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THE NEW AGE

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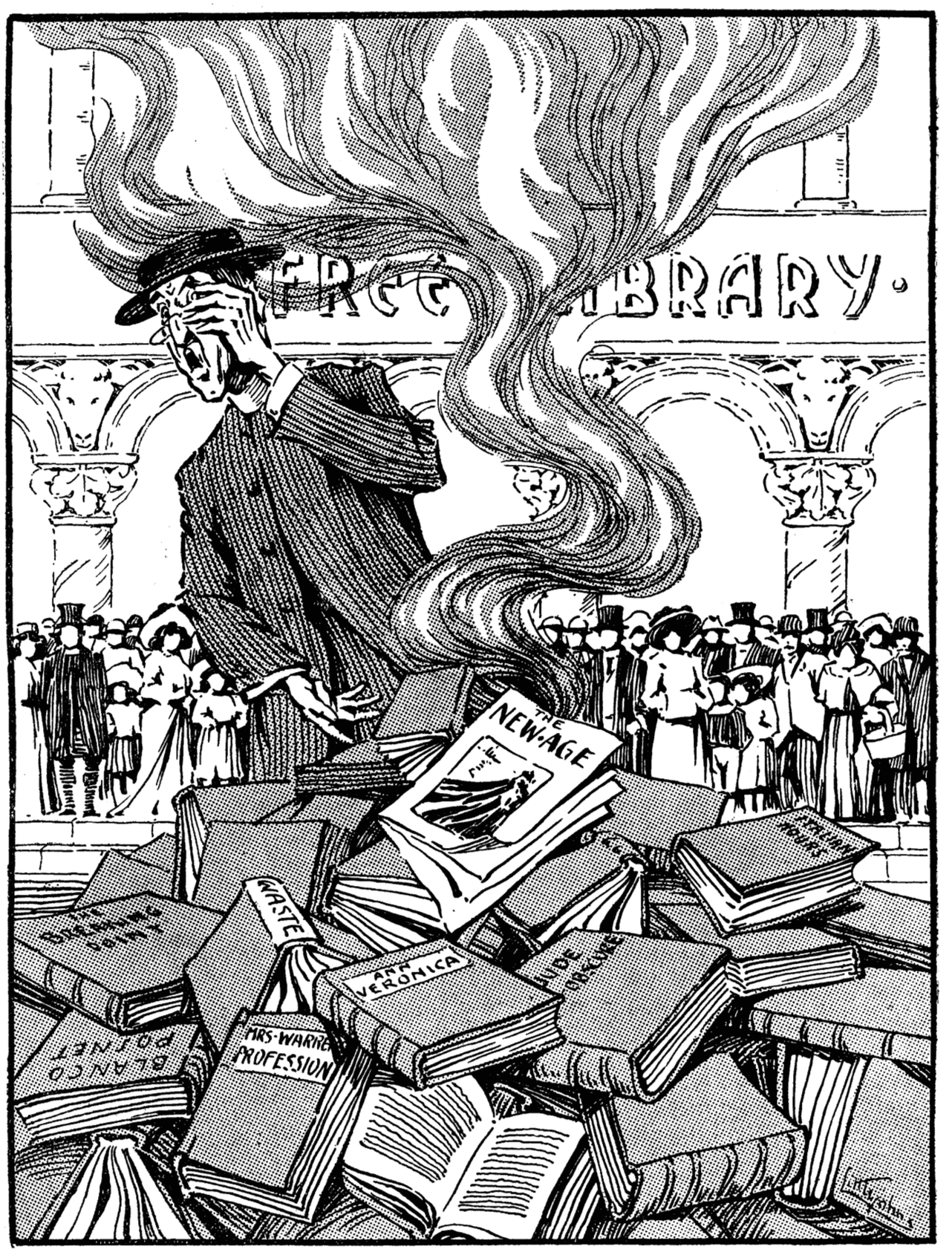

THE CENSORSHIP.

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THERE is a lull in the political world, during which the parties are drawing conclusions from their election returns. Mr. Asquith has gone for a week alone to the South of France to meditate on his future ways. And well he may. Things have not gone as he was led to expect by the infatuate augurs of his Cabinet. They have indeed resulted in a state of affairs from which only a series of bold strokes will deliver the Liberal Party; and it is open to doubt whether those bold strokes can be delivered by Mr. Asquith. Compromise is plainly in the air, despite the pre-election pledges, and compromise of one kind or another is inevitable. We do not see why the compromise should not be an advance, since in the matter of the Lords each party is prepared for a revolution. The Liberals would transform the Lords by virtual abolition, the Unionists and moderate men of all parties and of none by supersession. To create a Chamber fulfilling the functions of an Imperial Senate, while leaving intact or increasing the powers and privileges of the House of Commons, such is the constructive compromise which policy dictates. Our readers are referred to Mr. Allen Upward's article on the subject in our February Supplement.

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For the present, however, there would seem to be only one course for Mr. Asquith to pursue. It is obvious that the country has not given him an unmistakeable mandate for the abolition of the House of Lords. Foolish and impolitic as we may regard the bulk of our electors, the fact remains that their mandate points to a just articulate desire to restore the financial supremacy of the Commons and no definite desire whatever to destroy the Lords. Under these circumstances, Mr. Asquith has no claim to do more than establish for all time the single competence of the Commons in the matter of Supply. The remainder of his pledge must wait to be fulfilled by other means —means, that is, which require more than the consent of the Liberal Party, and which may carry with them the approval of the best elements in all the parties. Further than the adumbration of a large scheme of Lords' Reform, Mr. Asquith is plainly not justified at this moment in going. The Constitution is in the pot and is cooking, but no part must be poured out before the whole is ready.

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The present would seem to be the occasion for the emergence of the statesman in place of the partisan. Well-constituted nations invariably keep a supply of those balanced individuals who are anathema to fervid partisans during elections, but who in an issue such as the present really save the State. Keeping always the interests of the State (hence their name state's-men) before their eyes they can on occasion, when the parties are mutually cancelled, emerge with splendid effect. It is their legislation that has never to be repealed, while the legislation of the parties is almost invariably one-sided. And we may say, further, that it is their legislation that is always constructive and never merely a reactionary compromise. It is greatly to be hoped that during the next few weeks and months the voices of these minds may be heard and that the parties will attend.

* * *

Confining ourselves for the moment to the fortunes and prospects of the Labour and Socialist parties, we must first record our appreciation of the honesty with which their leaders have acknowledged their defeat. It is unusual that a party should do anything else after a defeat but explain it away. The Labour Party, however, is not afraid to face facts, and in the "Labour Leader" of the current week frankly admits that the party has done badly at the polls. We have no mind to examine the Labour election returns in detail at this moment, but our impression is that the Labour Party are somewhat pessimistic in their open-minded confession. While they have not done so well as they expected, they have done better than was expected of them by many of us, and rather better than they had reason to hope some twelve months ago. If a General Election instead of following the Budget had preceded the Budget, the Labour Party would most certainly have gone down with the Liberals. As it is, they have to some extent shared in the revival of Liberalism and profited at the polls by it. Moreover, considering that the party is new and that its appearance in 1906 was something of a phenomenon in the way of political experiment, it is gratifying to find the country confirming its choice of four years ago, despite the many errors the Labour Party has made and the new issues which have in the meantime been raised. On the whole, the Labour Party has demonstrated that it has come to stay; if not in any great force, at any rate in a position strong and striking enough to command attention and respect.

* * *

Various criticisms have been directed against the Labour Party for entering into a free-love alliance with the Liberal Party during this election. But as the returns conclusively prove, there was no other way of preserving their existence. Most of the elected members owe their present seats to Liberal votes which would assuredly not have been given had the party assumed the position everywhere of open hostility. If it was more important to preserve the party than to preserve its nominal independence, its leaders were right in cultivating, or at least in not repudiating

friendship with Liberal electors. Critics who take the opposite view forget the disastrous effect on the movement which the blotting out of the Parliamentary party would involve. Though they had gone down with the Red Flag flying, only the fact that they had gone down would be remembered. As it is, they still float in a vessel not quite unseaworthy, and if they have been towed by the Liberals, they can, at any rate, cut the painter at any time. What is the use of independence if you cannot employ it as you please?

* * *

All this, however, is not to say that the Labour Party has done as well as the promise of 1906 led us to expect. On the morrow of the 1906 election, as everybody remembers, there was such a stirring in the political air as seemed to presage almost miraculous things. Never in the history of England, perhaps in the history of Europe, had the prospects of a proletariat seemed brighter than those of the English proletariat in the days immediately following the Labour Party's triumphs. Parliament was to be shaken free of its age-long dust. Labour was to come by its own, and the People were to go marching on. Subsequent events proved, as we know, that the Labour members were not the Joshuas they were supposed to be. The Parliamentary party rapidly developed all the faults, with the exception of corruption, which had distinguished the other parties. They were class-conscious to an appallingly narrow degree, Puritanic in their view of the needs of men, caucus-ridden, intolerant of criticism, conventional, without imagination, and utterly without leadership. These defects, marring to a great party, were fatal to a small party. Within a twelvemonth of their election the Labour Party had chilled the hopes of all their more enthusiastic friends.

* * *

There followed a series of incidents more or less disappointing in their character, many of which we recorded sorrowfully in our pages. Opportunity after opportunity of restoring their prestige came to the party and was allowed to slip by untaken. In the House, in the country, and in by-elections the Party began to show signs of a double weakness: first, a too abject reliance on the Liberal Party; secondly, a too haughty contempt of the advanced sections of their own movement. The election, in face of their official disapproval, of Mr. Grayson as an out-and-out Socialist, his subsequent treatment at their hands, the treatment meted out to Mr. Grayson's supporters in the Press or on the platform were further proofs both of the existence in the rank and file of a spirit far in advance of the Parliamentary leaders, and also of a growing determination in the Parliamentary party to go their own gait, oblivious of the desires of the movement that had placed them in a position of authority. It was at that stage that we, for our part, gave up our last remnant of hope in them. Hitherto we had believed, with many others, that the Labour Party was the only hope of the workers, that sooner or later the Labour Party would make a push against the sufferance of the many, and revolutionise the morally and physically ruinous condition of industry and society; that, at least, though despairing, they would never give in until they had bred such a spirit in the proletariat as would, as fear, inspire their rulers to respect. With Mr. Grayson, when he made his memorable protest, THE NEW AGE took its stand, only to be subjected with him, not to the opposition of the other parties alone, but to the opposition, thrice embittered, of the very party whose interests we were seeking. The history of those trying days will probably never be written. Certainly we made as bold a move as a journal could to restore the vitality of the Socialist Labour movement; and if our policy appeared to vacillate from month to month, and sometimes even from week to week, it was because the centre of gravity of affairs shifted, like the spot of light cast by a mirror held in men's hands, or like a delicately poised mass seeking its equilibrium. At the end of it all, the Parliamentary Labour Party found itself barrenly triumphant. The spirit of free criticism in its ranks had been stifled: the renewing life of the Party had fled.

* * *

What the fate of the pursang Socialist movement has been when left thus disappointed the polls of the Socialist candidates at the recent elections only partially tell. Not one of the independent Socialists has been returned, and the only member Socialism has ever had at Westminster has lost his seat to a Liberal. Further than this, however, there is a spirit of dejection in the Socialist movement which contains no promise of any immediate revival. Not only have the various Socialist bodies suffered defeat, but they have accepted defeat for the time being as final. We are receiving daily proofs of this in letters and messages announcing resignations, break-up of branches, complaints and difficulties of all kinds. One spirit is breathed throughout—the spirit of collapse. Now we may very well inquire what has brought about this condition of things. It is possible that our virtues have undone us, but it is also possible that our vices are to blame. If the former, there is no need for change, except in our methods; if the latter, the sooner Socialist organisations become extinct the better.

* * *

By invariable rule the Socialist movement was at its highest point at the moment when the Liberal party had sunk to its nadir. The crest of the movement occurred in the months immediately preceding the introduction of the Budget. Then would have been the time for Socialists and Labour men to have united for a dash for power. Doubtless even had it been successful the resultant power would have soon disappeared, but not before stamping its seal on English social history. Mr. Lloyd George's Budget, however, made any such action impossible. Instantly the limelight was turned upon him. He and his Budget, and not the now spectral Socialism, became the object of main attention. In a word, Socialism was side-tracked. For how many defections from the Socialist ranks the Budget of Mr. Lloyd George has been responsible we would not care to speculate. Probably most of the recent recruits from Liberalism rejoined their old party, if not in name, at least in spirit; and their numbers were further increased by a new diversion from the straight path of economic politics in the form of the Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission. This, in the able hands of Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb, has been made to take the place as a practical proposal of the visionary schemes of the far-seeing utopian Socialists. Thus in two directions the forces of political Socialism were depleted: by a return of Liberals to Liberalism and by the segregation of practical Fabians and others from the party of theoretic propaganda.

* * *

There is nothing in this discreditable to the Socialist movement, though the consequences at the first glance appear disastrous. It was always to be expected that the adoption by either the Liberal or Unionist party of any plank of the Socialist platform would carry a section of the movement with it. Far from being depressed at having their clothes stolen while they are bathing, Socialists should be positively pleased when the theft takes place. To be stolen from is the happiest fate for people with ideas. Nor are we inclined to deplore the loss in the movement due to the attempt to get the Minority Report adopted. Again we say it is the business of the Socialist movement to provide relief parties for any and every reform, and, most of all, for a reform of the dimensions projected by Mr. and Mrs. Webb. On the whole, then, the apparently hopeless state of the Socialist movement turns out to be merely a consequence of its success. It has been depleted by its proper generosity.

* * *

But this suggests a view of the combined Socialist and Labour movement which our readers who are interested in one or the other will do well to ponder. It is plain on the one hand that the Labour Party as such has, to be quite frank, bitten off quite as much Socialism as it can chew. There is no hope now, nor is there

any longer in us the desire, that the Labour Party should "declare for Socialism." So much of Socialism as proves acceptable to electors we may be sure the Labour Party will provide. To provide more would be to risk the existence of the party; and probably the leaders are wise in placing self-preservation above martyrdom. On the other hand, the Socialist is equally set free from political obligations to the Labour Party alone. Any talk now of a close and exclusive alliance between the two movements is out of the question. Socialists have been repudiated, and perhaps wisely so, by the Labour Party as liable with their idealist theories and rather heterogeneous ideas to hinder rather than help the cause of popular representation. There remains, therefore, for Socialists their old task of contributing political ideas to all parties alike without distinction of colour.

* * *

This work, the original object of the Fabian Society, was in reality never more needed than at the present moment, when public affairs are in a chaos of indecision. We have expressed our view that what are needed now are statesmen in place of partisans; not a man, as Mr. Blatchford supposes, but men. And we certainly believe that many of them are to be found in the Socialist ranks. But it must also be conceded that many of them, perhaps the majority, will be found outside the professedly Socialist ranks altogether. Since THE NEW AGE has been running, we have discovered not tens but hundreds of men and women who, with no shadow of fanaticism in them, have nevertheless perceived the fundamental economic error of Society, and yet have never joined the Socialist movement in name lest they should find themselves and their ideals overwhelmed by ideals alien to them and to real Socialism. For them the economic revolution is only the means and not the end. More revolutions are needed in society than the mere redistribution of bread and butter. And such men as these, standing outside parties, are the men whose power is greatest in the days of crisis.

* * *

What is their business, and particularly at this juncture? To speak the truth, when they have discovered it, without fear and without malice; to be ready to do as they say and to say as they do; to devote the best hours of their mind to the difficult task of finding what is best in all things and of endeavouring to make that best prevail; to be careful of stirring up strife without reason, and malice and bitterness at all times; finally, to be tolerant of honest differences and ready on occasion to be proved wrong. Such is the temper of the men now needed in affairs. Of their programme it will be the time to speak later. In the circumstances of the moment a party with a programme is a parti pris, and rightly to be suspected. Not only the Constitution but all things are in the melting pot; and no man knoweth yet what will be the issue. We can only promise at this moment to keep our readers fairly acquainted with the best in our judgment that is being thought and said and done.

Our New Avatar.

THE NEW AGE has just gone through an ordeal almost without a precedent in the annals of newspaper enterprise, and emerged in a manner which is probably quite without precedent. At a time when some of our oldest and most esteemed contemporaries are finding themselves obliged to reduce their price, if they would retain their circulation, THE NEW AGE decided to raise its price from 1d. to 3d. Now, after about three months' trial, we are able to report that our circulation remained practically unaffected; and it has begun to shows signs of improvement.

This gratifying result is made doubly significant by the coincidence that the very time chosen by us for raising the price of THE NEW AGE, was chosen by the directors of the *Guardian* for lowering its price, which was formerly 6d., to 1d. We think that there is a meaning and a moral in these events, and that we are bound to note it for our own instruction, as well as that of our contemporaries.

The *Guardian* is one of the oldest, and it has always been one of the best conducted, papers in the country. THE NEW AGE is not only a junior publication, but it has had a rather stormy youth, and sown a fair crop of those wild oats which the Pale Person does not readily forgive. Although its circulation among the book-reading and book-buying public is probably double or treble that of some of the older literary reviews, the ordinary publisher is still afraid to advertise in its columns, lest he should incur the wrath of the patent-medicine vendors' clientèle. Nevertheless we find that the educated class, the class for which papers like the *Guardian* and the late unfortunate *Pilot* were established to cater, are deserting such organs in favour of THE NEW AGE.

What, then, is the characteristic of THE NEW AGE which has gained for it the confidence and support of a class whose interests it was certainly not intended originally to advocate? Why is it that, starting as the organ of those sociologists who call themselves Socialists, and devoting itself to the advocacy of the poorest classes in the community, we have found ourselves gradually transformed, in strict pursuit of Socialism, into an aristocratic organ, in the best sense of that much-abused word, that is to say, the organ of men in every party, and of every creed, who are leading their comrades?

Our secret is a very simple one. We are not afraid to tell the truth, even when it goes against our inclinations and prejudices, and those of our readers. We are not always looking round the corner, fearful of being overheard by some malevolent fool. We do not tremble when angry letters reach us from subscribers, threatening to extinguish us if we ever again speak disrespectfully of the Equator. As long as our opinion of that astronomical expression continues to be favourable, we shall express it, without regard to the threats of its idolators. Thus it has come about that THE NEW AGE is practically boycotted by the Labour Party, which it has striven disinterestedly to educate and advise, and is, we understand, popular among thoughtful and high-minded members of the employing class, who are themselves free from that vice of class-conceit of which we have wished to cure the leaders of Trades Unionism.

Our esteemed contemporaries, even the best of them, are handicapped by that vice which Matthew Arnold complained of in a well-known passage. They exist to tell us so much truth as is compatible, not with the interest merely, but with the supposed interest, in other words, with the prejudices, of their readers. The readers of the *Guardian* can bear to be told the truth about Dissent, but not about the Church of England. The readers of the *Pilot* were prepared to learn the history of Buddhism, but not of Christianity. Now the day for that kind of thing is gone. There is an ever-increasing public which demands to know how things really are, and not how the Bishop of London, or the Pope of Rome, or the President of the Wesleyan Conference, would wish us to pretend to believe that they are. If papers conducted on such principles cannot change their ways, they must indeed change their public. They must lower, first their price, and next their literary standard, as the Church of England has had to lower the standard of its candidates for ordination.

We have purposely singled out as examples papers for which we have a high respect, inasmuch as we believe their conductors to have been actuated by motives as honourable as our own, though we consider, of course, that their standard of right and wrong is false. The case is very different with some of our contemporaries, for whom we foresee the same fate of gradual declension if they persist in their present policy of one-sidedness. Perhaps the greatest vice of the contemporary daily press is its intolerance of correction and contradiction. There was a day when the *Times* stood at the head of the world's journalism, and enjoyed the respect due to trustworthiness and fear-

lessness. To-day we can only express our regret that the news columns of the paper should partake of the partisan character of its leading articles.

All papers are liable to be misled by their contributors and correspondents, and perhaps no paper has suffered more in that respect than THE NEW AGE, owing to its scrupulous regard for the principles of intellectual individualism and free speech. We cannot promise ourselves any immunity from mistakes in the future. To errors of fact, and errors of taste, we have had to plead guilty already, and may have to again. But from conscious perversion or suppression of the truth we hope to have been, and to continue, free.

We are not less anxious to be free, and most of all when public affairs are in their present critical state, from those faults of temper which injure the best cause, and which are in themselves worse than a bad cause. If we accept Plato's word *music* as the expression of that ideal after which we are all striving, consciously or unconsciously, we may put it that the ideal of sociology is to produce good-tempered men. By that we do not mean men whose easy temper is the expression of their moral laziness and weakness. We mean men who can fight hard for their convictions without ever losing the sense that their opponents have just the same right to fight for theirs. Of bad temper all our political parties are guilty. The language sometimes used by stupid bureaucrats, and silly peers, and greedy employers about the working class justifies, or rather *creates*, that hatred with which the Labour movement has been reproached. The intemperance of feeling and language indulged in by reformed drunkards on the subject of licensed victuallers and brewers is infinitely worse and wickeder than the intemperance they have forsaken.

We cannot but feel that THE NEW AGE has received a call to be something more than the organ of a party which has already cast it off. Whatever dreams the founders of the paper may have cherished on the subject, we cannot persuade ourselves that the reformation of society can be brought about if the reformation of individuals is wholly neglected meanwhile. The view that the poor have all the virtues, and the rich all the vices, may be countenanced by the language of the Christian Gospel, but it is not countenanced by experience. Even Fabians themselves must submit to the great test of K'ung the Master:—"Formerly I listened to men's words, and gave them credit for their conduct; now I listen to their words, and watch their actions." Believing that the principles represented by the words Individualism and Socialism are equally necessary to a happy state, the latter as means to the former as end, and that of false forms of both society is full, we shall set our face against abuses arising from either of these causes, as firmly against anonymous bureaucracy and teasing legislation which are the caricature of Socialism as against reckless competition and thoughtless cruelties which are the caricature of Individualism.

But the mission of THE NEW AGE cannot be confined to criticism only. From many quarters we have received the expression of what seems to be a widespread desire for some constructive suggestion, some new gospel touched with more spiritual fire, and opening wider vistas, than the unprogressive, not to say unscientific, dogma of Humanity. To that demand we hope to make a suitable reply.

THE NEW AGE will remain in the future what it always has been, the organ of free speech, the paper to which thoughtful men, who, perhaps, do most of their work for other organs, can come when they have something to say which they are not allowed to say in those organs. In addition, and as our increased means permit, we shall endeavour to secure the work of men of letters in England, on the Continent and in America, such men, that is, as are inspired by higher aims than that of "breaking the six-shilling record." We have also, as our readers know, a faithful band of regular contributors, all able writers, among whom it would be invidious to name one rather than another. If we single out Mr. Allen Upward it is to announce that the author of "The New Word" has accepted an invitation to publish in THE NEW AGE a successor to that work, under the title of "The Order of the Seraphim," in which practical ideals will be expounded, not as dogmas, but as suggestions to men of good will.

Of ourselves we have now said enough. Of our readers and supporters we can say with some pride that we believe them to represent on the whole the highest public in these islands, and the one which is destined most profoundly to influence the future. The pioneer is the king of to-morrow; and we address an audience of kings.

NEO-NIETZSCHE.

I am the singer
Of Neo-Nietzscheans;
The dynamic soul
With an anæmic wife,
With children like Spartans
Rigidly reared.

I am the camel,
Observe my great hump.
I am the lion
That laughs in the wilds.
I am the child,
A holy assertion.

I am the warrior
That never drew sword.
My speech is the lightning;
I slay with a phrase.
The Superman lives
In me the Up-goer.

I want a woman
Whose virtues are those
Of a world yet to come;
That I may divest me
After my sham-fight,
With her to dance.

I want a house-wife,
A waltzer, a soul,
With whipcord to keep her
Tame to my hand;
And my caresses
Shall be her reward.

Lo, I am square
To the four winds of heaven.
My children must be
Rectangular shaped;
But where is the woman
To bear me those cubes?

I am the Spirit
And Wisdom and Power,
And Truth is not secret
Or bashful with me;
And even my hammer
Is philosophic.

I am immoral,
Adore I all vice;
The lies of a just heart
Philanthropy are,
And great is revenge
For I am cruel.

Lo, I am the singer
Of Neo-Nietzscheans:
The Terror of Kindness,
The Slayer of Shams,
The Tyrant of Women,
But you must not laugh.

—ALFRED E. RANDALL.

Foreign Affairs.

THE first meeting of the Imperial Legislative Council of India was held on January 25th. The shadow of assassination has darkened the brightness of this auspicious occasion. Persistence in the policy of deporting men of repute without formulating any charge against them has not calmed but irritated the feeling of discontent and disappointment caused by the limitations imposed upon the Imperial Council. The Council is divided into 36 official and 32 non-official members. The proceedings are thus regulated. No question or resolution shall be allowed upon (a) any matter affecting the relations of H.M. Government or of the Governor-General in Council with any foreign State or with any native State in India, or (b) any matter under adjudication by a court of law having jurisdiction in any part of his Majesty's dominions. The President of Council may disallow any question or part of a question without giving any reason therefor other than that, in his opinion, it cannot be answered consistently with the public interest. Questions or resolutions disallowed by the President must not be entered in the proceedings of the Council. No discussion in Council is to be permitted in respect of any order of the President under the rules. Lastly, the rules of the local Provincial Councils are to be framed upon those of the Imperial Legislative Council.

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Can anyone be surprised that the Indian Councils Act has been very coldly received? These rules are drafted so as to prevent any free debate upon matters of grave public importance. It is an insult to invite men of high intelligence, as most of the elected and non-elected members are, to attend the proceedings of this feeble assembly. The Government of India has met a grave situation by setting up an academic debating society. The following extracts from Lord Minto's inaugural address are worthy of careful notice :—

"It is important that my colleagues and the public should know the early history of the reforms now sanctioned by Parliament. They had their genesis in a note entirely based on views I myself formed of the position in India. It was due to no suggestion from home. Whether for good or bad, I am entirely responsible for it."

The Liberal Press, which has acted as a mere claque to Viscount Morley, suppressed this passage. The present writer never believed that these constructive reforms had been initiated by Lord Morley. Lord Minto added :

"The safety and welfare of the country depend on the supremacy of the British administration, and that supremacy cannot be delegated to any kind of representative assembly. . . . . I believe the situation is better than it was five years ago, though some Indians are manifestly engaged in a deliberate effort to paralyse the course of justice."

* * *

The one point which is hopeful is that the principle of election and representation has been established in the governance of India. The spirit of murder and anarchy, unhappily, is still rife, and Lord Minto is proposing to introduce further repressive legislation. As the deportations have increased crimes of violence, so the multiplication of penal measures will further exasperate the extremists and embitter the moderate men. The practical suspension of civil liberty and civil rights in India has been maintained now for two years. The recent assassinations are some evidence that Indians, like Englishmen, are not satisfied to have their grievances remedied by the wholesale imprisonment of their ablest leaders. The only disadvantage about deporting Mr. Balfour for his speeches on the Budget would be that it might cause a civil war. Exactly the same observation may be applied to the Indian deportations, except that India is drifting into anarchy.

The Cretan problem has been once more troubling European diplomacy. M. Venezelos, a famous Cretan patriot, has persuaded General Zorbas and the Greek Military League to ask M. Mavromichalis, the Greek Premier, to advise King George to summon a National Assembly. M. Mavromichalis, notwithstanding the King's protests, accepted this demand, providing that the Military League voluntarily dissolved itself upon the issue of the Proclamation sanctioning the convocation of the National Assembly. This condition has been assented to by the leaders of the Military League. Under the Greek Constitution, which has been guaranteed by the Powers, the National Assembly can only be summoned after an agreement assenting to such a course has been come to by two successive Parliaments. In the present case there is no decision by one Parliament, so the convocation will be wholly unconstitutional. The Ambassadors of the Great Powers will probably protest against any such action being taken. M. Theotokis, who is the leader of the majority in the Greek Chamber, may resist this dangerous proposal, in which case the Military League will lose control of the situation. The Greco-Cretan problem is a recurring danger to the peace of Europe, but the settlement of the question presents grave difficulties. Turkey, in her present internal condition, cannot allow Greece to annex Crete, while the Cretans regard Greece as their natural ruler. The Concert of Europe has made a mess of the Cretan question.

* * *

That admirable worker in the cause of peace, M. Léon Bourgeois, has collected his various speeches on peace in volume form. ("Pour La Société des Nations." Bibliothèque Charpentier, Paris). M. Léon Bourgeois is an opponent of M. Hervé's philosophy of anti-patriotism. "L'idée de l'indépendance et de la dignité de la patrie est, à mes yeux, aussi sacrée que celle de l'indépendance et de la dignité de la personne humaine." Patriotism may flourish side by side with peace; but whether patriots are peacemakers is another matter. Most patriots, unfortunately, regard detestation of other countries as a necessary ingredient of a love of their own country. M. Bourgeois does not fall within this category. He is a genuine peacemaker and a true French patriot. The finest speech in this interesting book is his address to the School of Political Science on "La Société des Nations." The advance that international peace has made is summed up in the triumphant remark : "La Société des Nations est créée! Elle est bien vivante!" M. Bourgeois should be heartily thanked for his efforts in securing the regulation of disputes by the Hague Tribunal. His firm advocacy of the doctrine of judicial right, as being the true method of settling international disputes, as against the arbitrament of the sword, has been a potent factor in persuading European statesmen to enter into arbitration treaties.

* * *

The speech of the German Ambassador upon the Anglo-German naval rivalry was well-timed. No doubt, the English Jingoes will ridicule Count Wolf Metternich's sentiments and his professions of friendliness. The policy of Germany, as stated by him, was the excellent commercial policy of increased business and good relations with each and all. England is ruling the sea, Lord Charles Beresford notwithstanding, and Germany needed a naval force to protect her trade. Has not the moment arrived when Germany can check her expenditure, as her fleet is now an efficient protection for her commerce? The naval rivalry between the two Powers is a menace to peace, and the sooner it is ended by an amicable conference the better. In the meantime, the British Government might copy the example of Denmark, whose Budget for 1910-1911 has provided for these contributions: Arbitration Bureau at the Hague, 1,000 crowns; Peace Bureau, Berne, 500 crowns; Interparliamentary Union, 730 crowns; expense of the Interparliamentary Conference, 3,800 crowns; Danish Interparliamentary Group, 3,000 crowns. "STANHOPE OF CHESTER."

Deductions from the Election.

By O. W. Dyce.

WITH every desire to avoid the perpetration of a "bull," I feel bound to maintain that the most important deduction from the election is a deduction from something that has happened since. I refer to the departure of the Prime Minister in search of sunshine in Southern Europe. From that fact I assume that political affairs are not embedded in a morass of distracting complications, that Mr. Asquith has a cut and dried scheme, that he knows exactly where he is and has no need for conferences with King or Cabinet. In other words, the Premier has already in his possession the "guarantees" which he declared necessary to his retention of office.

If, however, Mr. Asquith has the "guarantees" up his sleeve at the present moment, we may make the deduction that he had them—with conditions attached—at the beginning of December. Where, then, is the necessity of going to the country a second time in 1910? A little consideration will show that the hypothesis here put forward affords the only justification for his ever having gone to the country at all.

The idea that a second appeal would produce any result in the shape of a definite mandate other than has already been produced is based on illusions. There can be no straight fight on a straight issue. No general election this year can be fought on the Lords' veto for the simple reason that the Tories are determined to shift the issue every time to Tariff Reform, the German Navy, Socialism, and beer.

If there be any serious element of uncertainty in the political position, it is impossible to discover an excuse for the absence of Mr. Asquith and the Chief Whip of the Radical Party. To join the pleasure-seekers on the Riviera at a really critical moment would be high treason to the Democracy.

Going back to the election results, one feature stands out as distinctly unpleasant—the landslide in the rural divisions. What is to be deduced from that? Surely the explanation is to be found in the fact that the Radical Party has not put before the agricultural voters a programme of reforms offering an attractive outlook. Hodge has said to himself: "Tories promise more work; Radicals praise Free Trade and promise to keep things as they are." Both parties swore that Old Age Pensions were as safe as the Bank of England. As for the fiscal quibbles, the towns were full of workmen who could see the absurdity of the Tory assurance that taxation should not raise the price of food, but the voters in the villages swallowed any nonsense.

The anthithesis between northern and southern England was an antithesis based on education. It is a simple truth, known for years past but brought out and specially emphasised in 1910, that the North is politically educated and the South is not.

It must be particularly uncomfortable for the House of Lords to recognise that the majority registered against it represents quality as well as quantity. Not only have 89 boroughs in England declared for Free Trade as against 78 for Tariff Reform, but the 89 contain the majority of the great cities and towns. Birmingham is the ewe lamb of the Tariffites; in that city alone is there a really large surplus of Protectionist votes. Liverpool has given the Tories a small majority of total votes, and isolated wins have been achieved in Sunderland, Brighton, Preston, and Devonport. Nearly every other Tory borough is of the small order. The two Tory gains at Bath, for instance, are gains in an electorate of 8,000; how can that count against the decisions of Newcastle with nearly 40,000 electors, Oldham with 30,000, Bolton, Derby, Norwich, Southampton, Jarrow, Leicester, and Huddersfield with about 20,000 each?

With all due respect to the opinions of the honest tiller of the soil, it cannot be held that his opinion on such an issue as that of the taxation of imports bears the same weight as that of Manchester, Leeds, Bradford, Salford, and the towns mentioned above.

What is to be deduced from the polls in the Birmingham area? They appear to be the romantically loyal responses to an appeal from a world-famed Birmingham citizen. Should that distinguished ex-Free Trader live to put forth another cry, consistent or inconsistent with his past record, the local patriots will follow with the same remarkable unanimity. Charles I and Napoleon I had just such followers. "Our Joseph, right or wrong," has been Birmingham's motto for a third of a century.

After a rapid survey of the results in the purely English boroughs, the numerical superiority thus revealed for Free Trade may be carried forward, whilst we turn to Wales and Scotland. Considering industrial and not rural districts, we find ten Welsh boroughs on the Free Trade side to one against, and twenty-six Scottish boroughs for Free Trade to four against. Here again the big populations of Aberdeen (10,000 electors), Cardiff (28,000), Dundee (19,000), and Swansea (11,000) have spoken out in a way that cannot be mistaken. The Tory Press has recorded with glee two paltry victories in the whole of Wales. One of them, Radnorshire, is a distant echo of Birmingham, for the Birmingham Corporation has seized that district for water-supply purposes, and has sent there three or four hundred officials, who have been working politically for years. The Corporation is a big ratepayer in Radnorshire, and naturally, on its own account and through its servants, is a very important purchaser of local commodities.

As for the Scottish polls, there is no need to regard the figures as entirely based upon the Scottish preference for sound fiscal opinions. In part the Radical retention of seats has been due to gratitude for a genuine attempt on the part of the Government to pass reforms that Scotland has been asking for, and to a belief that Scottish interests will receive abundant consideration at the hands of a Cabinet containing Mr. Asquith, Mr. Haldane, Lord Loreburn, and Mr. Churchill.

Ireland's behaviour in the contest has been of a peculiar character. It has chosen to fight out issues of its own, a number of little triumphs indicating a revival of strength on the part of the ecclesiocrats.

A section of the Press is doing its best to minimise the significance of the totals recorded in the election. Roughly set out, these totals are as follows: Anti-Peers, three and a half million electors; Pro-Peers, three millions. Majority against the Peers, 500,000. That is no contemptible majority. It would have been three-quarters of a million if plural votes, attached to the ownership of freehold land and the possession of University degrees, had been non-existent.

One weak point in the campaign on the Radical side was the omission to make clear the value of the Development Bill. Fine speeches by Mr. Lloyd George and others were delivered on that subject in the House of Commons, but it played little or no part in the orations on the hustings.

In certain quarters the Labour Party has been taunted with having sacrificed its independence for no corresponding advantage. This criticism seems grossly unfair. It is easy to urge, after the event, that the Radicals deserved no assistance, but the position in December, as it appeared to the Labour Party, was one of grave danger, not so much to the Radicals as to the State itself and to the ultimate welfare of the democracy. It was the highest ideal of patriotism that led the Labour Party to put aside its immediate aspirations, its hope to win seats, its desire to strengthen its prestige, its special propaganda in social reconstruction, in order that it might help to save the country from the frightful catastrophe of a House of Lords victory. That noble action may be compared with the policy adopted by M. Jaurès and the French Socialists in the Dreyfus period, when it was necessary to help Waldeck-Rousseau to defend the Republic from the mighty onslaughts of clericals and monarchists and military despots.

The Law of Libel.

THE recent action between Messrs. Cadbury and Mr. Pearson, or the *Daily News* and *Standard*, furnished an interesting illustration of the difference between common law and common sense, exhibited by the difference between the judge's opinion and the jury's. For that reason it is worth study by other litigants.

The case itself was in its nature political. For a great many years the Liberal press has been saying very hard things about the Unionist press. The *Daily Mail* seems always to have aroused particular ire in the Radical bosom ; why, it is difficult to say. On one occasion when the *Daily Mail* had charged a contributor to THE NEW AGE with a great number of crimes, he received a letter from a Radical solicitor begging him to let his correspondent take proceedings against that paper for libel. Apparently the solicitor was prepared to take up the case on speculation, and perhaps the speculation might have proved a good one. The assailed individual had not read the articles complained of, but he wrote in reply that he did not suppose the *Daily Mail* had said anything worse about him than he should be prepared to say about its political friends, and that he did not think political attacks of that kind need be or should be taken seriously. And that seems to have been the view of the jury in the case under consideration.

Lord Northcliffe, and probably Mr. Pearson too, have been the subject of much more serious attacks than that made on the Messrs. Cadbury ; inasmuch as they have been attacked in their business. The Harmsworth publications have been constantly charged with injurious and pernicious effects on their readers. Such language, if believed, of course would affect the sales of the papers attacked. But so far as is known it has never been made the subject of legal proceedings.

The attack on Messrs. Cadbury was clearly not inspired by personal considerations. It did not proceed from rival cocoa manufacturers, with an interest in injuring their rivals' trade. It did not really attack that trade. From first to last it was in the nature of a political—"You're another!"

The Messrs. Cadbury, as individuals, are politicians. They are active and influential ones. They own the controlling share in a party newspaper, and therefore they are responsible in law as well as in morals, for every word that newspaper contains. In addition, they have won much admiration by their righteous conduct of that paper, and in particular by their bold suppression of betting news. It is not likely that any reader of the *Daily News* takes the faintest interest in betting, or that the paper lost a single reader by its courageous action. Probably it gained a great many. It was sound business. But no one suggested that it was dictated by business motives. No doubt Messrs. Cadbury were actuated by conscience, and their motive, as Macaulay would put it, was not to give pleasure to their readers, but to give pain to the bookmakers.

In the eyes of the *Standard* the Messrs. Cadbury were identified with the cry of Chinese Slavery, to which it is part of the game that Unionists should pretend to attribute their defeat in the last election but one. The word slavery is a popular substantive, which has been employed in Mr. Pearson's own magazine to describe the condition of the chain-makers of Cradley Heath, and other British trades,—"*The White Slaves of England*" was the title of the articles. There is no earthly reason why it should not be applied to the condition of the Chinese in South Africa, though the word "convict" would be, perhaps, more appropriate than "slave." The *fact* of Chinese convict labour having been introduced, in breach of the promises made at the 1900 election, no doubt influenced votes. But Mr. Balfour's Ministry had long been doomed on other grounds, chief of them being the scandalous mismanagement of the war, and the apparent indifference of the Government to public opinion. The country was seen to be falling back into the hands of the Tite Barnacles and the Stiltstalkings, and the strongest things said against it were said in the Unionist press. Rout was converted into erasure by the threatened tax on bread.

However, Chinese slavery seems to have been considered a good election cry by the Unionist agents, and so it has been made a favourite grievance. Therefore there must have been uncommon joy in Bride Street over the discovery that the righteous Cadburys had been for years past buying and using slave-grown cocoa—that is to say, cocoa grown by "indentured labour." "The Lord hath delivered them into our hands!" would have been the cry of the editor of the *Standard*, if he had been as well up in Scripture as the editor of the *Daily News*.

Unfortunately for itself what the *Standard* had discovered was little better than a mare's nest. Messrs. Cadbury had known all about the slave-grown cocoa ; they had been the first to draw attention to the iniquity ; they had sent to inquire ; they had gone to the Aborigines Protection Society, and the Foreign Office, and the Portuguese Government, and in short done their very best to remedy things. They had only made one mistake ; they had gone on buying the cocoa, on the Jesuit principle of doing evil that good might come. They had trusted in diplomacy instead of public opinion : with the history of Turkey and Macedonia and the Congo before their eyes, they had expected the whisper of diplomacy to right a moral wrong.

The *Standard* might have suggested that this was because the Cadbury party was in power. They could not have attacked Portugal except over the body of Sir Edward Grey. But that was not the line taken by the lawyers. They tried to transform a political quarrel into a personal slander. They appear to have suggested that the Messrs. Cadbury had merely feigned to object to slavery ; that they had made a pretended protest to save their reputations ; and that they were at heart Legrus or Leopolds, gloating over the sufferings which swelled their ill-gotten gains.

Such a defence can scarcely have been believed by those who put it on the record. The Cadburys are not pupils of Machiavelli. A respectable Quaker family does not embark on a course of tortuous intrigue of that kind. The fault of Messrs. Cadbury was that they were too simple. They were too easily entangled by the intrigue of the Portuguese traders.

In the end the case stood thus. A political charge made from political motives had broken down, and a personal charge, resorted to as a means of legal defence had failed equally. But the action ought never to have been brought. If all politicians brought actions every time they were similarly assailed the Courts would have nothing else to try. The jury found that Messrs. Cadbury were free from blame, but they also found them guilty of wasting the time of the Court, by assessing their damages at one farthing.

That was the sensible view, but it was not the view of the judge. The judge was bound by the law. His mind was swathed in those fourfold bandages of rule and precedent, most of the rules ridiculous, and most of the precedents obsolete, which make up English law. He was not supposed ever to have heard the name Cadbury before, or to know what cocoa was. He now learned for the first time that there was a paper called the *Standard*, and another called the *Daily News*. His mental outlook was confined by the pleadings, as by a pair of blinkers, and he might not look beyond them.

According to the pleadings—things which the best minds on the Bench have been trying for fifty years to abolish—a certain company had called certain individuals hypocrites ; and they had to prove it. They had utterly failed to prove it, and therefore they ought to pay heavy damages. Such was the summing-up, in effect.

The jury took another view. They seem to have said to themselves,—"What are we brought here for? Is it to criticise the language of political controversy, or to protect the character of an injured man?" They estimated the damage done, or likely to be done to Messrs. Cadbury in the esteem of their fellow-citizens

by this kind of thing in the rival political press, at one farthing; and one must hope that they were right.

It was the greatest service which Fox rendered to his countrymen that he passed an Act of Parliament making the jury the judges of the law as well as of the facts in cases of criminal libel. Nowadays Englishmen are ceasing to value their birthright, and the inferior class of judges is always sapping away at the rights of the jury; rights which the great judges have as steadily defended. But now and then a jury is found with a knowledge of its powers, and courage to vindicate them, and it was so in this case. The law of libel exists to protect private character from personal malice, and the tremendous power wielded by a great daily newspaper ought to make it the object of extreme jealousy when it assails defenceless individuals. But Mr. Pott should not be taken too seriously by Mr. Slurk.

A. U.

A Plea for the Peers. II.

By Robert Ross.

UNLESS based on personal experience of some kind, opinion must be valueless, at best a brilliant guess. My opportunity for observation of the aristocracy, I will even say for acquiring a knowledge of them, has been extensive. I was a shopkeeper for many years. The counter is a coign of vantage, beside which the keyhole is but a poor watch tower. The cardiology of the nobility is often hidden (I am informed on good authority) at the dinner table or in the drawing-room where you meet the aristocracy on apparently equal terms. That is the reason the editors of society papers and ladies' journals always prefer a footman or a ladies' maid for their correspondents. The outlook is more impartial and scientific. From behind my counter I saw all sorts and conditions of men; all sorts and conditions of manners. And long before I was able to identify by name the many peers who visited my establishment I was conscious of their presence among a crowd of commoners. This was not entirely due to that curvature of the spine which acts like a divining-rod or a tuning-fork for the middle classes, more especially among those engaged in trade of any kind. A very wealthy looking client will produce the same physical phenomenon. Oddly enough, wealth can keep the bow bent. Rank, however, straightens the human ammonite, partly by tact and partly by manner. It must be remembered that for the aristocracy there are only *two* classes; "themselves and the others." All those nice little distinctions by which the middle-classes divide themselves up into camps or divisions are unknown to them. The literary, the artistic, the theatrical, the trading, the business, the journalistic, the political and the crossing sweeping worlds are all one for them. Education, refinement, and culture, which, accompanied by outwardly decent behaviour, are the accepted equipment of a "gentleman," have no significance of differentiation for them. We are all equal in the sight of the Lords, as in the sight of God. Now, this has a most wholesome effect on the middle-classes, the acknowledged backbone of the country. Take away from them the knowledge that beyond them there is another class where wealth is not the only standard of power and influence, where something other than mere ability counts, and you turn them into tyrants, bureaucratic or political. They will be out of conceit with themselves. You destroy also an ideal. They can hope at present to become part of that aristocracy. When they obtain a coronet, it always softens them. By "soften" I do not mean it makes them Conservatives, though even so I think it improves them. No one, I suppose, imagines that in a socialistic state there will not be two parties. Surely we should be as careful about the future component parts of one as of the other; of the one with which we are going to disagree, and of that with which we are to be in accord. Let us be careful in choosing our opposition. In the battle of life every man prefers someone as an opponent, victory over whom will bring credit. Let us keep our aristocracy, therefore, if only to stimulate the Lloyd Georges and Winston Churchills of the future. When every conceivable piece of socialistic legislation has been carried there must be a Conservative opposition: let it be one of gentlemen. Shall we cut the lion's fangs, draw his teeth, and turn him into the arena? And we require the lion, not merely because he is picturesque, but because he gives us prestige.

I have only met one peer deficient in manners; he was Irish—a representative Irish peer; *elected*, it must be remembered. Anyone obliged to seek the suffrages of his fellow men becomes in a way deteriorated. And though Irish peers are elected for life they never quite recover the loss of dignity sustained by asking or expecting other peers to vote for them. A Member of the House of Commons, too, however exalted a position he may hold in the country cannot view situations with the calm independence enjoyed by an English peer. He has to think of his constituents; he must often act contrary to his judgment, or contrary to what he *knows* is right, simply because his whole position depends on them. The late Duke of Devonshire, for example, was able to repudiate fearlessly the chimera of Tariff Reform, and remain a duke. Mr. Arthur Balfour was obliged to accept the new witchcraft, or the leadership would have slipped away from him. The House of Lords has I know, for the most part, been infected with what can only be called a terrible disease, but I do not think they would dream of passing a Tariff Reform budget if introduced by the Conservatives, until, as in the case of Mr. Lloyd George's, they first discovered if the country wished to be diseased. They have always been scrupulously conscientious according to their beliefs. I never thought the indignation against them on this score was quite sincere. Sir Frederick Pollock tells us their action was illegal, so I, for one, am delighted that a responsible body can be illegal sometimes. Part of the enjoyment of life is to break the law. Let us profit by a noble example, an august precedent.

The benefits to be obtained from an elected assembly, whether it be a first or second chamber, are, I think, apt to be exaggerated. The result of the present elections prove that both political parties will have to shelve their convictions. They will have to pretend to think dishonestly, even if they do not do so because the next election must be near and hanging over their heads. The Lords, on the other hand, are morally in a superb position. They have nothing to pretend. Abolish them; reform them into an elective assembly; and one of the first things that will be damaged is our Foreign Office. The nominations to the Diplomatic Service everyone knows are in the hands of the aristocracy. The young men who become ambassadors or represent England officially throughout the world are either aristocrats or the nominees of aristocrats. That privilege would soon vanish with other perquisites of the Upper House. We should then have a number of clever plebeians gradually and democratically taking their places. It is needless to insist on the loss of our national prestige with European Courts and Governments always quick to detect social *nuances*. A French Republican informed me that the diplomatic defeats of France in recent years were largely due to the inferior social calibre of her *corps diplomatique*. The old legend on which England existed for fifty years, that one Briton was as good as three foreigners, was cruelly dispelled by the disasters in the Boer war. Do not let us explode the well-founded belief that our diplomacy is the finest in the world, and gets us more territory than our generals would ever enable us to keep. It has been a graceful custom to make the Viceroy of India a peer if not already ennobled. Is some plain Mr. Keir Hardie to negotiate the handing over of that continent to Russia? I shall be suspected of Imperialism!

But let us look at home for some of the other immediate uses of aristocracy. They form a splendid bulwark against Puritanism and Nonconformity. The adultery of the Liberal Party with Nonconformist ideals threatens one day to produce a tyranny against which Socialism, Roman Catholicism, Free Thought, Anglicanism, and Jewry will have to sink their

differences in order to contend. It is a notorious fact that some of the greatest leaders of men, the most useful members of the community, are not sufficiently balanced to separate their private weaknesses from their public life. General Hector Macdonald and Parnell are notable instances. The Nonconformist wolves are always waiting to tear them to pieces. The greatest stain on Gladstone's career was his desertion of the Irish leader. But he knew the wolf would eat him too had he hesitated. If Gladstone had been a peer it would not have been necessary. The scandals connected with peers provide excellent copy for Fleet Street and excellent subjects for Father Vaughan's sermons; there the matter ends. The peer does not cease to be one, and turns up as right as rain a short while afterwards. The good effect of this is that it teaches the middle-classes that in another community their own smug ideas about conduct have no place. The peers in short have a humanising effect on English thought, especially Nonconformist thought. In an elected House, on the other hand, we should probably have inflicted upon us a number of Evangelical noblemen without a sufficient balance of the purely social element. For the philosophic politicians, of whom there are many among the peers, would succumb like the House of Commons to foolish puritanical legislation. Then, of course, I prefer an ancient injustice to a newly manufactured one from Birmingham. Without injustice there can be no constitution, no government. Verily, it is no mere Tory paradox to maintain that the Hereditary Chamber is a safeguard of democracy; it might also prove the safeguard of minorities, a most necessary piece of political furniture for every commonwealth. The only valid objection to the peers is that they enjoy their privileges by inheritance. That does not seem to me more unjust than the inheritance of good looks or health. Socialism, which will have to tolerate the latter, might, in view of the enormous advantages on which I have touched too lightly, tolerate the former. It may also be urged that by whatever abuses or corruption certain families acquired their wealth and position, the result comparing man with man is better than that of the newly-elected and uncorrupted House of Commons. The work of centuries has proved more satisfactory after all than that of the last three weeks. I would not harm a hair of the inherited ermine.

A Fallacy behind the Militant Theory.

By D. Triformis.

IN the issue of "Votes for Women" dated January 21st there is an "Open Letter to One who Condemns Violence." The article is signed G. Penn Gaskell, and it is apparently addressed to some Liberal woman who has written to "condemn and deplore violence." Not having seen the actual letter of this Liberal correspondent, it is impossible to make any comment thereon. In any case, that is not the present object; but to review the arguments marshalled by G. Penn Gaskell in support of violence.

These arguments make a formidable front. Among them are the violent reform movements of Magna Charter, the Ironsides' Rebellion, the Reform Acts, the French Revolution, the American Slave War, and the Young Turks' Revolt.

G. Penn Gaskell cannot reasonably object if we accept the obvious challenge of his array, to knock upon them and hear whether they are the things themselves, solid and indestructible in their natural juxtaposition to the women's movement; or whether they may be only hollow images of those movements which might be set behind the stage of any petty reform by anyone assured enough to use them so.

It is certain that the proximity of these vast upheavals of men against tyranny must, if they may be rationally compared with the women's movement, considerably enhance the importance of this movement in, even, the mind of opponents; on the other hand, if it be found that the great revolts of history were justified by no parallel of tyranny to that of which women can complain, the use of these revolts as examples calling for imitation, will merit condemnation from women who do not wish to see their movement made to appear petty by comparison, and, perhaps, to find thereafter the real grievances of women crushed under a load of ridicule.

We may consider these revolts in the order they are quoted in "Votes for Women." A question is put: "Do you condemn the personal violence by which the barons wrung Magna Charter from the reluctant John?"

Now let us quote the historian J. R. Green as to the state of things under John. We read: "John was the worst outcome of the Angevins. He united in one mass of wickedness, their insolence, their selfishness, their unbridled lust, their cruelty and tyranny, their shamelessness, their superstition, their cynical indifference to honour and truth. In mere boyhood, he tore with brutal levity the beards of the Irish chieftains. His punishments were refinements of cruelty, the starvation of children, the crushing old men under copes of lead. His court was a brothel, where no woman was safe from the royal lust. From the first moment of his rule, John had defied the baronage. He answered their demands by seizing their castles, and taking their children as hostages. On the nobles John heaped outrages worse than death."

Regarding the Ironsides' Rebellion, we again consult Green, and we must go back to the reign of James I., and even to the latter years of Elizabeth's reign, to learn the causes which drove the people to rebellion under the much milder but more foolish Charles. Of James, the historian records: "James had himself destroyed that enthusiasm of loyalty which had been the main strength of the Tudors. He had alienated alike the noble, the gentleman, and the trader. He had destroyed the authority of the Council. He had accustomed men to think lightly of the Ministers of the Crown. He had degraded the Judges. He had turned the Church into a mere engine for carrying out the royal will. He had quarrelled with and insulted the Houses as no English sovereign had ever done before." Under Charles: "Soldiers were quartered on recalcitrant boroughs. Poor men who refused to lend money to the King were pressed into the army or the navy. Stubborn tradesmen were flung into prison."

Even these grievances were not nationally considered ground for the violence of Cromwell. "It was soon plain that the resolution which had struck down Parliament and the Monarchy alike was without sanction from the nation at large," says Green. England has never, since Cromwell, made a boast of the execution of Charles; but our monarchs have been dispensed from many a crime for the sake of Charles!

With reference to the conditions previous to the Manchester Insurrection which led up to the Reform Bill in 1832, York Powell states: "In 1803, one-seventh of the people was in receipt of poor-law relief. Men could be hanged for over two hundred offences. Six labourers who had pledged each other to mutual support in their efforts to better their condition, were sentenced to transportation. In 1815, the new Corn Law prevented the bringing in of foreign wheat until English wheat was over eighty shillings a quarter." Carlyle writes of what followed: "A million hungry operative men started up in utmost paroxysm of desperate protest against their lot."

With reference to the violence of the French Revolution the "Votes for Women" claimant modifies the question thus: "You condemn, of course, the later excesses of the French Revolution committed after the cause was already won, but do you condemn the initial violence," etc. Before we describe the condition of the peasants in France previous to the Revolution, we ourselves may perhaps be allowed to put a question: Are English women prepared to behead one of the Government, and to flourish the head at the end of a pikestaff before the King at Buckingham Palace, to show that

they mean business? For that was the sort of "initial violence" done in France, that which we are dared to condemn.

La Bruyère describes the peasants of France: "Certain savage-looking beings, male and female, are seen in the country, and belonging to the soil, which they dig and grub with invincible stubbornness. They seem capable of articulation, and, when they stand erect, they display human lineaments. They are, in fact, men. They retire at night into their dens, where they live on black bread, water and roots."

H. A. Taine records: "I estimate that in 1715 more than one-third of the population, six millions, perished with hunger. . . . In 1740, prosecutions for unpaid dues are carried on with unexampled rigour. The clothes of the poor are seized, and their last measure of flour, the latches on their doors, etc." Here, as in England under Charles, it was that milder Louis who inherited the state of things, whom the rebels slew.

Perhaps people are still familiar enough with the overwhelming arguments against slavery to need no refreshing of mind. The fact is, of course, that the American slaves were actually bought and sold, and might be whipped just so long as that they did not die under the lash.

The case of Turkey, also, is modern, and it may be sufficient to quote G. P. Gaskell's own description of the Turks "groaning under the bloodstained tyranny of Abdul Hamid."

We refrain from pretending to look for a parallel between the conditions preceding any of these instances of revolt and the condition of the members of the W.S.P.U. There is no parallel: and we are inclined to apply the word "shameless" to those women who persist in comparing their movement with the movements described above.

G. P. Gaskell, "speaking with all reverence," cites "a higher example still" in favour of violence. Christ! "I come not to bring peace upon earth but a sword," quotes our writer, and relates the scourging of the moneylenders in the Temple to justify women in using violence to gain the vote.

One would think that such a conclusive proof of Divine approbation of the W.S.P.U. might have been relied upon by its discoverer to bring the "Liberal woman" to her senses. But what? She must be battered now that she may fairly be supposed to have been defeated. She is adjured to "analyse more closely" her own feelings. "If you consider why you applaud those great examples (she has not had the chance either of giving or withholding any such applause) of violence and yet condemn the violence now at length so reluctantly used by women—you will find that there is a very simple solution of the matter. Is it not the fact that you condemn force militant and applaud only force triumphant? And are you quite sure that when this fight is won your voice will not join in the chorus of acclamation that will hail the victors?"

Here the tentative tone is dropped, and future conduct of the woman is boldly prophesied: "When you claim, as you will claim, your share in the spoils of victory," etc. It may not be out of place to comment upon all this by quoting Burke upon the violent instigators of the French Revolution, who displayed "that upstart insolence almost inevitably adhering to and disgracing those who are the first acquirers of any distinction."

Women were never before so well-considered in England as they are to-day. Men have relaxed in many directions the foolish restrictions we ourselves have accepted from Church and State. Thousands are even willing to divide with us constitutional responsibility. Let us beware, lest we are beguiled by fanatical pioneers who would lay things level by violence, or we may come to merit such words as applied to France: "They rebelled against a mild and lawful monarch with more fury, outrage and insult than ever any people has been known to rise against the most illegal usurper, or the most sanguinary tyrant. Their resistance was made to concession; their revolt was from protection; their blow was aimed at a hand holding out graces, favours and immunities."

H.M. King Herod.

According to St. Judas Iscariot.

FEW things are more painful to a well-regulated mind than the attitude of the old evangelists towards royalty. The contrast between the New Testament and the Book of Common Prayer on this topic is very marked; and the preference of the Dissenters for the former volume is no doubt the cause of their objectionable Radical proclivities.

It will be a source of unfeigned joy to the devout and reverent to know that on this point, as on so many others, the Gospel of St. Judas strikes exactly the right note. The other Gospels contain a passage in which the second person of the trinity is made apparently to speak disrespectfully of his Gracious Sovereign. It has long been suspected that this passage was an interpolation. But we now learn from St. Judas that the meaning of the language used by Christ has been misunderstood. In the Aramaic dialect, it appears, the fox is the proverbial type of prudence and wisdom. Therefore when Christ spoke of His Majesty King Herod as "that fox," he was saying, in effect, "that tactful and sagacious monarch."

How far the founder of Christianity must have been from showing any want of respect to his superiors is proved by the fact, recorded by St. Judas Iscariot, that His Majesty graciously appointed him one of His Rabbis-in-Ordinary. He further had the privilege on one occasion of effecting a reconciliation between His Gracious Majesty and His Excellency Pontius Pilate, the great Empire-maker who was Viceroy of the adjacent province. But even this episode has been misrepresented by another evangelist.

The true cause of this hostility on the part of S.S. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John towards so able and popular a Sovereign must be sought, no doubt, in the evil spirit of religious bigotry. His Majesty, although officially regarded as the defender of the Jewish Church, was secretly a Pagan, having been converted to that faith by a skilful and plausible member of the Company of Jupiter. The Jovites, as we learn from Josephus, were a powerful and unscrupulous society, formed to combat the spread of philosophy, which was causing the income of the temples to fall off to a very serious extent. They were accustomed to use different baits for different minds; and in the present case they seem to have persuaded King Herod that he would be able to obtain forgiveness of his sins, which were many, from their Church, at a cheaper rate than from their Jewish rivals.

The tariff of the Jewish Church is admitted by its warmest apologists to have been exorbitant. A pair of pigeons for a theft, a ram for breaking the Sabbath, a fat bullock for adultery, and a whole flock of sheep for speaking disrespectfully of Moses—these were penalties which only a rich man could afford to laugh at. The civil list of King Herod was fixed on a liberal scale, but He had seriously crippled Himself by losses at kottabos and chariot-racing. His Majesty had received many loans from His Jewish friends in former days, and latterly He had added to His income by an operation in the shares of the Jerusalem and Joppa Caravan Company. Nevertheless He appears to have felt the need of economy; and the Jovites knew how to fix their charges to meet their customer.

It should be added that His Gracious Majesty was not entirely free from the superstition which was prevalent in those times. Jerusalem was overrun by astrologers and fortune-tellers of all kinds, and the

most eminent of them, Sir Simon Magus, K.C.H.O.,* held the appointment of Court Wizard. It is therefore extremely probable that His Majesty was a genuine believer in the pretensions of the Jovites to be the sole custodians of religious truth.

That King Herod was not actuated by any narrow fanaticism is shown by His treatment of St. John the Baptist, an episode which has been dealt with by St. Judas more fully than by his brother evangelists. During the first part of his ministry St. John was generally respected, and had he confined himself, in the Christian spirit, to preaching repentance to the poor, there is no reason to believe that he would ever have been interfered with by King Herod. St. Judas Iscariot informs us that His Majesty even sent for the popular revivalist on one occasion, received him in the kindest manner in His palace in Jerusalem, and authorised him to announce that his services were held under Royal patronage. Again, when St. John formed the project of making a tour of Judæa, His Majesty graciously intimated His intention to subscribe for the purchase of a camel for the use of the preacher.

Unfortunately Baptists are apt to be men of stubborn character, and to indulge in a freedom of speech which is unsuited to the character of a Christian minister. St. John so far forgot himself as to preach repentance to his Royal Patron. He was guilty of the unpardonable bad taste of commenting on His Majesty's private life, in terms which amounted to lèse-majesté.

Like the late King of the Belgians, Herod II. had formed a morganatic alliance with a lady of great personal charm whom the narrow restrictions of the Mosaic law hindered Him from making His Queen. The Countess Herodias, as she is styled by St. Judas, was naturally sensitive on the subject of her doubtful position at Court, unrecognised by the Pharisees, but winked at by the more tolerant Jovites. Had St. John been a sensible man of the world he would have carefully avoided offending her susceptibilities. Modern Baptists are frequently wanting in tact, but they are generally careful to draw the line at royalty. The late Sovereign of the Congo State had no better friends than the Baptist missionaries. Even Dr. Clifford confines his invectives to foreign monarchs such as the Tsar and Abdul Hamid. The conduct of St. John is in painful contrast with that of his successors.

The main outlines of the story, as told in the Gospel of St. Judas, agree with those in the familiar narrative of St. Mark. On St. John taking it upon himself to reprove his Gracious Sovereign, the tolerant King contented Himself with imprisoning the seditious preacher in the first division. But Herodias was not so easily satisfied.

It is impossible not to sympathise with the beautiful and high-born Countess when she found herself publicly flouted by a man whose birth and education, as a member of the priestly caste, ought to have made him one of the firmest supporters of the throne. Lady Herodias, we learn from St. Judas, was a Lily Dame, one of the foundresses and patronesses of the Lily League, which had for its objects the maintenance of the Roman Empire and the Established Temple. As such, her political, as well as her personal, feelings were outraged by the prisoner's whole career.

St. Judas himself is evidently influenced in this part of his inspired narrative by admiration for the woman so brutally assailed. His style seems to catch warmth and colour from the subject, till we almost feel that we are reading a page of D'Annunzio or the "Daily Mail" feuilletonist. We see the dark-browed patrician Jewess, with all the voluptuous languor of her Syrian blood, weaving her subtle plan for extorting the King's consent to the execution of her traducer. A request from herself might provoke suspicion; the pledge must be given to her innocent child. And so Salome is coached in her tragical part. The best dancing-master in Antioch is summoned to the palace, to teach her one of those maddening measures which were the secret of the priestesses of Ashteroth. The girl loses herself in the passionate abandon of the whirling frenzy, and when her excited stepfather offers her the half of his kingdom she makes her tigerish demand with an eagerness worthy of her insulted mother.

The importance of the episode, of course, is in its influence on the ministry of our Lord. The disciples of St. John, we are told by all the evangelical writers, came and told Christ what had taken place. St. Judas Iscariot is the only one who describes his reception of the news. He was then engaged in the preparation of a liturgy for the use of his disciples, when standing in the synagogues and at the corners of the streets. He had already taught them the rather brief and jejune prayer preserved in the canonical Gospels, and had given directions for its repetition four times at mattins and three times at evensong, in imitation of the heathen liturgiologists. He now composed in addition a beautiful petition, preserved by St. Judas alone, on behalf of His Imperial Majesty Tiberius Cæsar, His Imperial Highness Prince Caligula, His Gracious Majesty King Herod II., the Lady Herodias, and all the Royal Family. The exquisite Greek of this prayer should lead to its inclusion, with the necessary alterations, in any future revision of the Prayer Book.

A hardly less delightful composition on behalf of His Excellency Pontius Pilate, which St. Judas refers to elsewhere, is unfortunately missing from this Gospel. But a similar compliment to His Grace, Caiaphas, High Priest of Jerusalem, and Primate of All Judæa, will be found further on.

From this moment to the close of his earthly career Christ remained on excellent terms with his exalted Patron; and the Lady Chouza, wife of the Lord Steward of the Household, became one of the most influential members of his congregation. Even the evangelist least friendly to Herod II. has recorded that He presented Christ on one occasion with a gorgeous robe, a well-known form of compliment in eastern countries. He also graciously commanded him to work miracles in His presence.

It is to be hoped that the new light thrown by St. Judas on this able and beloved monarch, and His condescension towards the second person of the trinity, will lead to a revision of the judgment of ecclesiastical historians on his character. Marat's famous pronouncement that the Gospel was the most republican book in the world would certainly never have been uttered if he had been acquainted with the previous record of Iscariot.

LUCIFER.

* Knight Commander of the Herodian Order.

THE MAD MAROON.

THE south wind sings a sultry tune
Around the hollow-humped sand-dune;
The bowing breakers cringe and croon
Before the dancing mad maroon.

His eyes are bright, and roam about;
His raiment is an old dish-clout:
He kicks the sand in reel and rout;
Then starts in chase with laugh and shout.

But O! he dreads the fall of night.
The stars rush out: he shrieks with fright;
He scurries up the crumbling height,
And digs and burrows out of sight.

E. H. VISIAK.

Books and Persons.

(AN OCCASIONAL CAUSERIE.)

WE have now definitely got the first fruits of the Circulating Libraries Censorship upon novels. The libraries have, I believe, more or less banned one or two books not fiction, including particularly the "Memoirs of Harriette Wilson." I object to the banning of the "Memoirs of Harriette Wilson." The thing is not indecent, and if it is vacuous, tedious and immoral in tendency, it is not more so than many volumes which the libraries circulate and even push. Nevertheless, I do not feel deeply about Harriette Wilson. Granted a censorship, she wrote the kind of work that a censorship would be likely to sit down heavily upon, unless trade reasons pointed to another course. The pert Miss Wilson's Memoirs are not new, and they are not imaginative (at least, not confessedly imaginative), and though they might perhaps be necessary to the complete studies of anyone who was writing a social history of Harriette's time, I do not suppose that they were published to the noble end of facilitating historical knowledge ; and, anyhow, the serious student could obtain one of the original editions. What alone interests me is the attitude of the censorship towards new and imaginative works.

* * *

The first two novels to be banned are "Black Sheep," by Stanley Portal Hyatt, and "The Uncounted Cost," by Mary Gaunt. Both volumes are published by Mr. Werner Laurie. My mean and paltry mind instantly put the question whether Mr. Werner Laurie, who is an enterprising man, and therefore capable of irritating conservative institutions, had ever committed any dreadful crime against the libraries, and whether the Libraries' Association was not out for his scalp. I am always ready to think of the worst. I have satisfied myself, however, that the presence of Mr. Werner Laurie's name on the title-pages of the first two novels to be censored is a mere coincidence. The libraries have been honestly censoring. The censors—mysterious personalities (but I am convinced I saw one of them in the Eustace Miles Restaurant last Saturday afternoon)—had to go for something in order to justify their existence, and in order to begin the New Year properly, and so on ; and they have gone for Mr. Hyatt and Miss Gaunt.

* * *

I have read Mr. Hyatt's "Black Sheep." I read it solely with a view to finding offence in it. I do not care greatly for it. I object to bad grammar, and there are some glaring specimens of bad grammar in the book. However, it is easy to attach too much importance to grammar. What I seriously objected to was the tepid sentimentality of it, the kind of sentimentality which one almost invariably discovers in those hard, disillusioned, superficially cynical wanderers who have seen constellations that cannot be seen from Greenwich Observatory. The book itself is weak throughout. In brief, I regard it as a fair average production. Clearly in discussing it I must not mince my estimate of it as a work of art. On the other hand, it is a perfectly sincere book and a perfectly dignified book ; morally, it makes for charity and for righteousness. Moreover, there is a certain unusual skill in the presentation of the double strain in the character of the hero, Jimmy. If I were Mr. Hyatt, and anybody wrote or stated that "Black Sheep" was immoral, or indecent, or doubtful, or lacking in any quality of self-respect, and if I had a couple of hundred pounds to spare, I should amuse myself by bringing an action for slander or libel.

* * *

Why did the libraries ban it? The reason is clear. There is a —— in it. It is true that she only became a —— through filial devotion. It is true, that she is a charming ——, not at all like even the best ordinary ——s. But she is a ——. Jimmy falls in love with her. Quite natural! If not the colonel's daughter that the —— generally is, she was authentically the daughter of a man of science. While they lived together Jimmy got hard up. Such things have been known. And the —— loved him, and because she loved him, produced money, which saved the situation, but whose origin could not be justified, unless by the founder of Christianity. Such things have been known. Upon this, at the instigation of his relatives, Jimmy left the —— and engaged himself to another girl. But ultimately he married the ——. That is why the libraries banned "Black Sheep," though there is not an ill-judged word or sentence in it. Now, of course, if the censorship means that novelists are to pretend that there are no ——s (except in stage plays), and that perfect gentlemen are not what they are, and Bloomsbury not what it is, and flat landlords not what they are, and policemen not what they are ; if the censorship means that novelists are to write about some other world, not this, then I think it would be nicer and more polite of the censorship to say so at once. Then novelists can begin all over again, leaving out all the blanks. But if the censorship does not mean this, then the banning of "Black Sheep" is silly.

* * *

Not that the libraries will admit that they have banned "Black Sheep"! Only their purchases of it amount to about 12 per cent. of their purchases of Mr. Hyatt's last book, "The Marriage of Hilary Carden."

* * *

As to Miss Mary Gaunt's book, "The Uncounted Cost," I will content myself with quoting :—"We cannot help thinking that the libraries have made a grave tactical mistake in banning 'The Uncounted Cost' as unfit for circulation. There is a certain kind of nastiness in modern fiction which no decent-minded reader would wish to defend, and if the libraries confined their censorship to that—and it is so well-defined a type that there should be no difficulty about it—much good might be done. But there is absolutely nothing nasty or offensive about 'The Uncounted Cost.' It is not a great novel ; it is not a novel, perhaps, that every parent would like his girls to read ; but it is a perfectly clean and sincere attempt to deal with certain fundamental truths from the woman's point of view. It shows, indeed, just that difference between love and lust which some of our novelists would have us believe does not exist. Briefly, it is the story of a woman who once held the view that people should be married on trial, and, if they found that they did not suit each other, be free to part. She put her theory into practice, and after two years the man tired of her and threw her over 'like an old glove.' All this happened before the story opens, and is dwelt upon as little as possible. 'The Uncounted Cost' comes when, years afterwards, she wins the real love of a more honourable man, and has to decline him because she regards her earlier contract, though herself discarded, to be as sacred and binding as any bond made by Church or State. A happy ending, however, is found in the heart of West Africa, where a considerable amount of fighting, and much first-hand knowledge of local colour and savage ways, bring a really sound book to an excellent close."

* * *

This extract is from the "Daily Graphic." If there is a morning paper in London that caters for the family, the "Daily Graphic" is that paper. The censoring of "The Uncounted Cost" is worse than that of "Black Sheep." It is, even from the point of view of the libraries, a mistake, as the "Daily Graphic" says, in addition to being a monstrous injustice. But no censorship can work a week without making itself ridiculous, and the special fate of censorships is to condemn the innocent and acquit the guilty. Look at the advertisements of —— (I have practised journalism for twenty years, and never yet been the cause of a threat of a libel action, and I am not going to begin now). But look at the publishers' advertisements in general at this present moment, and see if you cannot put your finger on a novel by a notorious writer, and then see if it will be banned! It will not. Of course "The Uncounted Cost" is not banned either. Certainly not. But Smiths bought only fifty-two copies of it, instead of some three hundred

and fifty. And the "Times" has refused absolutely even to advertise it. In the literary way this is the most misguided thing, among many misguided things, that the "Times" has done during the last two or three years. What a collection of advertisements of veiled indecency could be made from the "Times"! And Smiths will only give you "The Uncounted Cost" under protest and after many delays, whereas on their bookstalls they will thrust upon your attention such chaste family reading as "Life in a Garrison Town." A censorship is bound to be ridiculous. And it is bound also to be ineffective. For example, Mudie's are buying and supplying "The Uncounted Cost" quite freely —this shocking work which Smith's have shied at and which the "Times" will not permit to sully even its advertisement columns. I am happy to be able to announce that there is going to be a great row over the censorship.

JACOB TONSON

The Immortal Burns.

By Bart Kennedy.

[Speech delivered by Mr. Bart Kennedy at the annual celebration of Burns's birthday, Jan. 22, before the Edinburgh Burns Club.]

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—I was sitting one night in London feeling depressed and wondering why I had ever been foolish enough to forsake the art of navvying for the more precarious art of literature. Things were not going my way. In fact, they rarely go the way of the man who writes—till after he has been well gone.

However, as I say, I was sitting feeling depressed, when I was handed a letter. I opened it, and found it contained an invitation to propose the toast of the immortal memory of Burns, the great poet of Scotland—and, I may add, the great poet of humanity.

This man of transcendent genius, who worked with his hands!

To be done the honour of being asked to help to pay a tribute to his memory cheered me up. My depression vanished. I was gratified beyond measure. Here was this high honour paid to me—one who had been a tramp and a sailor and a navvy. One who had worked with his hands—though, I may add, I avoided it whenever I could. Yes, I was cheered up. I felt that the Scots were indeed a discriminating race.

And I thought of a certain night years and years before in 'Frisco. It was the 25th of January, and I wandered into a saloon in Eddy Street that was kept by a bearded, braw Scot, a friend of mine. The place was filled with Scots, and they were celebrating the immortal memory of Robert Burns in a way that would have rejoiced the heart of the bard were he alive and in their midst. I helped them, gentlemen—I helped them into the wee sma' hours. It was a great night.

And here I must say that I am not at all at one with those who apologise for what are called the weaknesses of Burns. These weaknesses were the stronger part of this great jovial Scot. In fact, they were not weaknesses at all. They were but a fine sensing and appreciation of the joy of life. And it is the picturing of this sense of the joy of life that has made him immortal. For even the most straight-laced and dullest-blooded of human beings feel in their heart of hearts that there is something far finer than living by exact mathematical rule and plan. There are times when in their heart of hearts they would like to break out, to be men, to express themselves to the fullest.

Joy! That was the doctrine that this great poet, Robert Burns, mainly preached. And joy is joy, whether it exists in a palace or in a cottage. He made this fact very, very clear in his immortal songs.

Joy is the real ideal after which man strives. Even the kirk promises us joy—after we are dead! Burns had the common-sense to see that the time to seize and grasp joy was while the life was with man. A bird in the hand is worth many, many birds in the bush.

He sang of glorious, immortal, splendid, deathless love.

Louis, what reck I by thee,
Or Geordie on his ocean
Dyvour, beggar loons to me
I reign in Jeanie's bosom.

Let her crown my love her law,
And in her breast enthrone me:
Kings and nations, swith awa!
Reif randies, I disown ye!

And here I may say in parenthesis that Burns might well—even when not in a state of exaltation—speak of Louis and Geordie as reif randies, as sturdy beggars. For these kings, when compared with him, were as nothing. They were hardly fit to tie the latchets of his shoes. The poet was a king, indeed. He was a king by the divine right of intellect.

Yes, he sang of love:—

The golden hours on angel wings,
Flew o'er me and my dearie;
For dear to me as light and life,
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

And again:

If Heaven a draught of heavenly pleasure spare,
One cordial in this melancholy vale,
'Tis when a youthful, loving, modest pair,
In other's arms breathe out the tender tale,
Beneath the milk-white thorn that scents the ev'ning gale.

Say what one will, it is love that really makes the world go round. And this great poet sang of it in all its phases. He had that fine wisdom that realises that, compared with it, all other joys are pale indeed. And he also realised that the kirk but too often puts a damper on the soul of man.

Burns preached the gospel of joy.

And again he preached the gospel of manliness. This son of the soil, this genius from the plough, was no truckler and bower down. He was every inch a fine, square-standing man.

A prince can mak a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, and a' that,
But an honest man's aboon his might,
Guid faith he munna fa' that!
* * *
Then let us pray that come it may,
As come it will for a' that;
That Sense and Worth, o'er a' the earth,
May bear the gree, and a' that!
For a' that, and a' that,
It's coming yet, for a' that,
That Man to Man, the warld o'er
Shall brothers be for a' that.

Gentlemen, these noble lines prefigure the time that is coming into the world when man will have intelligence enough to live in amity with his fellow-man. They prefigure the time when horrible and dreadful wars will pass into the darkness whence they came. For it is not given that man shall be forever guilty of these dread blood-carnivals.

And may I say again that these noble lines of your great national poet also prefigure the time when the equally hideous strife that occurs here in the midst of our industrial system shall cease. I mean this strife in the midst of our so-called peace when man tries to snatch the crust from his fellow-man. Yes, these lines of the poet prefigure the time when this strife, too, shall cease.

He preached brotherliness, camaraderie. He saw that man's only chance of salvation would come through a trying to understand and to be tolerant of his fellow. And he sang of John Barleycorn, the glorious wine of Scotland. Say what the pale teetotaler will, this wine, when it is good, and old enough, and rightly used, is good for man:

'Twill make a man forget his woe;
'Twill heighten all his joy.

It is all very well, gentlemen, for the righteous purist to talk, but there is virtue in the glass, in the flowing bowl. Of course, one can overdo it, just as one can overdo going to the kirk. It causes friendship, it cements friendship. It has its obverse side, I know, but everything has its obverse side. After all, wine, whether it be the wine of Scotland or the wine

of France, comes from the sun. It enters into the earth and lives again in another form in the grain or in the vine. And we by our skill get it, and imprison it, and vivify ourselves with it. And, say what anyone may, it is good for us in moderation.

Burns sang of the life of the people to whom he belonged, the common people. And let it not be forgotten that it is the common people who are the people. It is they who bear upon their shoulders the weight of the world. It is their labour that carries everything.

This great poet came from out the darkness and the obscurity of poverty. His genius shone as a great light springing from a humble place. As a beautiful flower coming from out a dark soil. He was of the people, he sang of the people. There is that wonderful picture of the cotter going home on the Saturday night after his week's labour—one of the finest pictures in the world's literature. The tired cotter lays his tools aside and goes slowly home over the fields. And then comes the joy and happiness of meeting his family. The scene has changed from the darkness and the cold of the November night outside to the inside of his cottage, where shines the fire and where shine the welcoming faces of his wife and children. It is indeed a beautiful and moving picture that the poet gives us.

And there is Tam o' Shanter, who sees ghosts as he is going home to his wife, who looks upon his doings with the cold eye of the critic. How many millions upon millions of men have seen these very ghosts? Burns has caught and imprisoned them in his immortal pages.

Yes, this great poet came from out the common people, from out the masses, who labour with the hands. And over the world now, when he is long gone, statues are erected to his memory. Gentlemen, believe me, I say this in no carping spirit. But a fact is a fact. And perhaps it is that the great artist can only be fully gauged when his work is done—when he is gone. The comparison that must be instituted between his work and the work that the world accepted as great takes a long time. And so it is that the great individual artist must suffer. Not through the fault of men, but because of the nature of the work in which he is engaged. Lesser artists, the copyists, so to speak, do far better from a worldly standpoint than the man who does the work that lives.

Yes, the world honours and fully appreciates Burns now, and—well, who is to say that he does not know of it? Who is to know of the things that happen to a man after the change comes upon him that we call Death? May not the entity, the very individuality of this great poet be still with us? Who is to know? Who is to tell?

He sang of the sacredness of old friendships:

> Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
> And never brought to mind?
> Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
> And old lang syne?

Old friends, gentlemen, are the best friends. And friendship between man and man is the finest of all friendships. You are in personal consonance with a man, and you like him far more than if he were of the one blood with yourself. And you part with him. You go far away. Or he goes far away. And the long years pass. And you meet him. How strange are the feelings that the meeting evokes! At once sad and pleasurable and regretful. How beautifully and tenderly has Burns pictured all this!

This poet was in direct touch with all nature. He had a feeling for and an understanding of life-forms other than our own. He realised the linking that exists, however faint it may be, between all vital things:

> I'm truly sorry man's dominion
> Has broken Nature's social union,
> An' justifies that ill opinion,
> Which makes thee startle
> At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,
> An' fellow mortal!

These lines show the all-reaching sympathy that came from this man. They might have been written by some nature-philosopher of the Far East.

This elemental man was in touch with all things; in touch with the life that is called inanimate as well as the life that is called animate. He sang of the strange beauty of the flower, of the wide-spreading fields, of the corn lying in its sheaves. And he sang of the hurtle and roar and press of the winds, of the moving sea, of the running of the water of the burn; of the warmth of summer he sang, and of the cold and the snow of winter. He saw and appreciated the whole of life in its absolute roundness. This great, strange seer who came from the plough, who was of the common people, this man, who though he was a seer, was at once human and lovable and kindly, who loved the good things of life, who loved women and song. This fine poet who transmuted what he saw into magical, immortal pictures.

And here let me say why he was so great. He was a seer and a philosopher who was a human being. Too often is the philosopher sour and crabbed and flinty. Too often does he feel superior to the rest of the world. Too often does he forget that after all he is of the same clay as his fellow-man. And while we may respect him for his profoundness we feel for him no love. It is impossible to love the man who sets himself up on the cold and icy throne of superiority.

Your great, national poet was too big to be superior. He was a man among his fellows. One who walked abroad in their midst and shared their life. A man who was fine and great, and still who was of the people. A human, kindly, jovial man.

And that is why we love him. We respect and honour his genius, and we love him because he was so human.

This man from the ranks! This great poet of Scotland! I ask you to drink to him. Gentlemen, to the immortal memory of Burns!

Verse.

MR. LAURENCE BINYON'S new book, "England and other Poems," has been reviewed at great length by those weekly journals of standing (on account of their solidity) for which one pays threepence or sixpence, or reads in a club, or the local library, or not at all; and we will honour Mr. Binyon in the same way.

Almost every praise has been lavished on this book. What would appear to be stolidity to the unsophisticated person is "the poetic impulse well-disciplined by the conscious artist." What would seem platitude (as in "The Crusader," where Mr. Binyon addresses an effigy, and enquires after the state of its soul) is the "grave and individual mind concerning itself with the deeper things of life—love, fatherhood, duty, patriotism, in their more *tranquil and solemn aspects*"; what mere empty rhetoric is a "rich, clear sonority and a sustained elevation of phrase." At least, it is to be supposed that this is so, since none of the aforesaid journals mentions Mr. Binyon's platitudes, or his stolidity, or his empty rhetoric. Yet in two pieces, at least, "England" and "Milton," both "patriotic," we get that stolid, platitudinous rhetoric which might for a moment hold our attention, and then leave us wondering what impression or idea we really were the richer for—what message; and all through the book the stolidity, the platitude and the rhetoric are to be found, either together or separately.

It is safe to say that of the deeper things of life Mr. Binyon knows and feels little; the love, fatherhood, duty and patriotism of which he sings are the love, fatherhood, duty and patriotism of the comfortable, well-fed, and well-meaning middle-class, which means well to itself, which feeds its body and mind on the fare it is accustomed to, and which looks in art for certain conventional elegancies, eclecticised among the well-established, and will have no other. It is the class which supports the "Fortnightly Review," the "Corn-

* England and other poems, by Laurence Binyon (Mathews, 3s. 6d. net).

hill Magazine," the "Westminster Gazette," "Country Life," and "Temple Bar," to all of which Mr. Binyon contributed pieces reprinted in this volume.

We have to bring against Mr. Binyon the fundamental charge of class parochialism, and having said that we deny him the title of conscious artist, which his reviewers have bestowed on him in praise that might seem stretched if given to the greatest and the finest. In the work of an artist—all artists are conscious—we find a different atmosphere from that created by Mr. Binyon; the words do not stand in our way, they do not weigh us down; but rather are like wings conveying us to strange lands of new intoxications, and emotions that do not suggest one set of modern society. We admit Mr. Binyon's carefulness; we admit the carefulness of the suburban for the flowers of his garden, and at the same time acknowledge the wall around it; but even then we find such weeds as these:

Inversions:
senses tired, sunshine warm, edges pale, captains dread,
eyelids hot, darkness pure, borage blue, rampart old.
. . .Light's blossoms that a brook's cold ripple fledge
. . .His eyes a flamewinged dragon-fly pursue;

or these:

wound (woond)—profound (rhyming).
. . . . gazing eyes
Muse earnest upon mine and *starry swim.*

Hide me in your heart, Love,
None *but we* can know
How with every heart-beat
Love could grow and grow,
Till the seed that branched abroad,
How, we could not guess,
Holds us in the shadow
Of its boughs *that bless.*
And, where the sheltered dew has scarcely dried,
Cling worts, close-leaved, *each with its own wild name.*

Or such choppy rhythm as this:

White clouds that rose-clouds chase
Till the sky laughs round, blue and bare;
Sunbeams that quivering waves out-race
To sparkle kisses on a marble stair;
Indolent water that images
Slender pillared palaces.

The principal theme in Mr. Binyon's book is Love—a love that is sung about, reflected upon, turned-to as a relief, and only once, in "Sirmione," expressed as a rapture. There is "Love's Portrait," a dull and careful piece of verse-writing, the work of a man determined to write verse; "Ruan's Voyage," the story of a fisherman's luring to the faery isles by Morgaine the Fay, and of his return home after three hundred years, told in different measures, whose changes irritate; but the last few lines are very fine indeed in their effect of evanescence; yet what have Ruan and Morgaine to say to us through Mr. Binyon as a mouthpiece? And there are many shorter poems in which Love is presented as the refuge from the cares of life: such, perhaps, as the worries of business, or the little quarrel with Jones, or the perfidy of Smith, an estimable and solid middle-class domesticity which we admire. Love—this love, and the idealisation of it—to Mr. Binyon is the only truth; Love is enough; but when

Life from sunned peak, witched wood, and flowing dell,
A hundred ways the eager spirit wooes
. . . . . .
O love since I have found one truth so true,
Let me lose all, to lose my loss in you,

Love is evidently only a makeshift and a last resource; the true lover does not see "so many ways," but only one. Mr. Binyon has tried the hundred ways, and has come back to the one, which is a very sound, human, and middle-aged thing to do; but not a theme for song. The finest love poetry of this world is the poetry of youth: youth stretches from fifteen to ninety according to the man. This attitude to Love seems to be a stock subject for Mr. Binyon's musing moments. In "Sirmione," however, Mr. Binyon achieves something finer, and though he says nothing new, though you do not give the gasp of surprise and gratefulness for a new revelation, the feeling that ever so little, may be, the primeval darkness which surrounds our minds has been pushed back by so much farther, yet the old emotions which the poets, by definition, have conferred on us, are stirred again with much passion and fervour; we quote a passage:

O Love, Love, Love, look up! Let thy head lean
Back on my shoulder. Ah, I feel the keen
Indrawing of thy breath, and thy heart beat
Under my arm, and sighing through thee sweet
The wonder of the Night that widely broods
Over us with her glittering multitudes.
O in Night's garden has a fountain sprung
That over old earth showers for ever young
A fairy splendour of still-dropping May,
Through the warm dusk mounted like wine, and towered
And in far spaces infinitely flowered,
Breaking the deep heaven into milky bloom?
So beautiful in this most tender gloom
Ten thousand thousand stars through the height on height
Burn over us, how breathless and how bright!
Some wild, some fevered, some august and large,
Royal and blazing like a hero's targe,
Some faint and secret, from abysses brought,
Lone as an incommunicable thought!
They throng, they reign, they droop, they bloom, they glow
Upon our gaze, and as we gaze they grow
In patience and in glory, till the mind
Is brimmed and to all other being blind;
They hang, they fall towards us, spears of fire
Piercing us through with joy and with desire.

This poem, the sonnet "Violets," and—more for their skill of verse than for their poetry—"Forest Silence," "Bab-Lock-Hythe," "Ricordi," charming work all three, and perhaps the other sonnets, form the most interesting and attractive part of this book.

We have discussed the main theme of Mr. Binyon's book. His ideas on fatherland, duty, and patriotism do not interest us in the least. Mr. Binyon's England—indeed! The official England hand-in-hand on one side with respectable journalism, on the other with the "cultured" middle-class, the solid unrevolutionary lump. It is this limitation of Mr. Binyon's vision, this lack of cosmic and world-consciousness, lack of essential imagination, in a word (or even of mere exterior light grace of imagination), which makes it so exasperating to hear him hailed in chorus as a conscious artist; conscious craftsman is much, and then we would criticise Mr. Binyon's craft: sincere, untiring effort, sometimes achieving grace, sometimes conveying real feeling is the highest praise; and against this we put, not inspiration, but the will to write verse.

Old England is senile, and poetry lacks criticism and ideas; perhaps England may one day cast her skin, like the snake, and poetry acquire freshness again. If, after having learned his craft, the poet could wipe out all consciousness of the world's poetry—but every artist does this in some degree, surely? Every artist sloughs at least one skin. Let him then slough England's senility and sloth, and perhaps recreate England in the process. Art should be either inactual (unzeitgemäss) or else criticism.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

"The Thrush," No 2. One poem by Mr. W. de la Mare, and good verse by J. Endellion and E. M. Martin, the rest . . . . Again the prose articles, on "John Ford," "An Imaginary Book of Verse," and "The Development of William Butler Yeats," are the most interesting items; the criticism is just as uninformed; and the double-chinned lady on the cover is still about to strike her lyre: symbol of all that is abominable in modern verse. "The Thrush" lacks point of view, poetique, and purpose; choice and artistic direction; a nondescript collection of sparrows who, obediently to the editor, lift up their voices and chirrup, on the off chance of the world's discovering a . . . thrush astray among them.

"Moonflowers," a Book of Fancies, by W. F. Stead (Nutt, 1s. net). Dainty verses reaching that high level of prettiness which in a single poem is charming, but in a bookful palls. Moonflowers, indeed, the moon shining on the surface of beautiful things; but of the deep mystery of night and life nothing.

"The Poems of Sappho," by Percy Osborn (Mathews, 1s. net). Poems, epigrams, and fragments; translations and adaptations, apparently well translated, from the "divine Sappho." A cheap little edition for those, without Greek, who would know the reason of the raving about Sappho. Some of the fragments are comical in their brevity: "Crafty Medea . . . . "Fragrant myrrh . . . . ," " . . . of the Muses . . . . ," truly divine. One may ask scholarship

how these were preserved, and why Sappho did not live more fully in the hearts of her contemporaries and thereby have been transmitted more fully to us. Still, there is sufficient in this volume to justify adoration, and what is not there you imagine.

"The Race-Spirit," a play in one act, by Charles Granville (Daniel, 1s. 6d. net). Will nothing stop Mr. Granville? He has the matter of a short article in him, and forthwith he rushes into a one-act play in blankety-blank verse. Mr. Granville writes these books seemingly for the pleasure of quoting his reviewers at the end of them.

Edward Carpenter's Play.*

EDWARD CARPENTER is a poet who has never "got there." It is a long time since he was going "Towards Democracy," but if my readers imagine that he has at last reached "The Promised Land," even in five acts of blank verse, they are deceived by a title. I want to say two or three kind things about this "Drama of a People's Deliverance (In the Elizabethan Style)" to show that I am a critic, and not a mere sand-bagger of genius, and, as these compliments are choking me, I say them now to avoid discomfort. The play is written in intolerably good blank verse: I confess without shame that the lullaby perfection of the rhythm sent me twice to sleep. This is a god-send in these days of plays that will neither let you sleep in comfort nor induce you to keep awake. Then this play contains a lyric that Shakespeare could not have written with his eyes shut.

Alack-a-day, alack-a-day!
Love slipt out upon the way;
No one wist it,
No one missed it:
Ah, alas! alack-a-day!

For the benefit of those readers who, like one of the Georges (I forget his number), have no "daste for bainting or boetry," I point out the haunting beauty of the refrain: "Alack-a-day, alack-a-day." The lyric does not proceed with:

When Jesus washed my sins away,

as that would be an anachronism. The last kind thing that I have to say is this: Moses has had his hair cut, and, as he speaks in the Elizabethan, and not the Biblican style, he is as meticulously careful of his language as a man must be when he is only allowed ten or at most eleven syllables in a line. I know quite a lot of swear-words that would take two lines of this measurement, and then would refuse to scan; and it says much for the chastity of Edward Carpenter's style that Moses does not use them. Any young lady belonging to any Ethical Society or Sunday school may read "The Promised Land" without a blush; it would be as innocuous as "Eager Heart," but that it has a love affair. I hasten to assure my readers that it is quite harmless, and is undiscoverable except to the practised critic.

Just as Edward Carpenter journeyed "Towards Democracy," and never got there, so he now journeys towards the "Promised Land," only to see the curtain lowered as Joshua gives the command: "Forward, evermore!" A captain tells us that the—

land o'erbrims
With rich confusion. Corn there is, and oil,
Honey and figs and melons, kid-flesh, fish,
Cucumber [think of that, cucumber!] quinces, cattle innumerous, sheep [this should surely be innumerable]
And every bird on earth—that is not quail.

As the captain says nothing about women, I conclude that this is Heaven, or that the captain is a member of the *Salvation* Army. I suggest, though, that this trait is neither Elizabethan nor Biblical. An Israelite in the company indulges in a panegyric of wine that would shame Anacreon, and all to astonish an innocent youth who has never tasted it.

Cold is its kiss
Upon the lips, but in the heart 'tis fire.

Sweeter than old malice; sharp and sweet:
And yet not neither.

Just to smell of it
Is to forget all grief.

No wonder that the youth exclaims:

Well, I must think so, too, altho' I've seen
But half of the whole story.

Oh, Mr. Carpenter, if ever you go to the "Promised Land," take me with you, although I confess that the cucumber and the absence of women are the attractions for me. I have never tasted wine like the one described, and I don't believe that anybody else has; but if your promised land is free of Miriam and Zillah, the cucumber will satisfy me. But I must get on to the play.

I do wish that Carpenter had not described this play as a "drama in the Elizabethan style," or written a preface explaining that he has "taken the Bible story for basis," and that his "object has been to give it a realistic interpretation." I don't want to talk about these things: they are not proper in THE NEW AGE; but if I must, I must. First, there is nothing Elizabethan in the play; there is not a Gogs-worms, or a ha'porth of sack, or a man-hunt anywhere in the play. Perhaps Carpenter only means to imply that his style is as virginally pure as Elizabeth was, in which case I hasten to say that it is much more chaste than her style. She could swear like a fishwife, but Moses uses language that Spurgeon and Dr. Parker would have disdained. For instance, when Moses is portering his amateur sculpture down the mountain, and discovers all his people worshipping the golden calf, he speaks "with majestic mien, and in a loud, commanding voice" (I quote only the peroration and climax):—

Nay, 'tis enough. Take back your covenant,
These tables we have made and graven for you—
This draft of a new world that might have been—
This pledge between you and a God, as far
Beyond the gods of Egypt, as the round
Of Heaven exceeds the compass of a tent—
Take back your covenant, and go your ways!
I waste my days to serve your whims no more!
(*Throws the tables with a mighty crash to the ground.*)

This is accurate according to the Bible version, and weak as the Bible version is weak. The realistic interpretation is that he threw the Commandments at Aaron, who broke them; a knack that all his progeny have learned; and Shakespeare, who was more Elizabethan than Baconian, would have made great play with this incident, and enriched the language with another string of expletives. I think that Moses is unbearably "uppish" in this scene, for he has a God on the mountain-top, and nobody wishes to deprive him of it; but because the poor sing, and sing well, and dance round a golden calf, he talks to them in the haughty language of Edward Carpenter. I must mention one other instance of the realistic interpretation of this incident. The Bible says that the "people were naked (for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame among their enemies)." Carpenter has them dancing "in scanty raiment and with dishevelled locks," the principle being that half a robe is better than none. The penalty of throwing a Bible story into a "rationalised form," as Carpenter claims to have done here, is that one has to be so much more proper than the religious people were. For instance, the last mention of Zipporah that I remember in the Bible is in Exodus v. 24-26.

And it came to pass by the way in the inn, that the Lord met him, and sought to kill him.

Then Zipporah took a sharp stone, and cut off the foreskin of her son, and cast it at his feet, and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me.

So he let him go: then she said, A bloody husband thou art, because of the circumcision.

That seems to mark her exit, and one can understand that a man who can only be stopped from fighting strangers in public-houses by his wife's strong language is scarcely a desirable person to live with. But there is no "bloody husband" business in Carpenter; Moses must be accused by Miriam and Aaron of lustfulness, of

having made it matter of death
For common lust to trespass on the pastures
Of other tribes [yet] should still permit himself
To keep this Ethiop cow.

before the separation is effected. Of course, as Moses

* "The Promised Land." By Edward Carpenter. (Swan Sonnenschein. 2s. 6d. net.)

is an Elizabethan hero, he is falsely accused of sexual desire, and puts his wife away to preserve his reputation. I am tired of this realistic interpretation, and will just say a few words about the dramatic value of this play before I finish.

The essential condition of a good drama is that all the action necessary to a clear understanding of the characters should occur on the stage. This is all the more necessary when the play is an attempt to explain the greatness of more or less mythical people. If there were no Lord God of Israel able to work miracles and to inspire his children with wonderful courage and their enemies with incredible fear, we must find the explanation in the commanding power of a great personality, and we demand to see it at work. To explain the split in the ranks of the calf-worshippers, and the slaughter of the recalcitrant, this speech is not enough :—

> Come forth, come forth, then—all that hold with me;
> And most, ye sons of Levi, oh, come forth!
> To-day must bring an end to all this trifling;
> And those who will not forward to the Land
> Of Promise and of Freedom under Heaven,
> Let them not back to Egypt, but lie here
> For ever, for a warning. For thus saith
> The Lord God, God of Israel: If need be
> Take every man his sword, and go from gate
> To gate throughout the camp; slay, every man
> His brother, his companion, and his neighbour."
> (*Renewed uproar, fighting, and curtain.*)

This would not inspire the most truculent man to go bug-hunting, but we are asked to believe that it inspired thousands of fickle Jews to slay three thousand of their brothers. One can understand the English fighting like demons at Harfleur after Henry V.'s magnificent speech; even I, who am the most law-abiding of citizens, have wanted to slay the reciter; but this speech only arouses a murderous frenzy against Moses. Then when Aaron and Miriam accuse Moses in the tabernacle of lustfulness, the audience is only informed of it by hearsay. The scene surely afforded opportunities for dramatic treatment, and we want to know how Moses managed to abash his brother and sister. It is nonsense to make two Israelites talk about it indifferently in the next scene, which is constructed only for the purpose, and it is the weakest of anti-climax to close such a scene with the remark :

> These feuds are stuff
> For politicians, not for men like us.

Just imagine "King Lear" constructed like this. Two nobodies come on the stage and tell with yawns how Lear cursed Regan and Goneril, and how his violent temper nearly choked him, concluding with Dr. Delaney's tag: "Thank Heaven, it's no business of mine." When the action does take place upon the stage, it is reminiscent of a hill-side May meeting, with an occasional Protestant riot. Joshua is the man who does and inspires all the fighting, but it is as difficult to understand his success in this play as it is in the Bible. More so, for the ever-present power of an omnipotent God is there to explain it, but here Joshua is only an uninspired rowdy without a word beyond :—

> Unsheathe your swords, ye men of Israel!
> Slay, slay, and slay these traitors from your sight!

Not even the threefold "slay" and the exclamation mark quite explain his success, for once again "thousands are slain."

The love-making is too funny for words. Take this sample :—

> JOSHUA: You speak, fair maiden, in strange metaphors,
> Enigmas dark; will you not grant some word
> Of clearer favour?
> ZILLAH (vexed with herself): 'Tis my foolishness
> To have no tongue.
> JOSHUA (a bit sarcastic): And yet that were in you
> Straight against nature and all former use.
> ZILLAH: Oh, I have had my speech, and lost it, too;
> And so again, you gone, doubtless I'll find
> Glib phrasing for a thousand follies.
> JOSHUA (aside): Nay, what an imperious, proudset girl it is!
> 'Twere best not yield too tamely, etc.
> And that's how it happened down in old Judee.

ALFRED E. RANDALL.

REVIEWS.

The Dauphines of France. By Frank Hamel. (Stanley Paul. 16s.)

To judge by the subject of this volume of historical biography, it would seem as though the vein of French history which has been so industriously worked by English writers of late is fast becoming exhausted. Mr. Hamel has reached the Dauphines, after which there only remain the Dauphins as the unpromising residue of the historical stock-pot. The kind of historico-biographical material the latter would yield may be gauged by the sample of the Dauphin, his birth, baptism, household, and all the tittle-tattle of etiquette and precedence, with which the book opens. The material provided by the Dauphine is not much better. As a rule, the latter is young, a foreigner, of uncertain ability, completely overshadowed by prominent persons, and chiefly of interest for her capacity to bring heirs to the throne. It is as regent or queen that she has an opportunity to assert herself and to become an important personage in France and in history. In short, except in one respect, the Dauphine is a very colourless subject to treat. Her one interesting side is that, as a rule, she is a tool, one of the most effective weapons in the hands of ambitious statesmen, who use her for the purpose of advancing political careers in which finesse, lying, and assassination play no inconsiderable part. This side of his fourteen heroines Mr. Hamel has, however, been careful to neglect, so that while we learn a great deal of the details of their betrothals, marryings, and so forth, we hear practically nothing of their real political significance. We hear practically nothing of the political motives of Pope Clement VII., who was working through Catherine de Medicis; neither are we shown Mary Stuart in the hands of her uncles, the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal of Lorraine, as a remarkable figure in a great religious revival; nor do we see Marie Antoinette as the instrument of the political ambitions of the Austrian Court. Even as an aperçu of the various courts of which the Dauphines were members, the book is unsatisfactory. For instance, it provides no picture of the Court of Catherine de Medicis, which rivalled Rome at its worst, and in which Mary Stuart was reared. And it is full of facts that need revising. Fenelon, not the other characters, should be quoted as the instructor of the son of Louis XIV. The book is history in storyology. The author's language is 'igh falutin', and some of the portraits are rather good.

Peacock's Memoirs of Shelley, with Shelley's Letters to Peacock. Edited by H. F. B. Brett-Smith. (Frowde. 2s. 6d. net.)

A very charming edition of Peacock's reminiscences, which will be always read with interest. It is a pity that the letters have been included, since they have been quite recently republished in the complete collection of the Shelley letters. These letters are of biographical interest, but Shelley was no letter-writer. Mr. Brett-Smith's introduction is just the kind of introduction you might have expected. Shelley's biography is "an unsavoury and debatable tract"; Matthew Arnold's "Essay" is a classic. Perhaps it is; no one would ever now think of reading it. The binding and general get-up of this book are excellent.

A Bibliography of Unemployment and the Unemployed. Prepared by F. Isabel Taylor. (King. 1s. 6d.)

The value of this book—an offspring of the School of Economics—may be gathered from the following extract from the preface by Sidney Webb: "The list here presented to the student, of nearly eight hundred books, reports, pamphlets, and articles relating to the problem of unemployment, is, of course, very far, alike in form and content, from being a proper bibliography of the subject. It is, in fact, no more than a summary guide to the principal publications of the United Kingdom, and to some of those of France, Germany, Italy, and the United States, for the most part within the last quarter of a century." From this it will be seen it is essentially a book for the reference library.

Drama.

"Dame Nature" at the Garrick.

"DAME NATURE" is certainly much better than its title. I must confess to a prejudice against "adaptations" and anglicisations in general. They seldom amount to much more than patchy attempts to propitiate the Censor. "Beethoven" and "False Gods," two of the more recent versions of French plays, were exceptions to this rule, but neither was very coherent or convincing. On the other hand, it is a little staggering to find that "Dame Nature" passed the Censorship at all—not because it is in the least an immoral play, but because its treatment of sex relations is immeasurably freer than that, say, of "Waste" or "The Breaking Point." I can hardly imagine that it would have been licensed as a simple translation from the French, but after the absurd process of mangling and distortion known as "adaptation," and the labelling of essentially Gallic characters with English names, it has evidently managed to pull through. Most subtly British of all is "Dame Nature" as a polite paraphrase of the original title "*La Femme Nue.*" Mr. Redford's heart must have been touched.

English versions of machine-made plays such as "The Thief" are hardly worth noticing. We can do very well without them, or, if necessary, manufacture them here in large quantities. But "Dame Nature" raises the whole question of anglicisation more acutely. It is an interesting play, but evidently less convincing in its English setting. After all, modern society is becoming more cosmopolitan. Ideas are an international possession, and when a Frenchman writes a play about French people it is of no use pretending that they are English. The "average Frenchman" and the "average Englishman" (if such people exist) may be very much alike, but there is an elusive Gallic spirit, very different from the English spirit, and harder for English people to understand than, say, the Teutonic spirit. I apologise for this string of platitudes, but they must be stated occasionally if the extraordinary difficulty of representing a work of art sincerely upon the stage in any language but the language in which it is written is to be understood. The heroic course would have been to translate "*La Femme Nue*" direct, by way of "filling up the cup" of the Censorship. However, heroics are not the business of managers or adaptors, and (to adopt the phraseology of a Liberal leading article) the cup is already filled to overflowing.

The theme of "Dame Nature," in spite of its enormous cast, is simple and direct. A painter has been living with his model Lolette. Sometimes they have nearly starved together. When he wins what Mr. Fenn, the adaptor of the play, calls the "Grand Medal," and sells his great picture (a portrait of Lolette from the nude) for £2,500, they marry. Lolette has been happy enough hitherto, but she wants to be a wife. They come to London and grow prosperous, and within a few months the painter is making love to a princess. The princess attracts him because she represents the artificial side of life, the delicate and discriminating love of beauty. Hedonism, in short. But Lolette is no Hedonist. She is *la femme nue*, wild woman to her finger tips. She cannot dally with a sensation, and would not if she could. Her instincts are bare and uncompromising. She wants a man, she has got a man, and she will not give him up. So she goes to the Princess's husband, an ancient aristocrat just kept alive by drugs, and proposes a deal. He is to intervene. He will get his wife, and she, Lolette, will get her husband. She has reckoned without her host, however. As an aristocrat, the Prince regards the fuss that is being made about the affair as in exceedingly bad taste, and, being also an accomplished old cynic, he points out the one-sidedness of the bargain. Lolette is left to fight her battles alone, and she certainly fights well. Confronting what the dramatic critic should, I feel sure, call "the guilty pair," she urges her claims frankly and desperately. Bertram is her man. She loves him, and nobody else has any right to take him away. There is no question of morality for her. Her morality is what she wants, and she is prepared to drag all her heavy field artillery—the Church, the law, public opinion—into action in order to get it.

Throughout this scene the Princess is quite human. She is frankly sorry for Lolette, but knows that pity cannot override love. Bertram, the weaker character, is far more swayed by pity. He is so sorry for Lolette that he offers to go back to her—the marriage to be henceforth a purely friendly relationship. Lolette rejects this indignantly, leaves him to his princess, and goes out to shoot herself. Being unaccustomed to firearms, however, she misses her heart by an inch or two, and does no great damage.

In the fourth act she is slowly recovering. The Princess comes to visit her, repentant for the trouble she has caused, but still intimate with Bertram. Finally, an old lover of Lolette's arrives, and carries her off with him to Paris in search of peace. Bertram has his princess; Lolette has found another man. This rearrangement is the happy ending.

The acting is upon the whole wonderfully good, but it does not save the play from appearing a little blurred and out of focus. Miss Ethel Irving has made Lolette alive and passionate, but she is not *la femme nue*. With fine discrimination she has avoided the purely sympathetic appeal, yet she fails to dominate. One is never afraid of her. There are too many fig-leaves.

Mr. Norman Forbes again plays the old Prince extraordinarily well in his own way, but he is not in the least like "a bit of old china," as one of the characters describes him. I feel sure that his finely contemptuous, cynical speeches would be more impressive if they were delivered rhythmically in pure English, instead of with the attempted realism of a French accent. These are some of the drawbacks of adaptation.

"Dame Nature" should certainly be seen. Up to the end of the third act the difficult situation is treated quite honestly, without shirking, if one important exception is made—the absence of children to complicate the issue. And if Lolette's old lover arrives rather conveniently at the end to carry her off, it is at least in keeping with her character that, having lost one man, she should attach herself without delay to another.

ASHLEY DUKES.

ART.

SEARCHING at South Kensington Art Museum for a work on sunset colouring, I came across a portfolio of watercolour drawings of the "Cromatics of the Sky," by John Sandford Dyason. To me these meteorological notes are chiefly of interest in recalling the hard story of an old acquaintance. Dyason was a curious blend of artist, author, and scientist. He was a man of wide and exceptional knowledge and ability, a fellow of many London learned societies. When I first met him he was destitute. His business was painting and etching, his recreation attending the meetings of scientific societies. Unfortunately, he felt it his duty to appear well dressed at these meetings, and what with having no money, and with having to collect spotted and frayed garments where he could, he usually turned up looking something between a dancing bear and a Kickapoo Indian. But, though Dyason fulfilled his duty to the extent of appearing fearfully and wonderfully arrayed, I do not believe it was for the purpose of hearing deadly dull discourses on dry-as-dust subjects so much as for that of obtaining free refreshments. More than once during a discourse at the Meteorological Society's meetings I have seen him steal away apparently to discuss a knotty point with a Fellow, but really to obtain food and drink sufficient to sustain him for many long hours to come. For a time I lost sight of Dyason, and when I met him again he was in Marylebone Workhouse, where he had once served the public as guardian of the poor. Here in the infirmary he lay dying, and here I was able to add comfort to his passing. This man with his fine brain had *devoted* friends throughout the length and breadth of England, and yet he died a pauper's death. "God's in His heaven; all's right with the world," sings Browning. "In all I see is hell," sings Milton.

Of course, it is not unusual for painters of genius or talent to die in poverty. The cause of their doing so is sometimes within and sometimes without them. It appears in the latter case in our curious predilection for mediæval art. Many of my early days were lived at Hampton Court Palace, where, young though I was, I used to wonder at the strange sight of people bent in adoration before the tapestry cartoons of Raphael. For a long time I was unable to account for this weird worship of square yards of wrecked and mutilated canvasses designed by the Umbrian master and *painted by his pupils*. In the years that I moved about from gallery to gallery making notes on all the fakes and frauds that I saw, my wonder grew at the folly of a nation that covers its valuable wall space with tenth-rate foreign pictures of doubtful origin, and leaves its own modern masterpieces to rot in the cellars of the National Gallery. And as I passed from revelation to revelation the truth dawned upon me. I found the reason why we affect a genuine admiration for pictures not worth looking at is because we are a benighted and superstitious race, unable to distinguish between a good and a bad picture, and believing that all the pictures painted by the old men are works of art, and all those painted by modern men are the opposite. We adore old mediocrities because we are told to do so, and we invest untold hundreds of thousands in them because the dealer tells us to do so. In art matters we never go beyond the dealer. He it is who forms our estimate for us, he it is who puts the duty on the old fraud. He is the barm that makes this particular kind of bread rise and keeps the other kind — the modern masterpiece—down to starvation proportions.

That the neglect of the modern painter, however, is not entirely due to the tyranny of the old master and his pupils, and of seventeenth-eighteenth century copyists, and of the fabrications of Restoration dealers, is clear to anyone whose business it is to criticise pictures produced nowadays. From the many examples seen one thing especially stands out, namely, that the majority of painters ignore even the essentials of the science of painting; and whereas the old men were careful to study the chemistry of painting and went deeply into processes, pigments, and vehicles, most modern men are just as careful to neglect it. They buy their materials ready made and throw them together anyhow, with the result that the average life of their work can never be more than a generation or two. Again, many do not seem to have any conception of ground, or paint or colour, or the slightest understanding of the first principles of picture making. And the result is a surfeit of pictures as bad in one way as the old masters and their imitations and forgeries, are in another. The fact was painfully brought home to me as I inspected the exhibits of the Camsix Club at the Goupil Gallery. Generally speaking, these pictures just escaped being interesting and excellent because sufficient care had not been bestowed on them. For the most part they were carelessly finished, ill-balanced in composition, not together. For instance, the landscapes revealed a tendency on the part of the painters to finish the middle distance and to leave the sky or foreground, or both, empty and uninteresting. One of the most difficult things in picture making is to know how to bring the sky and foreground into key, and this is one of the things most of the exhibitors either do not know or shirk. It is no wonder that intelligent people refuse to buy modern pictures, seeing that so many painters are either too incompetent or too lazy to finish them.

I suppose only a man of genius may trust to luck in matters of art and expect to come out on top. The works of Charles Conder now being exhibited at the excellent Carfax Gallery afford an illustration of how successfully accident may enter into painting. Conder does not appear to have troubled himself about science at all. His compositions are altogether amateurish, or perhaps the proper word is archaic. He has simply thrown his paint on anyhow, but has got his beautiful harmonies all the same. Throughout his works his louisquinzesque silk hangings, fan decorations and paintings, his fine sense of decoration and his true feeling for delicate colour harmony, never desert him. He sees something very intensely and tries hard to get it. Here and there one notes a failure, but such failures are worth more than many peoples' successes. Conder was undoubtedly the best quasche man we have produced, and to the person of refined taste his work is a treasure. The gem of the collection is an uncatalogued composition of landscape, trees and figures. It is an exquisite colour poem. Conder died mad.

HUNTLY CARTER.

Appreciations of "The New Age."

PROFESSOR G. D. HERRON.

I regard THE NEW AGE as fulfilling its name. It is the best —in fact, it is the only—open door of expression into which the Socialist poet or prophet may freely enter, and be sure of sympathetic and sufficient readers. We have, in all nations, able Socialist journals and reviews, devoted to the discussion of economics and of party tactics—of questions and methods of social evolution and revolution. But THE NEW AGE affords the first effectual communication between the abundant artistic and literary feeling within the Socialist movement and the desire for a wider expression from the Socialist heart on the part of the sympathetic world without. The social revolution will never come as a bald economic proposition. It must show forth its reason for being in the finest feelings of the soul of man. The great religious movements, such as the first Buddhist, and the primitive Christian communities, and the great Stoic movement culminating in Epictetus, owe their best and earliest growth to the romance which invested them, or with which they invested the spiritual man and woman. Each of these movements, for a little time, made the quest or adventure of the soul the most romantic thing in the world. They summoned to their service all that was chivalrous and fine and loyal in human feeling. Almost of necessity the Socialist movement has neglected this in its disciplinary stage. The Socialist body had to be made first before the breath of life could be breathed into it. But now the social revolution waits to have a living soul. It is this living soul of the Socialist movement that THE NEW AGE is invoking and provoking. That is why I read it and get my friends to read it.

GEORGE D. HERRON.

MR. JOSEPH FELS.

I have for a long time been a reader of your journal. I have read it with interest, and frequently with considerable profit to my mental make-up; and, while I don't agree with you on many economic questions, I still consider your paper of value in helping to keep alive the consideration of important things.

I trust THE NEW AGE will live long, and continue to flourish in influence.

JOSEPH FELS.

MR. H. G. WELLS.

THE NEW AGE is wild, THE NEW AGE is young; it is harsh and high-spirited and as persistently advanced as a jib-boom. Against nature it didn't like "Ann Veronica," but I forgive it and wish it well.

H. G. WELLS.

MR. ISRAEL ZANGWILL.

I do not agree with everything that appears in THE NEW AGE, but in days when the general Press has sunk to the nadir of pecuniary and political corruption, it is peculiarly necessary that an organ should exist in which honest thought may be honestly spoken.

ISRAEL ZANGWILL.

PROFESSOR PATRICK GEDDES.

Since you ask an opinion of THE NEW AGE, though I did not very often see it before its rise in price, I have decidedly an impression of improvement. I think the introduction of cartoons an excellent idea, and welcome these as so very markedly in advance on the conventional ones. In the writing, I esteem the frankness and outspokenness, often, too, the insight, though I think, of course, that the bitterness need not be so unrelieved as it is apt to be in most numbers, the pessimism so universal. If I were admitted to your counsels, I'd plead for a little less Nietzsche, and an infusion of science. Is the customary exclusion (or practical exclusion) of scientific columns—other than the merest popularising (useful though that is—far better than none)—so good an example in the journals you compete with that you need follow them in this? or is it simply that you lack that sort of contributor? Look, again, at the positive work you might do just now—I mean this opening year or two—as regards county development and town planning—which are no mere material questions, but raise all others, and afford many elements of the social solutions we are all looking for, in other ways than those of the political thinkers and writers—be they the Liberals, Imperialists, or financiers of the group of "Order," or those of Radicalism, Socialism, or Anarchism, allied as these are in criticism more than in progressive construction, whereas my hopes lie essentially in the latter direction. Still, the former is no doubt the more readable of the two; and in election times especially seasonable! So go on and prosper.

P. GEDDES.

MR. A. E. FLETCHER.

I congratulate you on your new departure with THE NEW AGE. You are giving it an intellectual and moral force rare in present-and journalism. Your articles, notes, and reviews are sane,

lively and authoritative, and your cartoons clever and amusing. I heartily wish you the success you so richly deserve.

A. E. FLETCHER.

MR. CLUTTON-BROCK.

I often disagree with THE NEW AGE; but I read it and enjoy it every week because those who write in it say what they think themselves, not what they imagine their readers to think. Most papers express composite opinions, which are as dull and unreal as composite photographs. THE NEW AGE is not afraid either of the public or of its editor. Therefore it deserves every encouragement.

A. CLUTTON-BROCK.

MR. ROBERT ROSS.

Under the seal of publicity I have great pleasure in telling you that it would be impossible for me to exaggerate the amount of instruction, intellectual stimulus and delight which I have derived from the columns of THE NEW AGE. I am no Socialist, but an old-fashioned Radical of the sixties—an out-of-date supporter of the House of Lords—a snob with a taste for history—a clerical who has hardly gone further than Cobbett. But every week I look forward to the vigorously expressed views of a younger generation so admirably presented in THE NEW AGE. I am attracted by its fearless exposition of opinions held by sides and heroes not mine. I admire the frankness with which it exposes the smug Liberalism of the present day and the revolting compromise with Imperialism which is the cancer of the Radical Party. I admire its exposure of that even more dangerous ulcer militarism, and its championship of oppressed causes, of oppressed nationalities, and oppressed classes of the community. I welcome THE NEW AGE as a symbol of life and activity. It is a wholesome corrective to deciduous publications like the "Spectator" and "Saturday Review." Very few of its political rivals can boast of such excellent literary criticism as can be found in its pages every week.

ROBERT ROSS.

MR. ARNOLD BENNETT.

Far be it from me to conceal the fact that I get THE NEW AGE every week, and that immediately I get it I sit down and read it. This is as high a laudation as I can give to a paper. What chiefly attracts me in THE NEW AGE is its courage, and its distinction. Occasionally I am exceedingly annoyed by its attitude—in especial its attitude towards the Liberal Party—but I feel that it is good for me to be annoyed at intervals. All people who can tell the difference between a political weekly and a bread poultice are aware that THE NEW AGE is unique in its line. The worst I can say of it is that it is read by Cabinet Ministers.

ARNOLD BENNETT.

MR. EDEN PHILLPOTTS.

THE NEW AGE is more acutely alive than any other journal that I know. A man may agree or he may differ; but he is never left cold. The spirit of your paper possesses that fine Nietzschean quality of sending all that is old and crusted, not to say rusted, down the wind. It is absolutely impossible for a great many cherished traditions much longer to withstand the fiery blast of common sense you play against them.

EDEN PHILLPOTTS.

MR. UPTON SINCLAIR.

Please to accept my congratulations upon your editorial on the Ferrer case, which seems to me a model of what editorial writing should be. Incidentally I congratulate you upon having the best-edited Socialist journal with which I am acquainted. I wish that we could boast of such a paper in America—that all the scholarship and culture in my own country were not either asleep, or else in the hire of private greed. It would be a calamity if your voice were to be hushed in the present crisis of affairs in England.

UPTON SINCLAIR.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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

"THE FAILURE OF MILITANCY."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Mrs. Jacobs begins her demonstration by drawing a conclusion. She declares: "D. Triformis completely misunderstands the spirit and even the facts of our movement." It would be better if anyone claiming to argue on this subject were to lay aside, as far as may be, the militant tactics, because these are of no use when people are trying to reason upon a thing.

The key to Mrs. Jacobs' personal attitude towards violence I take to be found in this quotation I make from her letter: "It is not the physical force of women over men that is going to win this battle. Was any militant woman ever foolish enough to believe that, or wicked enough to wish it? It is the spiritual and moral force," etc. It was the theme of my first article that women are averse from violence, that numbers of them now see that it is "wicked," that to be urged to commit violence is a sort of torture in itself to civilised minds. Mrs. Jacobs says later: "I know of instances in which the mere uttering of a few words of protest at a meeting has meant days of mental torture to a woman." That is fairly conclusive. It is partly from contemplating the mental and spiritual unbalancement of friends after they have forced themselves to acts of violence against their instinct, against their reason, and solely in loyal imitation of the example of their urgent leaders, that some of us have become convinced of the shame of proceeding by violent methods when women appear so averse from violence. The inference to be drawn from the case of a woman who, while seriously desiring the vote, is mentally tortured by the idea of having to take part in violence, has to be goaded to use violence, is that her sense of humanity and the worth she sets upon civilisation are more powerful than the individual feeling of political inferiority. To arouse her to violence she has to be told that she is serving the cause of all women. All of us, who are suffragists, believe the vote to be the symbol of our needs. We are desirous of getting the vote. But some suffragists are not desirous of getting the vote at the price of even one canon of civilisation. Such repudiate the vote to be won by violence because we have seen how a very little violence stirs up the brute in humanity, because we have witnessed, since the first suffrage blow was struck, such recrudescence of inhumanity as may take generations to re-civilise.

I am not disposed to argue against Mrs. Jacobs that the "slap" was a technical assault, and this not merely because of her unimpeachable "eye-witness, an Anti-Suffragist"—(I could quite as easily have believed one of us suffragists in this matter). It is self-evident that Mrs. Pankhurst did not wish to hurt the policeman. It is self-evident that no militant wishes to hurt anybody. That is what I am contending. The fact is, however, that these imitations of violence, these threats of violence, have aroused the real devil of violence in numbers of men, and that they are used to goad numbers of women into an attempt to be violent against their own reason.

Mrs. Jacobs opines that my mention of the fact that none of the leaders have suffered so badly as those they have goaded is "not worth answering." That is a fair sample of the W.S.P.U. style of argument. If there is any answer, why not nip the growing question in the bud before it comes to a bitter maturity? Mrs. Jacobs sweeps me off the board yet once more. She calls my reference to the W.S.P.U. condemnation of the ballot-box episode a "misrepresentation." She says "the W.S.P.U. merely considered the action inadvisable" at that time. A dark hint is given that the Union may, at some future time, find it advisable to destroy ballot-boxes. (Threats, threats, and more threats!) I admit that the paragraph might be so construed, but the emphasis is laid upon the reminder to "our readers that the policy pursued at Bermondsey by another society is not that of the W.S.P.U." That this is not meant for utter condemnation of the ballot box by the slap, we have only the utterance of Mrs. Jacobs as proof when she says: "If, they said—(she mentions here the W.S.P.U. I have not seen this statement of theirs)—the appeal which we make to the voters at bye-elections becomes, for some reason, impossible, then we may have to resort to destroying the ballot papers, but it is illogical to appeal for votes to be given to support us and to destroy those votes at one and the same time."

What are we to make of this? If it is illogical now to appeal for votes and to destroy those votes, it will always be illogical. And are we to conclude that if the electors refuse to be reasoned with, the W.S.P.U. intends to use violent methods towards the electors themselves! "Was any militant woman ever foolish enough to believe that, or wicked enough to wish it?" It is deplorable that the women's cause should be so largely controlled and represented by writers and orators who do not appear to know when they are stating a case against themselves, who, when they are challenged or remonstrated with, hide their heads that they may not see and imagine that neither does the world see. When Mrs. Jacobs informs everybody that the violence of Mrs. Pankhurst was committed upon the advice of the policeman, she risks making our cause ridiculous to the man in the street. When Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, in an encyclopædic leader, confuses the name of the God of Wine with that of the Tyrant of Syracuse, and when, further, she pronounces: "Let destiny be fulfilled!" she makes us the sport of the student and of the critic of literary taste. When Miss Elizabeth Robins sets forth such a programme of political and domestic greed as is outlined in her articles, "Why Women want the Vote," and in lieu of argument tells anecdotes, she provides a laugh for the lawyer's clerks. When "Votes for Women" says: "Of the nine Liberal seats six have been won by the Union," that organ becomes the symbol of female extravagance and hysteria for electors. Such sentences as this: "These results reveal the power of the W.S.P.U. in striking a blow at the Government," might be divertingly, if they were not so devastatingly funny.

D. TRIFORMIS.

"GOVERNMENT BY POSTER."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

I read with great interest Mr. Dyce's article, "Government by Poster," in your last week's issue. As, however, there is one point upon which he is silent, and which I am sure is of importance to the public, I shall be glad if you will allow me to draw attention to it in your paper.

Who is responsible for the wasteful muddle and want of any sane coherent plan in bill-posting? It is especially deplorable at this moment, when the people should be given every aid to a clear understanding of the interests at stake. A bad instance of this mismanagement was to be seen recently in one of the streets between Great Portland and Wimpole Streets. There is a large expanse of hoarding in an excellent position, covered entirely with the bills and posters of the Radical and Labour Party. A good many large-lettered "Vote for Moon" slips are among them, and several copies of Mr. Moon's election address. The value of this station is greatly discounted by the printed matter being placed, like successive coats of paint, one on top of the other. This is not, as in many cases, done by deliberate intention of the opposing party, but, presumably, by one and the same workman. Several times "Vote for Moon" is sprawled across that gentleman's own election address, and by a happy inspiration a different portion of each address is covered. This is considerate, as those who have time can piece out Mr. Moon's speech by walking two or three times along the length of the hoarding, only it is to be feared that few of the passers-by will be able or willing to spare the necessary time. When the funds of the opposed fighters are so unequal—a fact which must have struck must of us in looking at the poster stations—when our party has to bring brains and courage into the field to confront the power of place and wealth, when our opponents have pounds to spend where we have shillings, it is tragic that there should be this criminal waste.

I wish the words "unskilled labour" could be blotted out of the language, so that they could no longer serve as cover for a thing which has no right to exist. There is, or more often there is not, skill in stone-breaking and stone-laying. If anyone doubts it let him look at the two pieces of road-mending in the long military way which divides the two parishes of St. Peter Port, Guernsey. It is only a long and narrow lane winding through flat country, but instead of trodden or gravelled earth it is paved with the rough grey stone of the island, and it is a picture which soothes the nerves of your eyes as you look along it. Of the two places where, after no great interval of time, the road has been mended, the stones in one place have been cut and placed in harmony with the original scheme. In the other place the road has been —— mended. I was told that the one piece of work would wear as well as the other—which I take the liberty to doubt—and what more should anyone want?

But the posting of bills and poster stands is another matter, the importance of which is convincingly brought home to all readers of Mr. Dyce's article. "Mit der Dummheit Kämpfen die Götter sellest umsonst," or should it be "vergebens"? "With stupidity the Gods themselves contend in vain."

The struggle would be hopeless if that were the conclusion of the whole matter; fortunately it is not. No intelligence, however patient, can get the better of stupidity while it remains itself. Converted or defeated, it is no longer stupidity. You can only deal with it by annihilating and supplanting.

Whose stupidity is to be annihilated before our hoardings become intelligible and intelligent? My own knowledge of bill-posting is only in the theatrical way. We suffer there much after the same sort. When the Vedrenne-Barker Co. were at the Coronet my eyes were arrested—and held—by the following on a station near King's Cross:—

After the usual information as to dates and so forth—

BERNARD SHAW.
OTHER ISLANDS.
JOHN BULL.

JAC.

* * *

THE POLITICAL CRISIS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

It is surely a mistake to disparage so extravagantly as you do in last week's issue the greatness of the Liberal (and Labour) victory at the election. You speak of Mr. Asquith's "enormously decreased majority"; but what Liberal ever supposed that such an exceptional sweep as that of 1906 could be repeated. It is very unusual for any Government to come back at all after four years of office; and this time last year the Liberals would undoubtedly have been defeated. It is clearly the Budget (with the social reform programme which it symbolises) together with the Lords issue that has rallied the country to them. And their majority is really a large one; at the time of writing, it seems likely to be about 120, which is not very far short of the khaki majority of 1900, when the Tories were considered to have swept the country. If the result had been exactly the same in 1906 it would have been regarded on all hands as a great Liberal victory, and there would have been very widespread surprise at their doing so well. I cannot conceive what interest any Socialist can have in trying to make out that the Government has suffered even a partial defeat. With all their faults, they are at any rate fighting our battle against the Peers; our wisdom would surely be to back them up for all we are worth, and to demand the boldest and most uncompromising action.

On this particular issue at least the entire majority is absolutely solid. It is idle to enquire on what issue or issues the election was fought. No election can ever be confined to one issue. At any rate, the Lords v. People issue was placed before the country as plainly as any other; it was the issue on which the Government elected to stand or fall; and they have secured what is really a large majority whose views on this point are not in the smallest degree doubtful. There is not the smallest reason why they should now feel the slightest nervousness or hesitation. A revolution can only be effected by boldness and determination (and the abolition of the absolute veto of the Lords is a revolution in a small way); since when has THE NEW AGE made it its business to preach nervousness and funk to revolutionaries? If Mr. Asquith continues in office without the "guarantees" or fails to apply all the pressure in his power in order to obtain them, he will be guilty of such a monstrous betrayal as will utterly extinguish both himself and the Liberal Party.

N. E. EGERTON SWANN.

* * *

EUGENICS!!

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Surely a more important step to work for would be the subsidising of every mother who could show proof—in existing family—that she could bring forth, and bring up well, fine children sure to be a credit to the State. The issue of the unfit can never compete with the issue of the fit; it is far more important to help, or compel, those who can produce fine children, to go on doing so. How often is lack of means to do the children justice the ample reason for cessation of bearing?

FREDERICK K. EVANS.

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1903 **THE JOURNAL OF ARTHUR STIRLING.** (Doubleday, Page and Co. $1.50.) (In England, Heinemann.)

1904 **MANASSAS. A Novel of the War.** (Doubleday, Page and Co. $1.50.)

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THE NEW AGE.

NEXT WEEK.

[The following items have been arranged for and will probably appear.]

A CARTOON.

THE ORDER OF THE SERAPHIM. I
BY ALLEN UPWARD

STÉPHANE MALLARMÉ.
BY FRANCIS GRIERSON

SHAKESPEARE'S WOMEN: A FEMINIST CRITICISM.
BY ALFRED E. RANDALL

THE POLITICAL SITUATION.

A PLEA FOR THE LORDS. III.
BY ROBERT ROSS

ON TRYING AGAIN.
BY HOLBEIN BAGMAN

COUNTRY AND TOWN.
BY PROFESSOR PATRICK GEDDES

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