FEBRUARY SUPPLEMENT TO
THE NEW AGE


THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 1910.

REQUIESCANT IN PACE.
The Reform of the Constitution.

By Allen Upward.

I.

The British Constitution has just been seen at its worst. The time of the country has been wasted on a General Election which has told us nothing except that the country cannot make up its mind. It is a vote of No Confidence in any party.

The result is that we are faced with a coalition Government; not necessarily a coalition Ministry, but a Ministry retaining office and exercising power by virtue of the support of other parties outside its own following.

The question of immediate interest is the course which that Ministry will, or should, pursue, in order to justify its retention of office, and to give effect to the wishes of the country, so far as it is possible to discern them.

As usual, there have been a number of issues before the electorate; no one has any means of knowing what were the decisive factors in the selection, and therefore every one is free to interpret the result in accordance with his own prejudices and inclinations. We may be influenced by our own prejudices in the following interpretation; but at all events we are not swayed by party feeling, because we have no party ties.

One of the most striking marks of this election has been the extraordinary number of men, of different classes and political traditions, who found it extremely difficult to vote on one side or the other. They did not want their own party to win. They did not wish to see Tariff Reform adopted, nor yet to see it opposed to Socialism in their professions, and slaves to their representatives to answer for them

On the whole the country has responded in such a manner as to satisfy this class. They are probably justified in hoping that the country will now get a rest from over legislation, particularly legislation of the kind that makes sneezing out of doors a criminal offence, and forbids starving boys to earn their living until they can solve quadratic equations and play the Moonlight Symphony.

It would be too favourable a view of the intelligence of the electorate to credit it with having consciously and deliberately decided in that sense. But we are justified, perhaps, in saying that that under-soul which seems to make itself felt in great national events, and which had a hand in this occasion and hence that the Liberal Party has not received such a mandate as to warrant it in embarking on a further course of Puritan persecution.

The same thing may be repeated in terms more suited to the intelligence of the party wirepuller by remarking that the Irish Party, whose support has now become necessary to the Government, is not in favour of the liquor taxes in the Budget. It must be regarded as extremely doubtful whether those taxes have at any time commanded in the country generally the same kind and degree of approval as the land taxes undoubtedly did call forth. Speaking with reference to both these considerations, we think it fair to say that the election has given a decisive majority for democracy, but not for teetotalism. The country has voted against the House of Lords, but not in favour of the Free Church Council.

If we consider the nature and authority of the mandate, as far as it concerns the House of Lords, it will be well to dispose of the other two issues on which it was sought to take the opinion of the electorate. We need not consider Socialism for the Navy as issues; they were simply party cries. Both sides represented that party as being opposed to Socialism in their professions, and slaves to it in their practice. Both are in favour of an adequate Navy, and neither can be trusted to grapple with those insidious influences of favouritism and corruption and seniority which are the inborn vices of all State departments,—the Conservatives because they will not, and the Liberals because they dare not. After Nelson had won the battle of the Nile, he found himself in the battle of Copenhagen under the command of an elderly person named Parker, who disliked him, and whose signals he had to disobey in order to gain the victory. No one in his senses doubts that the same kind of thing will happen in our next naval war. But this is everybody's business, and therefore it is nobody's business; and we should be surprised to learn that a dozen votes were given in this election on the issue of the Navy.

The House of Lords provoked the election originally by demanding that the People's Budget should be referred to the people. The people have now sent their representatives to answer for them; and should the new House of Commons send the Budget up again, the Lords will be bound by the terms of their resolution to accept it.

But the Government is in this difficulty, that it cannot send up the Budget with a great majority which will press the Lords into a bargain, because if any opposition were to the liquor taxes. If they should do so, it will be only in exchange for pledges on the subject of Home Rule. That would be clever party politics, but it would not be sound Liberalism, or sound democracy. The House of Lords would be under a moral obligation, to prevent such unrighteous bargains from taking effect that a Second Chamber is called for, and the House of Lords is the only thing we have to discharge the functions of a Second Chamber. It will be under a very strong temptation, we cannot say positively that it will not be under a moral obligation, to reject both measures on the ground that the majority in their favour is fictitious.

Whatever be the view most likely to be taken by the Lords, we confess to a wish that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should deprive them of the temptation or excuse to repeat their stroke, by so far modifying his Budget as to secure it the sincere support of the Irish Party. It is extremely doubtful whether the Irish Party will be well advised to enter into such a bargain as suggested above. Their experience must have taught them the risk involved in trying to snatch Home Rule by tactics from a reluctant partner. If the Lords should be well advised, they would adopt the course of passing the Budget, on the ground that the country had been consulted on it, and given at all events a technical majority in its favour; and they would then throw out the Home Rule Bill, on the ground that the country had not been consulted on it, while it had twice previously exercised the rejection of similar measures. In that case the Irish Party would be either

It is true, on the other hand, that by admitting any modification of the Budget Mr. Lloyd George would admit, pro tanto, that the Lords were justified in their previous action. But can such an admission be withheld in any case?

To whatever extent we may consider the result of the election a vote in favour of the Budget, it has not been so overwhelming as to amount to a vote of censure on the House of Lords. The country has found for the plaintiff, but it has not pronounced the appeal of the defendant to be frivolous and vexatious. And that is just what it was asked to do.

From the moment the Budget was rejected, the whole effort of the Government was put into the hands of all the three parties which make up its majority, to merge the issues raised by the Budget itself, that is to say, the issues of teetotalism and socialism, in the more imposing political question of the defeat of the House of Lords. All the minorities saw their chance. All the fanatics who have failed to convert the country, and have fallen back on the plan of capturing the party
The Liberals, it is substantially a victory for the Unionists, against a Second Chamber. Technically a victory for the statesmen of every self-governed country.

Reform, amounting practically to the abolition of one third, has therefore fallen to the ground. The suggestion that a sweeping constitutional reform, amounting practically to the abolition of one third, in both Chambers, after a single election, confused majority in the House of Lords, and a majority of only 16 per cent. in the other, is not sufficient to carry such a proposal.

In countries that possess a written constitution it is usual to require a two-thirds majority to effect any change in that constitution. Where there are two Chambers, a two-thirds majority in both, is required for any such change. The majority of votes given in favour of that proposal has been 371,963, which represents roughly 5 per cent. of the total poll. Evidently such a majority is not sufficient to carry such a proposal.

In countries that possess a written constitution it is usual to require a two-thirds majority to effect any change in that constitution. Where there are two Chambers, a two-thirds majority in both, is required for any such change. In the republican United States the checks on any alteration of the constitution are more elaborate still. The suggestion that a sweeping constitutional reform, amounting practically to the abolition of one Chamber, should be carried against an overwhelming majority in that Chamber, and a majority of only 16 per cent. in the other, after a single election, confused by several other issues, would appear preposterous to the statesmen of every self-governed country.

Mr. Asquith’s proposal, the proposal to which the Liberal Party was committed by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, has therefore fallen to the ground. The country has voted against the House of Lords, but not against the Liberal Party as such. That this was a victory for the Liberals, in substantially a victory for the Unionists, with their alternative policy of Reform.

Without pressing the language of political speeches and election addresses too closely, it may be said fairly that the Unionist Party is not so far as any considerable extent committed to the principle of reform of the House of Lords, in two directions: first, by a serious attenuation of its hereditary character; and secondly, by a serious diminution of the amount of power. To make it an effective Second Chamber, instead of a mediaval Estate. The country has not pronounced directly in favour of these proposals, but they were before it as alternatives when it voted upon Mr. Asquith’s proposal. Far, that reason it seems legitimate to add a great, though indefinite, number of the votes given to the Opposition to those given to the Government, and to conclude that the country has given an overwhelming, if not an unanimous, vote for constitutional reform.

It has done so because it was invited to do so by the statesmen of both parties. For that reason the resulting mandate is a mandate addressed to statesmen on both sides. The country has called for reform, and it has entrusted the initiative in carrying out that reform to Mr. Asquith, and not to Mr. Balfour. But by the character and weight of its vote, the country has not authorised Mr. Asquith to proceed without reference to the ideas and wishes of the powerful minority represented by Mr. Balfour. In short the country has asked, as every wise man would ask, that so important a change in our constitution shall be carried out as far as possible in consultation with all parties in the State, and if possible with the good will of every party.

II.

Such being, in our opinion, the moral of the election, let us now try to look at the whole situation from the point of view of the patriotic citizen, and outline such a scheme as will be most workable, while it will not be as perfect as to be quite outside the range of practical politicians. For we must bear in mind, what politicians are too apt to forget, that politicians have not to deal, like Plato, with imaginary men in an imaginary commonwealth, but with men who have become the crowds of selfish and shortsighted partisans, aiming mostly at their own advantage, or that of their class, or that of their often false and foolish principles.

The British Empire has just reached a stage where there are half a dozen great problems all waiting to be dealt with, and when it is possible to deal with them altogether, by one supreme act of constructive statesmanship, than to take them one by one, in these piecemeal fashions which are such a serious disease of English politics. Yet there was a time when England produced magnificent statesmen, not afraid to face such mighty tasks as the reconstruction of an ancient Church, the change of a sacred dynasty, and the federative immemorial kingdoms. Those were the tasks of aristocratic days, but yet our democratic colonies to-day can still embark upon great schemes of constructive statesmanship, and it is a reproach to us that we should falter and hang back when we invite us to go forward with them.

The questions that have been proposed for treatment are (1) Imperial Federation, (2) Reform of the House of Lords, (3) Reform of the House of Commons, (4) Tariff Reform, (5) Imperial Defence. It will be seen at once that all these matters dovetail into one another, and a very slight consideration will show that they can be settled together much better than separately.

(1) Imperial Federation. The framework of federation has been roughly found already in those Imperial Conferences which have met hitherto in the Colonial Office, but which the Colonies themselves wish to be held in a more dignified fashion, under the presidency of the British Commonwealth. The Conferences have been held hitherto at irregular intervals. There is no reason why they should meet with the same regularity as Parliament.

The delegations have been chosen not nationally, but substantially by the Cabinets of the Mother Country and Colonies. There is no reason why they should not be chosen formally, either by the legislature or directly by the electorate of the country concerned. That detail might be a matter of local opinion; at home, as will be seen presently, the choice ought to be made by the electorate.

The subjects discussed by the Conferences have been Imperial Defence, which cannot be discussed profitably without some form of Imperial Preference. The latter subject forms part of Tariff Reform, and whether it should or should not be within the powers of an Imperial Senate is a question of detail, on which we need offer no opinion now. It is clear that the prime purpose of Imperial Federation must be the security of the empire, and therefore that the Departments which must be under the control of an Imperial Senate are those of Foreign Affairs, Admiralty and War. To these should the Crown Colonies many have become the most probably added.

It can hardly be necessary to repeat the arguments in favour of this step, but a new one is now added by the constitutional crisis. In a quarrel between the Houses of Lords and Commons, the only legal arbiter except the King, who cannot decide without imperilling his throne, if he decides wrongly. Such an Imperial Senate as we have sketched out might safely
be entrusted with the powers exercised in the United States by the Supreme Court. It might be asked to exercise those functions in a judicial spirit. In short it ought to take the place in our constitution, not of the House of Lords, but of the Privy Council.

The Privy Council, although apparently an anachronism whose days are numbered, is yet in every way the most important member of it. It is the body legally entrusted with the proclamation of the king. In other words, it decides who is the lawful king. It is therefore the supreme court of our constitution and a slight change in its constitution is all that is required to convert it into the Imperial Senate, or else into the Upper House of an Imperial Sovereign Legislature.

It is to be feared that any such change as this, tending to invest a popularly chosen body with the supreme power in the Empire would be distasteful to the English aristocracy. But by removing foreign affairs, the navy and army, and perhaps India, out of the sphere of domestic party politics, once and for all, it would conduce so greatly to those objects they profess at heart, that they would find it difficult to offer open opposition. Should they do so, it would be with a view to securing the representation of their own order in the Imperial Senate, and such a demand as that makes for merely one form of negotiation, or for decision by the Imperial electorate.

A more formidable opposition might have been encountered from the clerks of the Colonial Office, who, by virtue of rules of promotion invented by themselves for their own benefit, have come to occupy posts and to wield power beyond any Imperial constitution could only be entrusted to responsible Ministers. The self-governing Colonies have already demanded that a Minister should be appointed to deal with them, instead of of their own appointment and the appointment of a unknown by name to more than decimal nought one per cent. of the population, as Minister, called forth a severe protest from the Premier of Australia. Our Foreign Office would not dream of sending an Ambassador to a friendly Power, if it had reason to think the appointment would be ill received. Sooner or later even a Liberal Government will have to recognise that the wishes of our great self-governing Colonies deserve more consideration than the private interests of civil servants, however responsible. One of the most important services which Federation will render to the Empire will be the ending of the dangerous friction so constantly renewed by bureaucratic conceit and supercilious monopoly.

(2) The most important function of a Second Chamber in this country is that of deciding between the Representative Chamber and those whom it claims to represent. The prerogative of dissolution, for that is what it amounts to where no one but the Government can bring it about, has been made eminently one for an Imperial Senate. Thanks partly to its being elected on different issues, and afterwards a steadily increasing proportion of the whole membership, the Senate might be trusted to take a reasonable and fairly impartial view of controversies between our domestic parties.

We have now come to propose that the Senate be a Court of First Instance, to borrow a term from the judicial system. Our proposal would be that when, and only when, the House of Lords rejected a measure passed by the Commons, the latter should have a right of appeal to the Senate, whose decision should be final in the term of that Parliament. Yet even that suggestion must be going too much into detail, and the Liberal Party are fairly entitled to ask that the Senate should have a general veto on the legislation of the lower House.

Because it must be borne in mind that the present House of Lords has sinned quite as much by reckless assent to reactionary legislation, as by vetoing progressive legislation. One of the great defects of the Asquith, or Campbell-Bannerman, proposal was that it left this grievance untouched. It would be a just Nemesis for the authors of that proposal if they now woke up to find themselves confronted with a Unionist-Nationalist alliance for passing Home Rule and Tariff Reform. There is nothing to prevent Mr. Balfour conceding such a gas-and-water measure as Mr. Pease indicated to be in contemplation by Mr. Asquith, and at the same time adding a protective tariff. The majority for both measures in the House of Commons would be about equal to that for Gladstone's last Home Rule Bill, and the House of Lords would pass both without saying. The supposition of course is that the constitution once transferred to the Imperial Senate, any reforms in the internal constitution of the House of Lords would be so much to the good, and should no longer arouse the fears of Liberals as strengthening the reactionary Chamber.

(3) Reform of the House of Commons. The removal of four or five great departments of government from the purview of the English Parliament, especially if it is considered with which a thorough-going supporter of a protective tariff. The majority for both measures in the House of Commons would be about equal to that for Gladstone's last Home Rule Bill, and the House of Lords would pass both without saying. The supposition of course is that the constitution once transferred to the Imperial Senate, any reforms in the internal constitution of the House of Lords would be so much to the good, and should no longer arouse the fears of Liberals as strengthening the reactionary Chamber.

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(4) Home Rule. The most formidable objections to Home Rule have always been the danger of Separation, and the equal difficulties of including or excluding an Irish delegation at Westminster. Under an Imperial Constitution all these hindrances would disappear. Ireland would be directly represented in the Imperial Senate, and such a demand as that made for merely one form of negotiation, or for decision by the Imperial electorate.

(5) Tariff Reform. We have pointed out above the possibility of Tariff Reform being actually adopted by the present House of Commons, without its having the definite consent of the electorate. We shall hope that from the Premier of Australia. Our Foreign Office would not dream of sending an Ambassador to a friendly Power, if it had reason to think the appointment would be ill received. Sooner or later even a Liberal Government will have to recognise that the wishes of our great self-governing Colonies deserve more consideration than the private interests of civil servants, however responsible. One of the most important services which Federation will render to the Empire will be the ending of the dangerous friction so constantly renewed by bureaucratic conceit and supercilious monopoly.

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An Interpreter of America.

By Professor G. D. Herron.

1. There is an America that Americans do not know. It is the America of the middle rivers, of the regions embraced by the two great arms of the Ohio and the Mississippi, and spreading out below the Missouri, and more especially of the lands that lie before and beyond the Wabash—the counties of Indiana and the prairies of Illinois. The peoples beside the Wabash and the Sangamons were ever the most characteristically American. New England was never other than what its name indicates. But the peoples of the Wabash and of Illinois were as different from New England as New England is different from Provence. Here, in the bosoms of these prairies and beside these rivers, was the incipient soul of America to be found in the early years before the Civil War; and here it now sleeps. America is not a nation yet: it is only a mob—a mob of conflicting capitalist interests and their slaves. But when this mob becomes a nation, when the New People take to literature in Hawthorne, Emerson and Lowell—for New England literature was always a disguised Puritan theology, always a maskerade of the essentially immoral Puritan morality. There is vastly more kinship between the Wabash and the Arno or the Euphrates than there is between the Wabash and the Connecticut. There is as much of Provence or Persia in the prairies of Illinois as there is of New England. The spirit of the first peoples of these middle rivers was the spirit of wide spaces, of great breathing places, of unfettered human being.

But perhaps the most underlying element in their life was the sense of neighbourhood. I am not sure but what this was their chief distinction. I am sure that in this the settlements of Illinois and Indiana stood in strong contrast with the anti-social spirit of the Puritan settlements. These frontier families had their strifes, their feuds, their guerrilla wars; and not infrequently there were murders among them. But the sense of neighbourhood was never absent; while their attitude towards the guest with whom they had once broken bread was much like that of the Arab. Each family was moved by an inner necessity for ministry to the other families of the vicinage; and the vicinage in those days meant a wide circle of territory: one’s intimate neighbours might be miles away. By this sense of neighbourhood, begetting a spirit that was at once intensely individual and widely social, these communities repeated some of the characteristics of the early Christians and the first Waldensians.

This real America has passed from the memory of the living. I have said that it sleeps—and who knows when it will awaken? Nor was it ever the manifest mind of the nation. It flowed high for one great moment, bearing Lincoln upon its crest. But then it ebbed again. The Civil War left not only the youth of America under the sod: it buried the soul of the nation as well, at least for a long time. It was the Puritan, not the prairies, that formed the nation’s moral and mental habits. And the Puritan still rules the land. Into our dark-omened present, into our terrible capitalist society, into its uncleans and degenerate Puritanism, the real America has disappeared. It will not reappear, the nation will not have a soul, until the last of Puritanism is dissolved in a social humanity.

It is true we have made much of Lincoln. We have made his name a popular asset for the pedagogues, the maker of sounding rhymes, the vagrant editorial writer, the igno rant preacher, the obsene politician. But all that is because we have not understood him. America has enshrined Lincoln without in the least knowing him. Even while his name is the nation’s most familiar glory, he is as a stranger in a strange land. Into the wide habitations of this man’s soul his own generation did not enter,
and far from his thoughts are the thoughts of the generations after him. We have linked up his name with that of Washington and other patriots and national saviours; yet he had no part or lot with these. Nor had he any portion with the Puritan; Washington and the Puritan are but the antithesis of each other. The American books and the American are but the aspect of an American personality, a commonwealth that is at once economic and social and spiritual; a commonwealth that is the living synthesis of inclusive association and unhindered individual liberty.

II.

By his remarkable book, "The Valley of Shadows," Mr. Francis Grierson has made himself the interpreter of the first West—the real America; he has set forth the reality of the nation, and the soul of the American; he has demonstrated to us that the nation of the Puritan is indeed upon the land. The real America, the America of Lincoln and the middle rivers, the America of the pioneers and the prairies, is in the tomb. Or let us say that America is unborn.

But the real America will come into birth at last. We shall have a harsh and terrible capitalist culmination. We shall have the Empire we want, with Cæsars more ruthless than Rome ever knew. Our economic machine, and its inevitable political form, will prove the same. The Puritan blight is indeed upon the land. The real America, the America of Lincoln and the middle rivers, the America

The nation was one of those mysterious personal forces that bring with them the silences from which they come; that tarry a little while upon an earth that never really sees or hears them; that light up the thick darkness for the moment they are here; that remain inscrutable to the end; and that go back into the silences, without any man knowing whence they come or whither they go. They come, they go, as if earth were a momentary halting-place upon a long quitting-place. They possess the supreme national spirit, and they are always essentially unknown by the nations to which they come—either glorified by the nation's rejection or falsified by its acceptance. Yet always are they so much more than this. They are universal types as well—more infinite and unsearchable than the heavenly spaces. As one of these, Lincoln looms across the centuries, above racial changes and the shifts of nations, belonging at last to no time, to no special people. He is more akin to Aeschylus or Beethoven, to Moses or Mohammed, to Jesus or Marx, than to those whose names we commonly set beside his own. He differs from each of these, of course, as these differ one from another; but he is of the same mystery, the same power, the same glory. We may think of him as the greatest mystic who ever took to politics. He did not show what he saw nor the way in which he walked. There were many things he might have revealed; but he knew the world could not bear them. He said but little of what he really thought; and the little he said was as if by accident, flashing from the clouds that enveloped him.

And what he said, and what his life meant, has had no actual bearing upon our subsequent national development. To truly say this, one has only to glance at the American pages since 1865. They are the pages of journalism, and the pages of journalism are but the antithesis of the American personality, the American spirit, the Americanism. The Puritan blight is indeed upon the land. The real America, the America of Lincoln and the middle rivers, the America of the pioneers and the prairies, is in the tomb. Or let us say that America is unborn.

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peoples that will shape the Socialism into a great spiritual reality. I am grateful to be asked to write about them. I know the peoples of the prairies and the middle rivers; and I have closely followed them within a score of years after the time of which Mr. Grierson writes my childhood was spent. I have always dreamed that out of them would go forth the social superman, the new human type, the shepherd-nation of the world. And so far I have not, for out of those silences came the sheer beauty of the book—of them that have been so steeped from his birth in the politics of the West. It is this he proposes to do at the beginning of his book; but how did he do it so well after those intense years? Whence came the sheer beauty of the book? "I have done my best," he writes, "to depict to the prairies, for out of those silences came the voices of preacher and prophet and a host of peoples that will shape the Socialism into a great mystical, though unconsciously, mystical. I am astonished at how sympathetically and accurately Mr. Grierson has transcribed the peoples of the prairies, for out of those silences came the signs and wonders of the heavens, the coming of the abolition of the slaves, these were the themes that varied, in their conversations, with questions of corn and hogs, of horses and hunting and husbands, and of the various kinds of agriculture.

Not that they were lacking in humour; far from that. They possessed a humour that fitted their moods and their frontiers. It was a humour both grotesque and gigantomachic, the humour of huge animals. Yet it was a humour that was inconsistent with their mysticism; with the fact that their common mood was religious, and their ordinary language full of poetry.

And they were as political as they were religious. It used to be said that every baby was born a politician in Indiana. Not since the Greek cities at their best, or the inception of Moses' commonwealth, has every man been so steeped from his birth in the politics of the state.

It is all this that Mr. Grierson has so faithfully remembered and so vividly pictured. Let us listen, for example, to Elihu Gest, the Load-Bearer:

"Folks is born like we find 'em, marm. I've been nigh on thirty year wrastlin' with the sorrows of life, en I ain't seen any critter change his spots. A wolf don't look like a wild cat, en I never see a fox with a bob-tail; en folks air like varmints: God Almighty hed marked 'em with His seal. He looked round the room, and said: 'I've been nigh on thirty year wrastlin' with the sorrows of life. I've been nigh on thirty year wrastlin' with the sorrows of life, and when the risin' settled thar warn't much harm done no way. But jes' let Sister Jordan sing a hymn, en ye feel like the hull yearth was set in tune.'

Now let us look at the Load-Bearer's portrait:

Here was a man who did everything by signs, tokens, impressions; who was moved by some power hidden from the understanding of anyone else—a power which none could define, concerning which people had long since ceased to question. He came and went, influenced by signs in harmony with his own feelings and moods, by natural laws shut off from our understanding by the imperative rules of conventional religion and society. Things which were mysterious and incomprehensible to us were pointing the way across the prairies, in this direction or in that. Is it time to go forth? He would look up at the heavens, sense the state of things, and by the signs and tokens pleased and comforted. It is all this that Mr. Grierson has so faithfully remembered and so vividly pictured.
Visitors were unannounced and at almost any hour To-day a neighbour would come miles to borrow some sugar; to-morrow another would come still farther to borrow ploughs or coffee. All were received as if they were old and tried friends, attended to by the Load-Bearer even in his teeth. 

For the neighbours considered my father a rich man, judging him by the horses, sheep and cattle he owned. And when he appeared at meetings, wearing a handsome velvet waistcoat with rich blue checks—one of the waistcoats he purchased during his visit to Paris before his marriage—they thought him rich still.

Of course, anything more perfect than this, either as a piece of the interpreter's art or as an example of the finesse of word values? And put beside it the portrait of Kezia Jordan:

The sentiment she inspired in me were like those produced by the motion of clouds on a calm moonlight night, or the falling of leaves on a still, dreamy day of Indian summer. There were moments when her presence seemed to possess nothing preternatural, when she imparted to others an extraordinary and superhuman quietude. Her spirit, free for ever from the trammels and tumults of the world, took wing to the highest passions of man, resigning to them every secret and mandate of destiny; for hers was a freedom which was not attained in a single battle—the conflict was begun by her ancestors when they landed at Plymouth Rock. In the tribulations that followed the successive generations were stripped of the superfluities of life. One by one the visions fell from the sight of the youthful pioneers, to be understood, and in the last generation of all there resulted a knowledge too deep for discussion and a wisdom too great for idle misgivings.

Or take the description of Socrates, as Zack Caverly was called by the settlers:

Socrates was sitting at his cabin door, smoking, dreaming, and listening to what strange sounds might reach him from the woods. Under the cabin the hounds were sleeping, all cuddled up, and snuffling; and after a somewhat busy and exciting day, Nature seemed more intimate and satisfying than ever. Age brought with it less and less ambition, less and less desire to do useless things, to speculate about vain theories and to do useless things, to speculate about vain theories and to do useless things, to speculate about vain theories and multiplicities of meaningless things, and a desire to strip the tinsel, became acquainted with the folly of the world, and in the last generation of all there resulted a knowledge too deep for discussion and a wisdom too great for idle misgivings.

Or consider the face of Sister Higgins, on a visit to the cabin of Elihu Gest and his wife:

"Thank the Lord ye've got here at last!" she exclaimed, greeting a slender man with a long, greyish beard, who was helping out an elderly woman clad in deep black.

"It's Squaw's going," said Sister Higgins hez come along to cheer a body with that beautiful smile o' her'n. Elihu alters says it's like the grace o' God a-samin' o' the hull world when she's a-smilin' of peace and harmony. For the neighbours considered my father a rich man, judging him by the horses, sheep and cattle he owned. And when he appeared at meetings, wearing a handsome velvet waistcoat with rich blue checks—one of the waistcoats he purchased during his visit to Paris before his marriage—they thought him rich still.

Of course, anything more perfect than this, either as a piece of the interpreter's art or as an example of the finesse of word values? And put beside it the portrait of Kezia Jordan:

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the main point so fast as an artless and art, but effectually left him.

He proceeded with his sermon, now bringing the expectant people to the verge of the last period, now letting them slip back as if he were giving them a 'breathing spell.' He brace them with herculean effort. It was wonderful how this simple preacher, without education or training, managed to keep the interest of the congregation and the audience alive an hour before he pronounced the two magical words that would unlock the whole mystery of the discursive. Before him sat old Whigs, Know-nothings, and all those old profligates, the ex-outspoken friends of slave-owners in the South. But the Lost-Bearer was there, his eyes riveted on the speaker, every nerve of his body tense with the unusual and the inmost compact the actual responsibility of the sermon. If the preacher failed Elihu Gessti would assume his loads; if the same was a triumph he would share in the preacher's triumph.

As the sermon drew to a close it became evident that by some queer, old-fashion'd, the process of reasoning and persuasion that grew upon the people like a spell, they were more and more in his mental economy for the thing called vanity. As the preacher gave them no rest — "Now right here I want ye all te ask yerselves who it air to that perfect word about Lincoln in America's heart!" — the words rang in the silence. The preacher failed Elihu Gest would assume his loads, for the people were more than aware that their hearts were at boiling point for more than an hour before he pronounced the last words when the preacher put the final questions: "I can't believe in myself, who did not consult with others about what to say, who never for a moment respected the opinion of men who preached a lie. My old friend, Don Platt, in his personal impressions of Lincoln, whom he knew well and greatly esteemed, declared he did not believe the tallest man he had ever seen; but  a-a-cryin' look of calm and neutral curiosity.

And with this that perfect word about Lincoln in the chapter upon the great debate with Douglas:

And now Abraham Lincoln, the man who, in 1839, undertook to deliver the homely man was creating by his very looks. The historian who had expected Senator to fail had to marvel at the people see and feel. The Little Giant had assumed striking attitudes, played tricks with his flowing white hair, mimicked the airs of authority with his stately deportment. All those affectations, usually so effective when he addressed an audience alone, went for nothing when brought face to face with reality. Lincoln had no grandeur, no desire to produce an hour of hour; he was too much intellect and too little heart. Douglas had been arrogant and vehement. Lincoln was now logical and penetrative. He was a living picture of ostensive vanity; from every feature of Lincoln's face there radiated the calm, inherent strength that always accompanies power. He was more than a hero. He was a living illustration of the sound no fault in the same mind with the intuitive sense, that constitutes their tragedy. It was the tragedy that ran red in the souls of Atchison and Jesus, of Beethoven and Mazzini, perhaps of Shakespeare and Leonardo. But in an extraordinary degree did Lincoln combine this immense and profound mysticism with the keenest and shrewddest powers of reasoning. And to some extent he harmonised the two. He knew how to use the exact word, the exact word, never at any time distant, was now close at hand.

It is a great prose-lyric that Mr. Grierson has written. It is one of the abiding books of literature; one of the rarely vivid and truthful pictures that words have painted. The book is Greek in its purity, worthy to stand beside Thucydides and Xenophon. Mr. Grierson has told his story of the peoples of the prairies, of Lincoln and Illinois, in some such manner as Luke the beloved physician tells his story of Jesus, and of the Christian spring-time. He has set forth the turbulent and the calm, the Emersonian and the Santonian, and when he died the heart thus stilled was the bravest and wisest that ever beat out the world's political redemption.

Such as Lincoln are always strangers in a strange world; and as they and the ideas they represent, their lives become legendary, and myth and apprehension gather about their personalities. Yet these men are the justification of our hope for humanity. And so are such interpreters as Mr. Grierson, through whose book Lincoln lives as in no other written pages. It is a great prose-lyric that Mr. Grierson has written.
What will be the Coming Dispensation?*

By Judah P. Benjamin.

It took three centuries for the hand of progress to mark the high noon of Empire, which arrived with Elizabeth. Athens and Rome both followed the same route marked by the same inexorable law. We are now in the year 1910, with the clock pointing towards sunset, in the autumn of Empire, at the close of a dispensation which has lasted for six hundred years. What will happen when the sun sets on the present dispensation?

In order to see through to the issues let us begin at the beginning and get at the true meaning of Empire. An Empire is founded on pride, wrecked on vanity. Among nations pride creates a legitimate ascent, vanity a foreordained decline. The Elizabethan era was one of proud rulers, proud adventurers, and proud moralists. Vanity and sentimentality were crushed under the power of authority or held in abeyance under the weight of dignity. Work and faith are supreme in a nation that is all-powerful never talks of optimism—the eternal vanity of human desires.

At a time when the leading thinkers, the Americans, have appropriated all these illusions, coupled with the sentential melancholy of human desires. Agnosticism, optimism, sentimentality, vainglory are roots that grow out of home soil. Our first cousins, the Americans, have appropriated all these; the only things it costs nothing to appropriate. They, and they alone, have transplanted the tree of illusion, root and branch.

Glance for a moment at our philosophical writers at the close of this, England’s first dispensation, in a dying dispensation everything partakes of doubt, fatigue, groping, stumbling, illusion, and decadence. How is the leaning towards optimism to be explained amidst so much doubt and insecurity? Enigmatical paradox! The eternal vanity of human illusions, coupled with the sentential melancholy of human desires.

Examine the raisons d’être of the persistent conservation of so many illusions and lies. The real reason is to be found in the seeming security bestowed by vast territorial possessions and the false intellectuality bestowed by vast material wealth. England has been dreaming ever since the destruction of the Spanish Armada. During the Napoleonic game on the chessboard of Europe, when crowned heads were the pawns, England felt some slight emotional shocks while watching the players. Waterloo was an earthquake only felt in England as a tremor. It was hardly more than the excitement of a Derby witnessed at a great distance. Nothing was radically changed at home. But something was augmented at home. The old, chronic optimism now became swollen like the great toe during an attack of gout. The real decadence of English thought and politics began with the capture of Napoleon. The Titan dead, nothing remained to menace the nation. Comfort now slipped into the lap of luxury, ease into the lap of indolence, opulence changed from arrogant optimism, and the nation to a species of hypocrisy which passed the bounds of foreign credibility.

Soft-headed optimists called Micawbers made their appearance on the one hand and predatory Shylocks on the other. At this time the German States were little more than coloured blots on the map situated between France and Russia. The map itself was looking down from the gallery. British science here gave the lie to British optimism. Agnosticism is the bivouac of tired minds in a philosophical wilderness. How came it that Huxley, England’s greatest champion in the scientific arena, bequeathed to English people nothing better than this negation? I give this answer: In a dying dispensation everything partakes of doubt, fatigue, groping, stumbling, illusion, and decadence. How is the leaning towards optimism to be explained amidst so much doubt and insecurity? Enigmatical paradox! The eternal vanity of human illusions, coupled with the sentential melancholy of human desires.

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of Continental Europe have accepted a masculine philosophy of life and morality we are steeped in the old mode of feminine ethics—the sentimental rules as with an iron hand, the yoke of the negative drags us to the gutter of intellectual pauperism. For this reason our so-called philosophers have no voice in the counsels of Continental thinkers. And, after all, Darwin did no more than discover a path into a new country; foreign philosophers and scientists have found the treasures. The spirit of our churches and the general tone of our culture have turned us into a psychological paradox: we flirt with science, dabble in art, and use religion as a fashionable function. Our philosophy goes hand-in-hand with a decadent aristocracy, which in turn reflects the spirit of our churches and the general tone of our pulpit polities. No one is able to see or bold enough to declare that we are now in the position of Poland before the partition, when internal dissensions, paltry politics, effeminate strife, sickening and bungling brought on the downfall. Authority has gone from its head, power from its hands, influence from its masters. Dissenters, Bishops apologise before throwing their milk-sop maxims to their unwilling congregations. No one in the Church dares hint at the downfall of what Margaret Fuller called a mountain of shams; the poor and shallow, when once attached and crooked and the clergy be without the faults, the sorrows, and the vices of the poor? Without the slums there would be nothing to contrast with Imperial splendour, without our rags matching to contrast with the Royal ermine.

A great gulf separates us from Continental thought. It is forty years since we ceased to bear any relationship with the German people. To-day we stand separated by philosophy, separated by militarism, separated by political ambition, separated by the tendency of social aims and material watch-words. While we have broken with Germany we are estranged from the scientific methods of the Americans. The closing dispensation finds us between two stools. We are not clever enough to rise to the level of the American financier, and not morally courageous enough to doff the sentimental habit for something akin to the helmet of Teutonic pride and progressive dominion. At a time when the Hapsburg Empire is wavering about the price of the most unwholesome beer in the world, and in a ferment over the question of taxing a score of superfluous dukes and a few hundred wealthy lords and landowners. The whole question of democracy is dirtier such as it would be, without the Church, without the clergy be without the faults, the sorrows, and the vices of the poor? Without the slums there would be nothing to contrast with Imperial splendour, without our rags matching to contrast with the Royal ermine.

Germany entered upon a new dispensation in 1866, when she defeated Austria. The Imperial seal of blood and iron was affixed to this epoch on the day Sedan capitulated in 1870. Ten years later a philosopher arose who imposed a new scale of moral values to the ignorant mandarins that lie on the table, and for all individuals who will be second, third, and fourth in a new spiritual element will spring forth, which in turn will control and dominate the material. The new dispensation will end in a great intellectual and spiritual renaissance.
MODERN EDUCATION.