to break up the property they want Dick and me to marry.

HARRY: And you refused?

LUCY: Well, the best laid plans of mice and men, you know. Dick's determined to marry the loveliest girl in London, and why should I not marry the handsomest man in the world?

HARRY: My darling! Why not, indeed? My teaching brings me in a regular income, and——

LUCY: Oh, never mind about the money, dear. All I ask is that you will never regret the step you have taken.

HARRY: How could I? You are all the world to me.

LUCY: My Harry!

HARRY: I couldn't live an instant without you!

LUCY: Precious one!

HARRY: Oh, I'm the happiest man in the world!

LUCY: Darling! (*They kiss each other with rapture*). Here's Dick coming. I must go, love. Be guided by him; he is the best of fellows. We will go up to the hotel separately. I don't want them to see us together. We shall soon meet again, Harry, dear one. [*She runs out.*]

HARRY: Was there ever such an angel! (*He packs up his sketching materials.*)

DICK (*entering*): My hearty congratulations, sir. I think I guess how you feel. Upon my soul! it seems profane to intrude. It's a case of "Right about turn, quick march," as we say in the army.

HARRY: Excuse me; I was lost in thought. I assure you I am feeling almost too happy to speak.

DICK: I know. I can appreciate your emotions. But you're in luck.

HARRY: Isn't she divine? I should like to speak to you about our engagement. In fact, Lucy wishes me to consult you.

DICK: Yes, I know. She's told me all about it, and I hope to be of use to you.

HARRY: When we are married and settled in Hammersmith, you must come and see us.

DICK: Oh, lor', yes! But there's a lot of manœuvring necessary before you can get her to—well! to Hammersmith. Lucy's father is simply rabid on the question of her marriage.

HARRY: Why, he always has treated me so kindly.

DICK: Of course he has, because I told him you were engaged to a girl in America.

HARRY: Oh, come now!

DICK: Don't you know that when a great fortune is at stake there has to be no end of scheming?

HARRY (*thunderstruck*): A great fortune! What under the sun are you talking about?

DICK (*chuckling*): Now comes the fun!

HARRY: If you refer to Lucy, I can assure you I never knew that either she or her father had a spare dollar between them.

DICK: And I as solemnly believe you. Now listen to me. Her father's rating at Coppertown is just over a million, and it's all wrong.

HARRY (*with a sigh of relief*): Thank God for that!

DICK: I know for a certainty that his property is worth nearly double that amount; and she is an only child.

HARRY (*aside*): This is very depressing! Whatever is he going to say next! [*Rises from his camp-stool.*]

DICK: Sit down and keep cool. I know just how you feel, and Lucy knows that you are ignorant of her father's wealth. Now—

HARRY (*looking very worried*): This is more than I can bear.

DICK: The Duke of Knickerbocker,—

HARRY: Oh, hang the Duke of Knockerstick!—

DICK (*laughing immoderately*): Ha! Ha! Well, that's easier said than done.

HARRY: What is it? For God's sake be intelligible, man!

DICK (*still laughing heartily*): No doubt it would be the simplest way out of the difficulty. Ha! Ha!

HARRY (*in a tone of desperation*): What *do* you mean?

DICK: Why you can't hang your own girl's father very well.

HARRY: In the name of all that's horrible, you don't mean to say—

DICK: Of course I do, why not? The Knickerbockers always take the name of Smith when they travel on the Continent.

HARRY (*completely overcome*): And I've called her father a thief, a land-grabber, a rapacious plunderer! Lucy! Lucy! how ever shall I be able to look you in the face again?

DICK: And I'll tell you something more.

HARRY: Stop, sir! I can't bear to hear any more. You've wrecked my happiness! Tell her— Oh, Lucy, have I lost you after all? Tell her— Oh, Lucy, I shall never cease to love you! [*He picks up his things and runs out.*]

DICK (*astounded*): Well, I'm dashed! He's no soldier! Did you ever see such a coward! Can't stand up to a pretty girl who dotes on him just because—

LUCY (*re-entering*): Dick, it's all right. Everything is settled. Brown is willing. The motor will be waiting for us here at midnight. Where's Harry?

DICK: Yes, indeed! Where! Bless'd if the fellow didn't run like the devil the moment he heard who you were.

LUCY (*looking round*): Harry gone! Now didn't I tell you to break the news to him gently? Drat that Budget!

DICK: It's conscription we want, I say, not land-Budgets. What's coming to the young men, I don't know.

LUCY: Well, I suppose I shall never get married!

[*Both go out looking very disconcerted.*]

W. P.

THE END.

The Guilt of Sham Industry.

WE set out for a walk through the city, and the course of our tramp brought us at the darkening into that dreary region which cowers by the banks of the sinister canal. The brush of ugliness was over the scene, ragged urchins, dirty women, surly men, squalid houses, dingy shops, and gloomy lanes. A stream of working people, freed from hours of grim, monotonous toil, began to pour along the wet dismal streets, like phantom figures, weary and hopeless.

"Until now," said Quarles, looking into the far-away from which new ideas come, "I had considered the appreciation of beauty in all its forms as the highest point in culture, but now I divine something higher, something which does not reject ugliness. The true son of nature loves the wind and the calm, the wet and the dry, frost and shine, sun and stars. The true son of humanity appreciates the weak and the strong, the bold and the shy, bonnie and ill-favoured, humble and proud, those who strive and those who grow. To accept these and to refrain from being attached to these is mayhap the earliest glimmer of the sixth sense or

fourth dimension, wherein thought and taste become impartial as air."

"I see dirty slimy streets, and dirty weary men and women," remarked Rothes with some bitterness; "I see weary workers hastening home to miserable fare and squalid abodes. It is all ugly."

"Why should we wander in this lugubrious wilderness of stone and lime?" asked Rammerscales; "really, Quarles, there is no redeeming feature in it."

"What I see cannot be argued, and perhaps we had better return to the centre of the city," replied Quarles, who still maintained a far-away look.

"We are among the habitations of the poor and working class," said Sully, "and why the poor should be always working and the workers always poor is beyond divination. I am not a sociologist or an economist, but I like to see fair play. It is strange when you come to think of it that laziness is always associated with those who work. An idle aristocrat is never called lazy."

"The poor must work out their own salvation, they have the power, they have the numbers"; remarked Rothes. Then he added somewhat sadly: "But they neither have the stomach nor the vision."

"Like Sully, I'm not a specialist, and it seems to me a matter of business that those who work should contract to live in comfort," said Rammerscales.

"It is a practical view," added Quarles, "that he who is industrious should see to it that he is well-housed, clothed, and fed. If he is not congenially conditioned, he had better ask himself whether or not his JOB is more than his LIFE. Working folk have to spend far too many hours daily to extract by labour the necessities of a bottom-rate existence. They are driven deeply into the crime of false industry, and their prayers should ever be for leisure in which to effloresce."

"Prayer is not enough," remarked Rothes; "I daresay if prayer could banish poverty paupers would not exist: but to the poor all poor things are given."

"The best thing to do is to keep pegging away. Busy people have no time to bemoan," said Rammerscales.

"That we are busy is no guarantee that we are doing anything," replied Rothes, bluntly; "the emptiness of our civilisation is not hidden under the ceaseless and hasty pursuit of ephemeral and useless things."

Rammerscales was confused by this utterance, and muttered something about the excellent teaching of Carlyle. The writings of the sage of Chelsea were at once a tonic and a trumpet-call. Carlyle advocated work as a specific.

"Industry does not consist in working hard, working long, being pushful, increasing production, or any manifestation of expending energy: to be industrious is to be continually doing and making good," said Quarles. "If we are busying ourselves about the production of shoddy, adulterated, ugly, or trumpery things, we are not industrious; we are rather restless fools and knaves. Life with sham industry is guilt."

"You spoke about Carlyle," said Rothes, looking at Rammerscales; "now, please don't mention the name of that hollow mockery to me again. His superficial doctrine of work has kept the people enslaved. He was a snob and not fit to lick the boots of Robespierre and Marat whom he decried. He will be exposed thoroughly some day."

"The usual rendering of the doctrine of utility is poor enough too—the production of what are called useful things is not an exalted aim," added Sully. "What the world needs is an output of sincerities, be they useful, beautiful, or merely curious. As for the writings of Carlyle, they are passing away, and our descendants will purchase them in one small slim volume containing only such poetic passages as the march to Versailles and the account of Teufelsdroch under the stars. In my opinion man is too much called upon by his teachers to perform: he should bethink himself of allowing himself to grow, and he might with advantage consider the lilies of the field."

During our walk, the rain, which fell at first in a timid hesitating fashion, had developed into a steady downpour, and as we reached Gordon Street the torrent became so drenching that we were glad to scamper unceremoniously into the Central Station for shelter. The great open space between the platforms and the offices was covered with people who carried dripping umbrellas and waterproofs. The majority were travelling to the suburbs from business, the others were either bound for distant places or, like ourselves, escaping the rain. They had a prosperous confident appearance, and were evidently persons of respectability and competence. On the fringe of the crowd were congregated ragged men and women, flower girls, match-sellers, newsboys, street porters, out-of-works, loafers, and thieves. They hung around the cold draughty doorways just beyond the deluge and no more. Sometimes a gust of wind carried the shower over them. An old woman of evil appearance stood at the main entrance. Her head and feet were bare, and she held in her hand a few wet bootlaces.

"She is not in the least concerned," said Rammerscales; "I suppose it's a question of habit."

"And so are we," Rothes rejoined, with a drawn smile.

"Her feet and ankles are red and her hair is grey. She is wet through," added Sully; "how the deuce do we become so callous?"

"A modern city is so full of disagreeable sights and incidents," answered Quarles, "that callousness is an almost inevitable growth in man, but there are pictures which refuse to become dim, and the spectacle of a lad whom I recently saw walking with bare feet along the slushy thoroughfare comes sailing up to me when least expected. The cold wind, the frost, the snow, the thaw, the slush, and through it all—bare feet! I had often been told that we were highly organised, that everything was well-managed, that there was nothing overlooked. It was even averred that progress was being made: but what about those bare feet? If you take Dr. Hume Brown's History of Scotland, there you will read that in the reign of James II his subjects attained to 'a degree of luxury that seemed to call for repression rather than encouragement.' That was four hundred and fifty years ago, when there was no free education, no popular franchise, no heaven-born statesmen, no white man's burden, no newspapers, no we-are-the-men-ism. The sumptuary laws—an Act of March 1458—restricted all, except persons in dignity, from wearing 'clothes of silk and costly scarlet and the fur of martens.' And the feet of that handsome lad were bare among the snow of our boastful time, when civilisation smites its breast and gives thanks that it is not as other eras."

"But if people are thriftless and lazy and profligate they must take the consequences," said Rammerscales; "unless they lead respectable lives they cannot expect to live in comfort."

"Come, come," cried Rothes, "respectability is no test of comfort, and comfort is no test of respectability. We are all members of one social body, and it is incumbent upon us to maintain a common standard of decency."

"That word respectability beats me: what does it mean?" asked Sully.

"Respectability does not mean the achievement of the respect of neighbours. It is the external symptom of acquiescence in the commonplace; it is the villadom of reputation," answered Quarles. "A man is considered scarcely respectable whose clothes are sorely worn, and he is not a whit better whose garments are of ancient cut, even although they may have the merit of being unpatched. There is a gregarious cruelty in respectability, and it allows no margin of mercy to originality. The kirk session which judged Burns was consciously and reputedly respectable, but the poet was not. The heartless force which stoned Stephen and destroyed Bruno is ever with us. A republican in a monarchical country, an agnostic in a Christian community, a lover of peace in an aggressive empire, a communist in an individualistic State, are all somewhat out with respectability. It slays what it cannot understand. Deep study, large experience, intellectual courage, a flash of genius may bring a man opinions enough to bar the door of every respectable house against him. Respectability is the open gate to

oblivion: it is a dark, vast capacious shoot. Barabbas was a robber, and Christ the Son of God, yet these two were classed together as malefactors, neither being respectable according to public opinion in those days. Respectability does not and dare not discriminate."

Quarles left us and walked across to the old woman. He bought her small stock of laces, and as he did not wait for change we concluded from the smile that passed over the evil visage of the ancient crone that he had paid her well.

DAVID LOWE.

Place aux Dames!

THE Suffragette enthusiasm has worked one or other of two miracles which deserve to be placed upon record, for either it has changed the character and nature of women themselves, or else it has revealed something of the truth concerning these mysteries to the dense and tardy mind of Holbein Bagman. It is not impossible that both miracles may have been accomplished, for Holbein Bagman has observed a transformation in the listless lives of mothers and daughters known to him since the suffrage propaganda afforded an outlet for unsuspected energies, and the kingdom of what he is pleased to call his own intelligence has undergone a revolution.

Who would have believed, for instance, that underneath the decorum they preserve in drawing-rooms, while they converse in polite civilities and commonplaces, English women concealed a robust and masculine sense of humour? This defect or weakness of our faith has been taken away for ever by the application of a label to the forbidding acerbity of the countenance of the Prime Minister—an act which added to the gaiety of Holbein Bagman and of everybody except the Liberals, who have yet to learn the right way of taking themselves seriously. Hereafter, when the atmosphere of the drawing-room grows oppressive, which of us will be able to refrain from looking round uneasily for traces of the label which the demurest of the company may have affixed upon the most artificially animated countenances present?

The masterpiece of Suffragette humour, however, cannot be anything other than the formation of the Anti-Women's Vote Society. Could there be conceived comedy broader or finer than this pretending masquerade of sympathy with old-fashioned ideas and prejudices at which all intelligent people are laughing? "We are not worthy of the vote," chant the Anti-Suffragettes (so called) in their amusing chorus. "We always have been well taken care of, and we always shall be well taken care of, and we prefer to be taken care of!" They have opened offices even For the Blandishment of Man into a Firmer Knowledge of his Indefeasible Superiority! Gilbert and Sullivan could go no further.

There is a close relation, as philosophers inform us, between the sense of humour and the sense of proportion. Where there is one there is bound to be the other, and the Suffragettes have proved the philosophers to be in the right of it by their surprising ability to see through glass windows. What is a pane of glass but a pane of glass, since the ladies have taken to wrapping up stones in brown paper parcels? Previously the mind of Holbein Bagman was bowed down in superstition. He lived in a glass house, which is now shattered. The windows of an Englishman's castle were things sacred and impenetrable to his exaggerated reverence, guarded by all the gods, to say nothing of the policemen. The imperturbable Suffragette, who is mistress of herself though crystal fall, has taken away this shameful credulity.

Then those lively spirits in the organ, among the tubes and bellows, who had learnt that their voices were as sweet in sound at least as Mr. Birrell's, and the lady who taught the world to perceive that a bell was as much entitled to a hearing as Mr. Winston Churchill—to each of these and to others of their joyful and emancipating fellowship Holbein Bagman tenders his sincerest thanks for the rectification they have effected in his sense of the proper measure of things. Use and custom had sophisticated his reckoning more than he was aware. He is now a free man who formerly was fettered. But he cries you mercy, Ladies. Do not hurry a willing apprentice too fast, nor pour too much scorn upon him; for they were your own hands which riveted many a chain which bound him!

Place aux Dames! Holbein Bagman exclaims for these and other lessons. He enumerates but two more articles of his everlasting gratitude. The first of these is illumination in political philosophy, the second in moral philosophy. The importance which women are attaching to the vote has rehabilitated that instrument in estimation as indispensable to Democracy, to say nothing of individual self-respect. A large number of us are agreed that the solution of certain social problems, the amelioration of certain social circumstances, can come about in no other way than by means of Acts of Parliament, and it has become evident, as the result of frequent and disappointing experience, that the makers of Acts of Parliament will listen with but little respect to representations, however cogent, proceeding from citizens however enlightened, as long as the enlightened possess no particle of the power to influence the possible course of elections. The women's emergence in the field of political warfare has brought the true significance of the vote into prominence. It is not so much a conveying of power into the hands of the ignorant and suffering (although that goes along with it) as a laying upon legislators of compulsion in their own interests to feel and know where the social shoe pinches. The aggrieved dispossessed of the vote have no other constitutional instrument than importunity. In other words, the loyalest efforts of wisdom and public spirit are likely to be wasted on behalf of the unenfranchised. The vote in the hands of the unintelligent (if these are to be found in any large number) is necessary to the effectiveness of the political and social sagacity of the intelligent.

Needless to say, Holbein Bagman does not reckon the Suffragettes among the unintelligent, although the franchise for which they are working will be extended to many who are less worthy of it than themselves. Democracy must take its risks and proceed along the only possible path, the path of adventure. The item of moral philosophy for which Holbein Bagman has yet to thank the Suffragettes throws an interesting light upon the adventure of Democracy. The women have concluded that it is not moral to be submissive. This appears from their acts, however absent it may be from their contentions. They are revolutionaries in moral theory, and by their proceedings have rubbed off scales from our eyes. It is only moral to claim one's own. If a body of free men and women have made up their minds to desire a thing and to obtain a thing, where is the imperative that shall prevent them? A demand is a right. "Claim your own at any hazard" might be the motto of the militant Suffragettes, who defy police, custom, order, imprisonment, and accepted notions of propriety. Henceforward Holbein Bagman will be far more of a person than ever he has been; his demands, when he has made up his mind about them, shall carry their own sanction, and the history of the world to him as he reads it shall be the history of the rising of the human spirit.

HOLBEIN BAGMAN.

Excursus upon Romance.

THE middlemen of the literary art, which, it is unfortunately not superfluous to say, comprises the drama, have a far greater influence upon its shape and tendency than the middlemen of any other art. The music publisher and the picture dealer are free with their opinions about what will sell, but the artists are not seriously affected by these opinions, which have not much influence at any time and no ultimate force whatever. But the publisher, in the region of fiction at any rate, does actually seem to decree the kind of book which shall be in vogue, and makes it unprofitable to produce any other kind. It is owing to the publisher that the writing of verse has become like yachting and polo-playing—a recreation confined to the well-to-do. A poet who knows that he cannot afford to pay for the publication of his verses throws cold water on his poetical impulses, and after a while succeeds in extinguishing such talent as he was born with. Short stories, too, are said to be regarded by publishers with profound disfavour, unless they are the work of a money-making author who has already written three or four novels which have made his name familiar. This excess of power which the literary middleman enjoys in comparison with his brethren who deal in the other arts arises of course from the fact that while the decision about the success of a painting or musical composition must ultimately rest with the people of trained taste and judgment, the decision about a novel or a play rests with the untrained, with all the world.

The perception of this induces a certain timidity in the publisher and the theatrical manager, and a code. A very successful novel or play is really extremely injurious to all other novelists and dramatists of any originality, because it starts a fashion, and sets the publisher and theatrical manager upon the hunt for more or less disguised imitations, and renders them more recalcitrant than ever to new forms. People often say that publishers and managers would find it to their benefit if they put more faith in the intelligence of the public and were a little more adventurous. The public take what is offered, it is said, because it is offered, not because they want that particular kind of thing more than any other kind. It is not the public, we are told, who are afraid of certain forms of drama: it is the managers. But the managers say on their side that no great body of people can be got to regard a play such as Ibsen's "Ghosts" as a desirable evening entertainment. This may be; still, the "portable" theatre companies who travel the country with an extensive repertory, and frequently change their bill, have found that it is the most harrowing matters which draw the best houses.

But whether the theatre directors are right or not in their dealings with the public, the publishers, at all events, are acknowledged on all hands to be a very keen-witted clan who undoubtedly know their own interest best. In the matter of poetry, for instance, it were to be unjust to publishers to suppose that they who publish to get money would not be willing to publish poetry if they could get money by it. Their reluctance to do so is an evidence of one of two things: either that the public will not read poetry, or that there is some fault in the way that poetry is put before the public. Poetry is in this unhopeful state, and the short story. The genuine realistic novel, the novel, that is to say, in which the conditions are relentlessly drawn out to their logical and final, not temporary, conclusions, is supposed to be another. Certainly this kind of novel is hardly ever seen nowadays in England. Instead, you have gay romances by a generation which is not essentially gay. "Tristram Shandy" and "Candide" arose naturally from an age which did not trouble itself or worry overmuch. The eighteenth century deprecated enthusiasm and was sceptical. This century is not sceptical at all: it believes everything it is not obliged to believe in. The eighteenth century, essentially sceptical and light-hearted, could afford to luxuriate in the tears of "La Nouvelle Héloise" and the "Sentimental Journey"—delicious tears as artificial as cosmetics. But we, because we have learned what real tears are and their lacerations are on our faces, have no longer sufficient resolution to consider ourselves in the glass when we are weeping. Tears, we are told, will not sell, and still less that fierce misery which burns up tears and has nevertheless for the artist a singular beauty. No one will deny the beauty of "Madame Bovary," for instance, though almost all the details are sad or ugly or both.

But here it is useful to note the rather curious fact that if we don't want—or, what perhaps amounts to the same thing, if the publishers don't want—real realism, neither do we want romance. Ouida would look about for her readers to-day as well as Flaubert, if they were not both already consecrated. Zola (to take him for convenience as a realist) may or may not be breaking up, but Bulwer-Lytton is in a far worse plight. No, we don't want romance any more than realism; what we want is sham realism. We want the probable character, situation, and event, and we don't object to our feelings being harrowed to a certain point. Then suddenly at this certain point, the novel going at full speed is arrested with a dislocating shock, a new direction is taken, and the book ends in a more or less sunlit haven.

It is from this splitting in two of a novel, this double mood, these illogical conclusions from premisses stated with care, that arises the sensation of lack of balance which all reflecting readers will feel without being able to define it when they are reading almost any modern novel which is worth taking seriously. In most of these books, to make the concluding part fit in plausibly with what has gone before, the characters would require another psychology altogether. It would be to insult the many brilliant men and women who are constantly writing novels to suppose that they do not perceive this themselves. They could, no doubt, finish their books logically, but they would doubtless tell you that if they did their books would never get published. If this be indeed the truth, it follows somewhat amazingly that the lines which a form of art is to pursue are defined for all profitable and most practical purposes by the middlemen. Certainly, whether it be owing to the publishers or not, the genuine realistic novel, handled seriously and logically without sentiment or concessions, is extremely rare. Miss Beatrice Tina contributed to this paper some time ago just such a novel, entitled, rather unhappily, on account of the note of polemic which underlies this kind of title, "Whited Sepulchres." Here you have the characters levelled down to the surroundings. The effect is light grey; but it is at all events throughout the effect intended, and does not suddenly run into crimson or yellow before our troubled eyes.

This wish, or supposed wish of readers for adulterated realism, this preference for a hero who shall be an average man, but who must develop at a given moment all the powers, perquisites, and privileges of the grandiose thaumaturgist who used to fill the part, ends by playing the strangest tricks with some of our novelists. Let me take as an example a writer of great value: Mr. Leonard Merrick. Everybody knows that Mr. Merrick's books are at an immense height above those of the mere amuser who writes to entertain the imagination with a story. Mr. Merrick does conceive and block out his characters, and they act usually by their own will, so to speak, and not according to the caprice of the author and the emergencies of the plot.

Now, I happened to take up the other day a book of Mr. Merrick's called "Whispers about Women," and in it I found two stories which I condense as follows:

An English financier, aged fifty, port-winey, champagne-drinking, self-indulgent, has a nephew, a curate in the East End, to whom he intends to bequeath his large fortune. Meanwhile, uncle and nephew live on the best of terms. One night the curate calls on his uncle to ask leave to marry. He has fallen in love with a girl who holds up a cross in the limelight in a play patronised by the clergy. The uncle is obdurate, and threatens to disinherit the curate if he proceeds. He declares that the girl is a mercenary wretch who wants the curate because the curate is a millionaire's nearest relation—which, by the bye, the author lets us

know is the truth. The financier adds that he is going to New York. The curate and his beloved decide that the girl shall travel by the same steamer, so as to wear down by her charms the uncle's resistance. On shipboard the uncle falls in love with her, and as the steamer is entering New York Bay he persuades her to jilt his nephew and marry him instead.

That is story number one. Here is the second :—

A wealthy solicitor has a son who disappoints him by going on the stage. The son starves for three years, then surrenders to his father and is called to the bar. He is abundantly successful, and at forty-one is a K.C., with a prospect of being Attorney-General in the next Cabinet. One day he gets a note from a theatrical manager who had bought one of his farces years before. The manager intends to produce this farce, and ignorant that the author has become a personage he invites him to come to Manchester for rehearsals. The K.C. hesitates, then goes under his old stage name, the name the manager knows him by. All the charm he found in his old, precarious, vagabond life comes back to him. Instead of staying at an hotel, he quarters at theatrical lodgings. He falls in love with the leading lady. She has sweet eyes ; her mother is a charwoman ; when the actress is out of engagement, she does house-work and blacks the grates. After the K.C. gets back to London he is more in love than ever. He writes to the girl, and she comes to his chambers in the Temple. He reveals his true position in the world and asks her to marry him. Her head sinks on his shoulder, the fountain outside in the court tinkles dreamily, and the flowers toss their heads in the sunshine.

There you are ! and very pretty too. But, one must ask, where is the realism? Does the end of either of these stories fit the beginning? Are they not rather pleasant little dreams, akin to Mr. Barrie's comedies, of what the world might be if it were, oh ! so different? In the days of "Caste" and "Our Boys" the second story, put on the stage, would have had a prodigious success. To say this is the same as saying that Mr. Merrick's story is not realistic art, or very good art of any kind. Mr. Merrick, of course, cannot think himself that in real life a prosperous lawyer (of all people !), with his eyes on political preferment, would hamper himself by a marriage with a little obscure actress. Young peers sometimes do that kind of thing, but would a successful K.C. aged forty-one? Many things might occur to him, but marriage would not. If by some extraordinary chance it did, then the story would begin from that point, and it would be a story of decay. For the man who had it in him to marry the little actress at the age of forty would not have it in him to be a successful K.C. any longer. His psychology would be different: his whole nature would have changed.

And the financier? Is there in sober truth a millionaire financier to be found in London who at the age of fifty would marry an insignificant actress of small talent and no renown? I don't say that some millionaire who has dully made a dull fortune in some one-horsed town "out West," where social relations are at their simplest, might not do it, though I have the gravest reasons for doubting that too. Millionaires, wherever they rise from, have a very accurate knowledge of their value in the market. That skilful and often profound observer, Mrs. Craigie, pointedly remarked that the millionaire who sheds his wealth on pretty women from motives of pure benevolence is not easy to find. And Miss Beatrice Tina and other thoroughgoing realists would tell Mr. Merrick that in such a case as he postulates marriage would never be the first proposition of a high-living, champagne-drinking London financier. It might by hazard be the last—by a wild hazard.

Perhaps the explanation is that Mr. Merrick is juggling with the word "marriage" for the sake of his public or his publisher. With a writer of his talent one must envisage all the possibilities. Perhaps he suggests marriage in these two cases as a superfluous feast. Perhaps when he wrote "marriage" he counted that his more intelligent readers would read—well, not marriage. If this be the case, I am not sure that any writer should count on an understanding between himself and his readers to that extent. But if, on the other hand, this is not the case, and Mr. Merrick meant marriage in the two instances just as he wrote it, then indeed you have two perfect examples of the croak which I say occurs sooner or later in most novels of contemporary life.

VINCENT O'SULLIVAN.

Books and Persons.

(AN OCCASIONAL CAUSERIE.)

I DID not go to Paris to witness the fêtes in celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of Victor Hugo's "La Légende des Siècles," but I happened to be in Paris while they were afoot. I might have seen one of Hugo's dramas at the Théâtre Français, but I avoided this experience, my admiration for Hugo being tempered after the manner of M. André Gide's. M. Gide, asked with a number of other authors to say who was still the greatest modern French poet, replied: "Victor Hugo—alas ! " So I chose Brieux instead of Hugo, and saw "La Robe Rouge" at the Français. Brieux is now not only an Academician, but one of the stars of the Français. A bad sign ! A bad play, studded with good things, like all Brieux's plays. (The importance attached to Brieux by certain of the elect in England is absurd. Bernard Shaw could simply eat him up—for he belongs to the vegetable kingdom.) A thoroughly bad performance, studded with fine acting ! A great popular success ! Whenever I go to the Français I tremble at the prospect of a national theatre in England. The Français is hopeless—corrupt, feeble, tedious, reactionary, fraudulent, and the laughing-stock of artists. However, we have not got a national theatre yet, and, moreover, this has nothing to do with Victor Hugo.

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Immediately after its unveiling I gazed in the garden of the Palais Royal at Rodin's statue of Victor Hugo. I thought it rather fine, shadowed on the north and on the south by two famous serpentine trees. Hugo, in a state of nudity, reclines meditating on a pile of rocks. The likeness is good, but you would not guess from the statue that for many years Hugo travelled daily on the top of the Clichy-Odéon omnibus and was never recognised by the public. Heaven knows what he is meditating about ! Perhaps about that gushing biography of himself which he penned with his own hand and published under another name ! For he was a weird admixture of qualities—like most of us. I could not help meditating, myself, upon the really extraordinary differences between France and England. Imagine a nude statue of Tennyson in St. James's Park ! You cannot ! But, assuming that some creative wit had contrived to get a nude statue of Tennyson into St. James's Park, imagine the enormous shindy that would occur, the horror-stricken Press of London, the deep pain and resentment of a mighty race ! And can you conceive London officially devoting a week to the recognition of the fact that fifty years had elapsed since the publication of a work of poetic genius ! Yet I think we know quite as much about poetry in England as they do in France. Still less conceivable is the participation of an English Government in such an anniversary. In Paris last Thursday a French minister stood in front of the Hugo statue and thus began : "The Government of the Republic could not allow the fiftieth anniversary of the 'Legend of the Centuries' to be celebrated without associating itself with the event." My fancy views Mr. Herbert John Gladstone—yes, him !—standing discreetly in front of an indiscreet marble Wordsworth and asserting that the Government had no intention of being left out of the national rejoicings about the immortality of "The Prelude" ! A spectacle that surely Americans would pay to see ! On Sunday, at the Français, Hugo was being declaimed from one o'clock in the afternoon till midnight, with only an hour's interval. And it rained violently nearly all the time.

I found a good new book in Paris. "Une Main sur la Nuque," by V. Cyril. Six short stories. Those who have read Huysman's "Sac au dos" may expect something in the same style, but much less acrid. Nobody that I met knew anything about V. Cyril except that he existed, and that his work was the most promising that had appeared for nobody knew how many years. I had been hearing of the book previously for several months. And I think that I bought the last copy but one in all Paris—a rather dirty one, but the less dirty of two. The volume, for the moment out of print, is too serious and restrained to sell in tens of thousands, but I presume that the publisher will immediately venture to reprint it. It is a first book. I will only say that I have enjoyed it. There is in it a full-sized picture of bureaucratic life in an old-fashioned bank that is about as fine as it could be. Another work by the same author is announced: "La merveilleuse aventure de Jim Stappleton." A title which creates misgivings.

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In the current "Mercure de France" there is an interesting note by M. Emile Henriot about the death of Gérard de Nerval. Although the general authoritative opinion is that Gérard de Nerval committed suicide, a few of his friends have always maintained that he was murdered. Among these was the late Ernest Reyer, a rare and very witty critic and a celebrated but tedious composer. Reyer said to M. Henriot: "Gérard did not kill himself—he was hung!" To which statement M. Henriot attached little or no credence until in an old number of "Charivari" (origin of our "Punch") he came across some souvenirs of Méry, who was an intimate of de Nerval. In his latter years de Nerval was destitute, and at the same time extremely sensitive about borrowing money. He was in debt to Méry, and his poverty and his ticklish obstinacy were such that he actually insisted on paying off Méry at the rate of a halfpenny a day. Now Méry had a parrot, and to ease the situation he said he would transfer the debt to the parrot, and de Nerval was to bring the parrot a halfpenny cake every day, because the parrot had a passion for halfpenny cakes. De Nerval invented a wild scheme for a book descriptive of the "dens" of Paris. He supplied the parrot with cakes regularly for some time, and then failed to appear. In response to urgent invitations he at last said: "I shan't come till I can bring my halfpenny." The next event was his death. Said Méry: "We are sure that he passed his last night in a fearful hole. . . No one saw him come out, and the next day he was found hanging to the grating of the window. His bedfellows, seeing him making notes, had taken him for a police-spy; they must have killed him and then hung him up. . . . My parrot was really the cause of his death." Further, an old woman, who was closing the shutters of the windows of another den near by, once said to Ludovic Halévy: "I saw him. He was still hanging there. He didn't hang himself. He was hung. His feet were touching. And he had his hat on. You never saw such a thing! . . . Hang yourself with your hat on! . . ." Literary life in Paris under the brilliant Second Empire. JACOB TONSON.

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

The Theory Behind the Budget.*

MR. J. A. HOBSON'S peculiar merit lies in his capacity for combining the distinguished air and the impartial accuracy of the academic economist with the business-like comprehension of the practical sociologist, who is closely in touch with the actual needs of the age. He has to his credit a number of very valuable contributions to economic science, and he has long been a member of that extremely small and select circle of economists whose work no serious student of affairs can afford to neglect; but hitherto he has not attempted a comprehensive expression of his views. In this his latest work all his previous achievements are welded together, and we are presented with a general coherent account of the main operations of modern industry and of the distribution of its product.

The central feature of the book, as may be gathered from its sub-title, is its analysis of distribution. Mr. Hobson divides the factors of production into three main categories—Labour, Capital, and Land. Each of these, he points out, must receive out of the product a "subsistence wage." Thus, Labour must receive enough to maintain the individual in a condition of working efficiency and to provide for the production of a new generation of workers. Capital must receive enough to make good the "wear-and-tear" which it suffers in use, and also—under a system of private ownership—to repay the individual owner for his "effort of abstinence," and induce him to allow his savings to be used. Land must receive enough to pay for keeping it in repair and maintaining its fertility. But in a progressive industrial community a further payment is necessary to each of the factors in order to promote growth. For labour an increasing wage—above the subsistence wage—is required to evoke a progressive increase of efficiency in all grades; for capital an extra payment must be made to stimulate its growth in new directions and the improvement of its material forms; for land there must be an improvement fund to provide for the more and more extensive cultivation required by a growing demand for food and raw materials.

All these payments are necessary for the maintenance and growth of industry; and under any system they must be a first charge on the product. As long as these are provided for the industrial process will go on. "The industrial system will work for its keep," and these payments are "its keep." But actually it produces more than its keep, and so there is a surplus, which is divided among the different factors in varying proportions.

The distribution of this surplus is governed by no fixed laws. The share obtained by any factor depends simply upon the pull which it is enabled to exert by virtue of its strategical position. Land being in its nature a monopoly generally secures a large share in the form of rent—a payment which is shown to be unnecessary by the fact that its abolition would in no way affect the contribution made by land to the processes of production. In some industries, particularly where there is a natural or an artificial monopoly, the capitalist entrepreneur obtains the lion's share. In others it may be that the workers, owing to their close organisation, are able to secure a large part of the surplus for themselves. The shares thus obtained may or may not be economically justified by a resulting increase of efficiency on the part of the "factor" concerned. The "economy of high wages" is indisputable, but it has limits at any given moment. A proper distribution of the surplus would assign to each factor just that amount which it is capable of assimilating and turning to good account.

The distinctive feature of Mr. Hobson's doctrine of distribution consists in the substitution of these categories of "costs" and "surplus" for the old categories of wages, interest, and rent. The line of division between earned and unearned income is shifted. Thus, incomes are carned or unearned in Mr. Hobson's view according as they do or do not serve as an incentive to industry or to increased efficiency. Thus the "interest" paid to a manufacturer may be truly earned, whilst the "monopolist" fees paid to a popular medical or legal practitioner may be largely unearned. Of every income that portion, and that portion only, is earned which is necessary to produce the effort and the efficiency required of the recipient.

* "The Industrial System." An enquiry into earned and unearned income. By J. A. Hobson. 1909 (Longmans, Green and Co. 7s. 6d. net.)

Upon this analysis Mr. Hobson bases a theory of taxation. Discarding the old theory that all taxation is a necessary but evil burden which should be made as light as possible and distributed so as to secure the greatest "equality of sacrifice," he shows that it is an invaluable instrument to be used freely to readjust the distribution of "unproductive surplus." He considers the most important duty of State-craft to be that of securing, on the one hand, the absorption of "surplus" by individual producers in proportion to their capacity for increased efficiency, and, on the other hand, the application of the remainder to the direct use of the State for public services. This involves, firstly, the regulation of industry by Factory Acts and Wages Boards, and so on, and, secondly, the taxation of unearned incomes. Wherever there appears to be a waste of surplus, there the taxing power of the State should be directed. Economic rents and excessive profits, interest or salaries not merely fail to perform the true functions of a surplus as the fund of progress, but actually damage efficiency by enabling whole classes of persons to be consumers without producing; and it is on such forms of income that the whole burden of taxation should be laid, whereby it may cease to be a burden in the true sense and become a positive benefit to the community.

Here, then, we have an economic justification of all the more controversial proposals of the present Budget. The land taxes, the supertax, the high licenses, and the increased estate duties are all more or less effectively designed to fall on "unproductive surplus," as also is the slight relief given to income-tax payers who have children to support. Our public financiers are moving in Mr. Hobson's direction, and unless the present recipients of "waste surplus" succeed in barring the way for a time there seems no reason why our system of taxation should not soon be based upon truly scientific principles. There is a good deal to be done, the proper graduation and extension of the income tax and death duties, the development of the land taxes, the abolition of taxes on food, and a far more adequate recognition of the public service performed by parents as parents. But we shall not be long about it once the problem is really understood; and for the spread of that understanding amongst the "sovereign power" we know of no better instrument than this book of Mr. Hobson's. C. D. S.

REVIEWS.

Ann Veronica. By H. G. Wells. (Fisher Unwin. 6s.)

We are afraid that women will prize this volume as another proof that men can only write of women from the outside. Ann Veronica is a rather more vulgar huntress of man than even Ann Whitfield. Like Ann Whitfield, she mistakes her desires for maternal pretensions. Instead of "A Father for the Superman!" this heroine cries "Children! Lots of 'em!" It is a surprisingly poor book, although the practical touch of Mr. Wells is often evident and there is a good deal of the grinning kind of humour of which he is a master. Ann Veronica, driven from home by overbearing relations, goes out to seek her independence. She falls among Euston lodging-houses and settles down finally in the dreary environment of cheaper London. Her first false step is to borrow forty pounds from a comparative stranger in order to allow her to complete a training in biology under a certain Professor Capes. The stranger expects a return for his money which the unsophisticated Ann, after accepting a heap of dinners and small presents, shrinks from dispensing. As a matter of fact she has become inflamed with Professor Capes, and the story concludes with Ann's capture of the professor. The book ends with this cry of total surrender: "Blood of my heart!" Flamboyant, for a man who knew the anatomy! We think the production of this volume is a temporary aberration. Its appearance so closely after "Tono-Bungay" explains perhaps the obvious note of overstrain.

The Severins. By Mrs. Alfred Sidgwick. (Methuen. 6s.)

Faced with the problem of a Philistine suddenly confronted by revolutionary tendencies as expressed by the family from which he has been separated since childhood, Mrs. Sidgwick has two solutions. She may either develop her highly respectable hero on the revolutionary lines of his family and its anarchist friends, or according to the Sunday-School-afternoon-tea conscience. She chooses the latter way and after condemning the triangular tie, makes her rather colourless hero declare love to a married woman, and keeps the lovers apart till she has killed off the undesirable husband. Then, in a final twaddly chapter, she gives full play to the Goethean elective affinities. Admirable Grundyesque bait for goody-goody groundlings. Apart from this problematic aspect, Mrs. Sidgwick's book is a clever piece of work. The authoress possesses undoubted literary gifts, her characters are well-drawn if we except Selma and the revolutionary journalist who are overdrawn obviously to express the authoress's prejudices. It will have a long run in many circles; the longest, no doubt, in religious circles.

DRAMA.

"Smith."

IT would seem that our popular dramatists are growing a little weary of their subject-matter. They write inevitably of a small and not particularly interesting class, wealthy, fashionable, occasionally clever and epigrammatic, but amazingly restricted by convention and prejudice, and especially by an arbitrary standard of manners and good taste. Mr. Pinero recently attempted a more brutally realistic, less well-mannered study of this class, with the result that the last nights of his "Mid-Channel" are already announced. Mr. Somerset Maugham's method in his new play at the Comedy Theatre is likely to prove more popular. He must have a new subject. Evidently the matrimonial difficulties of the governing classes, although as numerous as ever, are limited for the purposes of the stage. Mathematically speaking, there are only x possibilities or permutations in domestic upheaval, and x is a strictly finite quantity. Given the factors Husband—Wife—Lover (each provided with a fixed income) we may arrange their course of action something as follows in order of popularity:—

1. Complete misunderstanding on both sides. Wife reconciled to husband in Act IV.
2. Wife leaves husband in Act III, and returns in Act IV.
3. Lover shoots himself.
4. Wife shoots herself.
5. Husband shoots himself; and so on.

All the above are quite familiar to the theatre-goer, and Mr. Somerset Maugham has himself used several of them (especially No. 1, the easiest and most obvious) with immense success. It is plain that x, like the North Pole, can no longer remain an unknown quantity. We need not extend our enquiry to the Antarctic regions of the complication Wife—Husband—Mistress, which obeys precisely the same unwritten laws.

Now Mr. Maugham, as a purveyor of fashionable comedies, evidently understands all this. He is out for

novelty at whatever cost, and in "Smith" he does achieve a new and original situation. Moreover, he conceals its wild improbability by four acts of witty, polished dialogue. He begins, as usual, with Mayfair and bridge. That was inevitable. Then, by way of a fresh outlook, he introduces a healthy savage, one Tom, a wealthy Colonial from Rhodesia, in search of a wife. Tom dislikes Mayfair and all its works. He looks, at first in vain, for a "strong, healthy woman" who will prefer babies to bridge, blunders good-naturedly through four acts as a missionary of the simple life, and finally discovers his complement in the parlour-maid, Smith, whom he marries. We are left to infer that they live happily together, and that Smith rears countless babies on a Rhodesian farm.

The idea of the healthy savage in fashionable London is, of course, not at all novel. Mr. Sutro used him in "The Walls of Jericho," where he thundered condemnation of bridge and other luxuries for five hundred nights. But in Mr. Sutro's play he did not marry the parlourmaid, as he should have done. The whole treatment of the courtship of "Smith" is very fresh and human. She feels deeply that while any gentleman may make love to a parlourmaid, no gentleman should so demean himself as to offer her marriage. We gather that this is the view of "Cook," who unfortunately remains in the kitchen during the entire four acts, and thus is present only in spirit. We hoped to the last that she would appear.

The comedy is acted exceptionally well by Miss Marie Löhr as "Smith" and Mr. Robert Loraine as the prophet of simplicity. Mr. A. E. Matthews, as Algernon Peppercorn, gave an admirable performance in a vein which can only be described as "Wilde brought up to date." He might well be a nephew of one of the young men in "The Importance of Being Earnest." "You simply reek of your period," he says to the backwoodsman. "About 1902, I should think." Unfortunately, "Smith" does not hold out any great hope that Mr. Somerset Maugham, having achieved success, is now going to do sincere and conscientious work for the stage. Let him deprive each of his characters of that fifteen-hundred-a-year standard of life and start again. He will still get good comedy out of them with his mastery of witty dialogue. And surely, when a man has lived and travelled, written a dozen or so novels, and so evidently learnt to know his world, he need not always ring up the curtain upon one of those tiresomely perfect drawing-rooms ("well-appointed interiors" is, I believe, the phrase), with its group of still more perfectly appointed women seated round the card-table, and that inevitable "I make hearts!"

A. D.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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

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

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

THE MILITANT SUFFRAGISTS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

It is easy to sit comfortably at home and measure out cool-headed criticism of those women who are facing ordeals the most hideous that it is possible for women to face: ordeals which recent events prove are still used for punishing the political offences of those who have no political rights. (And we are asked, ad nauseam, why women want such rights!) As I have no bias in favour of violent tactics, but on the contrary bitterly regret their adoption by the Social and Political Union—terrible as the provocation has been—I am the more qualified to express my feeling of the preposterous and stupid injustice of the general execration that is being launched at those women who, right or wrong in their recent policy, are acting in complete devotion to the cause they hold sacred.

"By such conduct they prove themselves unfit for the franchise," we are told. If that be true, then are men a thousand times more unfit; and the argument, if it has any meaning, would lead to the summary abolition of the representative system!

But, of course, it is only the old story of the wolf and the lamb. Any action or attribute which anti-suffragists disapprove puts women out of court (the fashion of their hats is sufficient), and as those attributes which their opponents do approve

prevent their even asking to enter the sacred precincts, their exclusion is safely secured in either case, if we are to accept this astonishing reasoning. In common with many other arguments that catch the popular taste, it is utterly irrelevant. The franchise is not bestowed as a reward for "fitness." Who asks if a man is fit to vote? There would be as many answers to that question as there are different opinions about politics. What, then, has this indeterminate quality of "fitness" to do with the matter? Why are women asked to pass two tests for man's one—that of tax-paying and that of "fitness" into the bargain?

But, granted for the moment that such a double test were just and reasonable, as well as possible, it remains a question for discussion—not for begging—whether courage and devotion, such as the militants have shown, does prove them specially unworthy to make the laws which they have to obey.

If the verdict is against them, it surely cannot be more adverse than it would be in the case of men who come to register their votes half drunk, or those who vote—and their name is legion—out of pure self-interest, to further their business or the influence of their class. It would be laughable if it were not so heart-breakingly unjust, to urge the "unfitness" for the vote of women who are nothing less than heroic—whatever else they may or may not be—while every male time-server or good-for-nothing enjoys the privilege as his natural right—which, indeed, it is under the representative system, for whose establishment our ancestors have fought and bled. But it is equally a natural right for women who also fulfil the conditions.

Let them show themselves as "unfit" as they may in the eyes of the majority, that is no just reason for their exclusion.

It is, therefore, another question altogether whether their present tactics are or are not justifiable. Some means of rousing the public from their apathy seems to have been necessary in this, as in other great causes—though it is debateable whether it is wise always to go to the past for an example. The standards of public feeling change, and a quite new method might succeed to-day which did not succeed, or more probably was not even tried, yesterday. The almost bloodless revolution of the Young Turks is a case in point. The world has tried violence for weary centuries; and though it is indeed hard, in special cases, to see how certain results can be won without it. I feel personally convinced that it is only as we do gradually learn to do without it, that we shall make any serious headway against the miseries of the human lot, more than half of which take their rise in the belligerent and revengeful instincts of mankind. We have too little faith in the power of ideas; naturally enough, for there are few things that men so cordially dislike! Yet in the end they are ruled by them. As Miss Elizabeth Robins says, in relation to the cognate subject of slavery: "Not by battles in the field, but by victories in the mind and heart of man shall true emancipation come." But, of course, one has to waken the very somnolent "mind and heart of man" before one can begin to win victories in that land of Sleepy Hollow. There lies the difficulty, and the source of all the difference of view as regards suffragist tactics. The question is, indeed, a knotty one. Suffrage societies which confine themselves to those peaceful measures that their opponents so highly recommend do a vast amount of work, but receive very little notice. A paragraph quoted in "Votes for Women," of October 8th, from the "Yorkshire Daily Post," throws a significant light on this discouraging fact:—

"This is ascribed to hostility to the cause. Of course, it is nothing of the kind. Even those newspapers most heartily in favour of the movement could not be so foolish as to insert what, it is to be feared, few would care to read, and omit what everybody would want to know about."

The Militants themselves, in fact, do employ peaceful measures on an enormous scale all over the country, but that is not the part of their work the newspapers report. Moreover, be it remembered, it was not till their questions asked at the legitimate moment after public meetings, were silenced and the questioners roughly—and, surely, unconstitutionally—ejected, that they began to interrupt Ministers in the middle of their speeches. Not one of their much-decried actions has been resorted to till after a perfectly legitimate method had been met by unfair treatment.

I draw attention to these facts not as a plea for violence, but to remind those who have idly joined the chorus of abuse, what a tremendously difficult problem these devoted women have to deal with. Personally, I continue to believe in the possibility of achieving our object without violence, and without the device of mingled menace and appeal which constitutes the "hunger strike," heroic though it be. The logical consequences of justifying violence, even in such a case, are grave, indeed. But, apart from this question, I have always been ambitious enough for my sex to hope that they would mark their admission to full human status by an entirely new departure, viz., the consistent rejection of the time-worn modes of battle and fury, leaving all these to their male opponents.

For more reasons than one, therefore, I cannot but profoundly regret that the earlier rule of the Militants was abandoned: the cult of no violence or hurt to life or property. They consider that the Government's refusal even to listen to peaceful representations has driven them into a corner, leaving them the alternatives of abandoning the movement or of carrying it on by such means as were left to them. But I find it indeed hard to believe that the brilliant resourcefulness of the leaders could not have found a way out of the dilemma other than this. Indeed, I personally do not regard this as a way out at all.

Such being my convictions, it must be clear that my appeal

for bare justice for the militant suffragists (if a little large-hearted sympathy be too much to ask) is not actuated by mere blind partisanship.

I ask those who sit in judgment to remember the politically helpless position of those whom they are judging; to remember the weary years during which peaceful and constitutional means were tried, and tried and tried in vain; and to remember that even such rights as are nominally theirs—as British subjects—under the present laws have been persistently refused them. In such circumstances, what is, and what is not, justifiable? It is a question which every liberal-minded Russian has to ask himself as regards his own problems; and, indeed, the present crisis in England has a sort of kinship with the more terrific situation in Russia, and has brought out a spirit in English women of the same kind as that which has been roused by the iron tyranny of the Russian Government. I think that however severe may be the judgment on their actions, it ought, in common justice, to be given with that respect and homage that is owing to great and self-devoted heroism.

MONA CAIRD.

* * *

A NOTE ON "LA FOI."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

No review that I have seen points out what are surely the most importants defects in the English version of "La Foi" at His Majesty's. Even N. C. speaks of the first scene of Act 4 as the "great scene." Most people seem to think that the words of the High Priest to Satni are either the "moral" of the play or the answer of Brieux to the various questions he raises in it. Others think that this answer is to be found in the last words of Satni himself. I do not know how far the version at His Majesty's has been altered from the play as written by the author, but as it now stands two defects are obvious. In his endeavours to include every phase of religious thought and experience, Brieux has not only made the play too long drawn out for its full impressiveness to be felt, but has also spoilt his answer to the questions in it by ending with the death of Satni instead of with the duologue between Yaouma and Mieris outside the potter's hut. Before the final curtain goes down Mieris asks him: "If there are no gods, to whom shall we sacrifice ourselves?" He answers: "To those who suffer." Now, whether this answer is final or not, it is an answer to one only of the hundred questions raised by Brieux in the play. Neither he nor anyone can pretend to give a final answer to such questions. We cannot say whether the attainment of absolute truth is ultimately possible or immediately desirable. We cannot yet hope to build a consistent structure out of our various broken and provisional cosmic hypotheses, but we can at least lay a rock foundation on which to build. Brieux lays this foundation in the scene between Yaouma and Mieris. Yaouma, in a moment of exultation, cries out that Isis is before her eyes. Mieris is almost persuaded that she, too, has seen the goddess. Yaouma is the seer and poet; Mieris represents a large part of groping humanity—of humanity feeling pain and joy, and groping out after the light. The seer tells his vision, and the ordinary man, aided by whatever other senses he has, succeeds in perceiving in a less degree what the eyes of the seer have seen. . . .

Some will object that the vision of Isis was an "hallucination," and that Brieux meant us to know that it was. Brieux does not say so, and the time has surely gone when philosophers could cheerfully use the categories of "subject" and "object." If there is an impassable barrier between thought and matter, consciousness and nervous action, the knower and the known, how are we aware of either? We "know" that "facts" are "known," and that "thought" "knows" them: what, then, is the nature of "fact" and "thought"? Whether we explain man as a natural phenomenon, or the world as a mental one, the task of philosophy is the same. John Davidson shouted to us that "spirit" was only an aspect of "matter"; others shout back that "matter" is only an aspect of "spirit." Wells doubts whether our ideas have any relation whatever to reality. But whether all, one, or none of these thinkers are right; whether what we call "facts" (this desk and paper, for instance) are merely "symbols of an unknown entity," our problem remains the same. As Wells himself says in "Mankind in the Making": "Even if life is a dream, this *is* the dream." Even if this desk is merely a symbol or a mental phenomenon, here am I writing at it. Whether a sunset is a natural or a mental phenomenon, a symbol or a "subjective" hallucination, I can at least say of it that (whatever it is, is not, is or is not becoming) it evokes in me emotions to which I and the people I know have agreed to affix the label, "beauty."

This is our rock-bottom of fact. On it we can build, nor can any "don't-knowist" crumble it. If anyone challenges us to prove that the sunset is not an hallucination, we are justified in challenging him in the same way about his nose. Similarly, the "inspiration" of the poet, the "vision" of John in Patmos, of Swedenborg, of Yaouma—what can we say of them? That they must be glimpses, however distorted and fragmentary, of reality. Of reality, that is, as we can conceive, induce or deduce it from what we know or think we know. Suppose that what Swedenborg saw was a fragment of reality; what more can we say of our hands and feet, of night and day, paving-stones, or the discoveries of science? If the scientist asserts that the vision of Isis was "hallucination," a mere "subjective figment," we can challenge him to prove that his atom, cell, or electron is more. How does he know that the atom he holds is more than the merest apex of an infinite pyramid stretching away out of his ken, and out of his spaces and times? . . .

And it is, therefore, a great pity that Brieux did not bring down his final curtain on some enlargement of this wonderful dialogue. One line of genius may be noted. When Yaouma has the vision of Isis, she speaks of it as bidding her to the temple—a marvellous psychological touch. Even when a man is inspired he will deduce from his glimpse of reality only that which is the highest thing yet known to him. This to Yaouma was sacrifice. Her vision cannot do more than strengthen or purify her most exalted emotion. From this surely we may deduce the function of reason—which is to arrange and classify, to correlate and correct.

R. W. TALBOT COX.

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SOCIALISM AND VIVISECTION.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

So much dust has been kicked up around the vivisection controversy that the real issue—the destruction of disease—bids fair to be lost sight of altogether.

The Socialist attitude, therefore, might well be to hold aloof

from all this wrangling over horrible methods and doubtful cures and go straight to the root of the whole matter and insist that the Cause of disease be obliterated. Disease is not a visitation of God; it is no more necessary than poverty; but in most cases is the result of social injustice, greed, and ignorance.

Some one has written recently that Socialism should not be allied with vivisection. To a certain extent this is true. Neither should Socialists, to my mind, spend their energies in attempts to reform criminals—a rather hopeless task—but should occupy themselves with the work of removing the social pressure which is driving men to all sorts of crime, to the prisons and madhouses. Crime and disease do not differ greatly, and the one sure remedy is to remove the Cause.

The average vivisectionist will never see this. He is a microbe maniac. He would kill a thousand or more innocent animals in an attempt to find some serum to cure yellow fever, without once thinking of destroying the cause, as the Americans did in Cuba, completely wiping out the pest by applying simple laws in hygiene.

The coming Socialist doctor will be a food and hygiene expert.

It is enough to make one's blood boil to see apparently sane physicians spending money and their intellectual efforts in trying to cure dysentery among children, for instance—God knows how many die annually in the slums—while milk dealers like those of New York City are allowed to flood the market with milk doctored with embalming fluids to keep it from turning sour. And I know personally a distinguished doctor who is getting rich selling a concoction alleged to cure colds and influenza, while nobody seems to bother with the cause. Nearly all disease, I am told, comes from improper nourishment and great fatigue, together with the breaking of the general laws of hygiene. The latter is due to ignorance, and the former is forced on millions.

But let anyone try to remove these causes, and immediately he is hounded as an enemy of society. The reason is that to attack these first two causes successfully would bring about a revolution. Bring into play the laws of hygiene, and there immediately would be an uprising of landlords, for it would mean that half of our modern cities would have to be demolished. Prevent the fatigue, and sweated industries and many others will go. Tuberculosis, perhaps the greatest plague of all, is today cured in Germany simply by fresh air, hygiene, and proper feeding, but not one in a thousand can afford this simple treatment.

It is to stave off revolution that the governing classes are turning to serums and what not. Look at the list of supporters of the Research Defence Society in London, and the truth will be brought home. On the other hand, the working classes and a good many humanitarians feel there is something wrong, but they do not yet see clearly that the propertied class prefer to poison the human race with nostrums, at the same time accumulating large fortunes, rather than allow the revolution to take place.

Here, in Paris, Dr. Boucher, one of the most eminent of the French medical men, openly accuses the vivisectionists, not only with being commercial vendors of nostrums, but with poisoning the human race and spreading rapidly tuberculosis, in the French army in particular.

There are serums here for everything except insanity, which some of the savants at the commercial Pasteur Institute ought to invent, and then take themselves.

At the bottom, therefore, this question of disease is a social one, and should be treated as such. Vivisection will never bring about the annihilation of disease, and anti-vivisectionists only cloud the issue when they turn the movement into a dog-saving crusade, and feed the rescued animals with filet mignons, chicken, and other tit-bits, at a price that would raise an entire family out of starvation.

While condemning the uselessness and vicious brutality of vivisection, the Socialist, as I said before, should demand that the Cause of disease be wiped out, and if it requires Revolution, well, the sooner the better.

F. H. BURLINGHAM.

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THE I.L.P.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Will you kindly give me space to explain that I have resigned from the I.L.P.? I have done so because I no longer believe that the Labour Party, with which the I.L.P. is identified, is now, or can ever become, a National Party. And while recognising, and being desirous of helping the very valuable work of the Labour Party, I see no reason for tying myself down to work exclusively for what is, in fact, a Trade Union Socialist group. Men such as Mr. Josiah Wedgewood and Mr. Chiozza Money appear to me equally worthy of support with Mr. Shackleton and Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, for instance. If any I.L.P. branches or Labour organisations for whom I have undertaken to lecture should object to the advocacy of Socialist principles without special reference to the Labour Party, I shall be, of course, willing to cancel those engagements.

L. HADEN GUEST.

* * *

ENGLAND AND INDIA.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

With reference to Mr. Snowden's contention that "the rich are growing richer and the poor poorer year by year," you say, in your issue of the 30th ult., that that is "the worst sign of decay a nation can manifest." I think I can go one better. What would you say of the country where the rich are getting poor, and the poor still poorer year by year? You know, of course, that that is the condition of India.

You also say: "Parish Councils must, in our opinion, be the first word in practical Socialism. Socialism that begins with the State ends in bureaucracy; but Socialism that begins in the village will end in real democracy." The truth of these words is amply borne out by the history of India. But British rule, besides impoverishing us, has destroyed our corporate village life, and prevented us from making our village communities the basis of real stable democracy. And to add insult to injury, we are now told (and a good many of us have been gulled into believing) that we are incapable of democratic self-government!

V. CHATTOPÁDHYÁYA.

* * *

EGYPT AND THE EGYPTIANS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

I am delighted that my article has moved Mr. Moussa to the salutary process of rubbing his eyes, though I regret that he has not attained the happy consummation of being able to see clearly at the end of it. My article was about Egypt and the Egyptians: Mr. Moussa's letter is about the English. The article was not a panegyric on the British occupation; that phenomenon has endured panegyrics and denunciations without end, and remains unmoved in the face of both. Panegyric is fruitless, and denunciation vain. Mr. Moussa and I both want self-government for the Egyptians. The first thing we have to do, therefore, is to face the fact of the Occupation. The second is to discover a way of changing the facts. In my article I endeavoured to outline the means by which, in my opinion, the change could soonest be effected. It is beside the point at present to talk about moral values. If Mr. Moussa will read the article again he will observe that my analysis of English and Egyptian characteristics was unqualified by any reflexion of praise or blame. I stated the facts—that the English had certain qualities which enabled them to dominate the Egyptians, who had not got these qualities. It is on the solid foundation of those qualities that the Occupation, just or unjust, rests, including that very potent factor which Mr. Moussa describes as a "demoralised English army." In these days of international rivalries current moralities go by the board. Powerful nations are struggling for their existence, and in the struggle less powerful nations go under if they cannot help themselves. We may deplore the fact, but there is only one way of facing it. The weak nations must learn to help themselves. Regrets and aspirations and hatreds are useless unless they are translated into action. Action is useless unless it contributes to the end in view. What we want in Egypt, and over all the world, is men with Broadbent's capacity for action and Keegan's capacity for thought.

LAWRENCE SHUTTLEWORTH.

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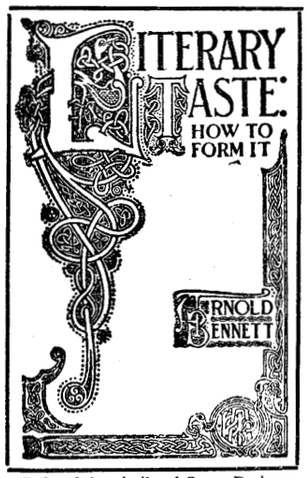

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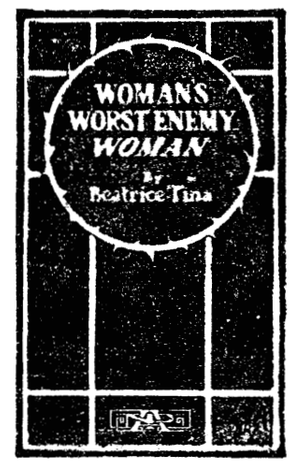

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