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THE CAMEL AND THE NEEDLE'S EYE.

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

Now that they are out of the wood the Irish and Labour parties are loudly whistling their independence. This, no doubt, is to increase the price of their support. But we must warn them and all minorities that the risks of the balancing power and the casting vote are even greater than those of the powers to be balanced. True in the fable the mouse that gnawed the net of the captured lion had its life spared afterwards; but political lions are not so generous. For driving anything in the nature of a hard bargain now both the Irish and the Labour parties will be made to pay heavily later. By one means if not by another all that they receive will be rendered hollow.

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We have not the least desire that it should prove otherwise. Home Rule and the Right to Work Bill are measures which in so far as they represent things and not names have our cordial support. But there is no use in disguising the fact that if they were passed in consequence of an electoral and party trick they would be passed without the general consent of the nation. And this, as we say, would be fatal to their success in practice. Why is it that so many Acts of Parliament have proved a dead letter? In many cases they were carried by an enthusiastic minority, who believed that the Thames would be set on fire by them. But nothing happened. And why? Because a Parliamentary majority does not always, or even often, command and represent the general consent, without which the most virtuous Act ever passed must remain sterile. This has been the case very largely with the Small Holdings Act carried by a Parliamentary majority, but without the intellectual assent of its opponents. Everywhere in the country a strange blight of inoperativeness has fallen upon it. And the same fate awaits both Home Rule and the Right to Work Bill if they should become Acts in consequence of the accidental power of minorities.

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We urge this view at this moment because there are signs that a movement towards legislation by general consent is in the air. It is unfortunate perhaps that the initiation should come from the Unionists, who have lost in the electoral battle; but it is none the less desirable on that account. The truth is that the temporary deadlock of the party system has revealed the inherent defect of the system itself; the defect, namely, that each party is perpetually engaged in legislating contrary to or aside from the general good. Thus we see the Liberal Party quite prepared to force upon an unwilling, or at least a not consenting, country measures like Home Rule, Welsh Disestablishment, Teetotalism, and Nonconformist Education. The Unionists, on the other hand, are quite ready in the temper of their rank and file to force upon the country a measure like Tariff Reform, which plainly has the consent of no more than half the country; while the Irish and Labour parties are similarly bent on working democratic mischief. It happens, however, that in the present lull these partisan defects become clearly visible; and there are voices from several sides urging all parties to drop for a while their partisanship and to co-operate for the general welfare.

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It is to be hoped that Mr. Asquith will take a broader view of the situation than is taken by his Liberal organs. They have, as Mr. Asquith knows to his cost, been consistently wrong in their advice to his party from the very day on which the Lords took their novel step. The "Nation" and the "Daily News," the "Star" and the "Daily Chronicle" have all said the same thing, and have all been wrong. And it is certain that they are wrong still. Replying to the suggestion that the occasion demands a compromise, the "Nation" and the "Star" in particular are loud in their repudiation. Having received judgment electorally in their favour they propose to insist upon their pound of flesh. But so, we hope, will not Mr. Asquith. If he should allow himself to be guided once more by the opinions that have already betrayed him he will deserve the fate awaiting a Ministry intent on usurping an authority which the best sense of the country denies to it. We repeat that the mandate revealed by the election is a mandate for compromise. As plainly as figures can prove it, the country has declared for a programme of legislation acceptable on the whole to both parties. Should the slightly dominant party abuse its trust and utilise its power of initiating legislation to force legislation down the throats of the slightly inferior party, such a reaction will be produced in the country as will sweep the Liberals into oblivion at the next General Election.

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What precisely should be the policy of Mr. Asquith's Government in the opening Session of the new Parliament? It is a difficult question, yet the following notes, we think, afford a complete answer. The keynote of the new Liberal Government should be Legislation by Consent; and this would provide in our opinion an amount of useful legislation such as would ensure the party the respect as well as the gratitude of the whole country. In the first place, we must frankly admit that the problem of the Lords must be allowed to stand in temporary abeyance. It is clear that the Lords must be reformed in one way or another; and it is clear that there is a universal feeling that this must be done sooner or later. What is not clear is the method by which the reform is to be carried out. All parties without exception are agreed that the problem must be faced; all parties without exception are in the dark as to the solution. We do not want a mushroom constitution, a constitution one of whose parts has been transformed hastily, passionately, and without consideration. On the contrary, the work must be done thoroughly and slowly if it is to be done to last. Whatever else may be uncertain, it is certain that the opening

weeks of a new Government and of a comparatively weak Government are not the occasion for a profound change in the nature of the constitution. The occasion will come later.

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On the other hand, there is no reason why the re-affirmation of the sole competence of the Commons in the matter of finance should not be accepted by both parties as obligatory. The election has not given the Commons a mandate for an immediate abolition of the House of Lords, but it has, we think, given them a mandate to restore the status quo in the matter of Supply. The Unionists would be well advised in permitting this resolution to be carried, and the Lords would be well advised in at least abstaining from opposing it. More drastic innovations will need to be made in the Lords before our constitution has been adapted to the new conditions; and the loss of what has been for three hundred years a merely nominal right would neither be fatal to the Lords nor detrimental to the future of that body. On the whole, the first business of the new Government should be to reintroduce the Budget with a prefatory note to the effect that henceforward the Budget must be allowed to pass without either amendment or rejection.

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Should this difficulty once be surmounted by the goodwill and commonsense of the Unionists co-operating with the Liberals there would be no need that hostages should be given to the Welsh or the Irish or the Labour Party or to the Nonconformists. Any of the measures associated with either of these parties must be regarded as out of the question during the early days of the present Parliament. As a matter of plain fact, not one of the four chief Bills of these four groups is calculated to be of the smallest economic value to a single soul. Welsh Disestablishment has only a remote concern with anything of general interest; Home Rule in its partisan form is unintelligible in Ireland as well as in England; the Right to Work Bill is the affirmation of a principle which in practice is already being put into operation in Labour Exchanges, Unemployment Insurance, Old Age Pensions, and other such measures. As for education, the country needs a long rest from political strife and a period of reform, chiefly from within, in the matter of education itself; any further administrative change is for the present unnecessary. Thus there is nothing vital to the nation in the demands of any of the four groups which profess to hold the Liberal Government in the hollow of their hands. And it will be as foolish as it is unpatriotic for the Unionists to force the Government to rely upon these groups when the alternative is so unmistakeably simple and beneficial.

* * *

We assume, then, that the first measure to be brought in by the new Government is the Budget, with its preambulatory affirmation of the right of the Commons to control Finance; and we assume, further, that the Bill and its preamble are carried in the Commons by the consent of both parties. Its fate in the Lords after that will be not uncertain. With the King, the country, and the best elements of both parties behind it, the Lords will pass it without further demur. There will remain outstanding the larger problem of the Lords' veto on general legislation; and this, as we say, need not be discussed at this moment. After all, why on earth does a Liberal Government insist upon introducing Bills which it knows the Lords will throw out? If they were invariably Bills of a demonstrably beneficial character, the party would be justified, no doubt. But except from a narrow view the vast majority of the Liberal Bills thrown out by the Lords have been concerned with pedantic and wire-drawn legislation of concrete utility to nobody. There is not the least reason why Bills of a sound and practical character should not be introduced and passed by the Lords. And as a matter of fact if Unionist promises count for anything at all, the way is clear for the Government to follow up its Budget with a series of measures to which the Unionists have committed themselves no less explicitly than the Liberals.

* * *

It is agreed, for example, that what is called Social legislation is equally the desire of both parties. The most far-seeing Tariff Reformers, such as the "Morning Post," have indeed from the outset sought to associate Tariff Reform with Social Reform. In the "Observer" and the "National Review" Mr. Garvin and Mr. Maxse, as extreme Tariff Reformers as the world knows, are never tired of expatiating on the need for Social Reform. We are fortunately not under the partisan necessity of regarding these writers as liars or as traitors or as, in fact, anything but sincere if muddleheaded politicians. We take it that in face of their demands it would not be difficult to secure their support for measures of Social Reform that had not been tarred and marred by the importation of non-essential matters. Is it impossible that a programme of Social Reform should be devised by the Government such as to ensure the support of both parties? Assuredly not; and we proceed to enumerate a few items on which by profession both parties are agreed. There is the proposed Unemployment Insurance Bill to be brought in by the Minister of the Board of Trade. Who has heard a single word against the principle of this Bill? Yet in effect it is a recognition of the first principle of the Labour Party's Right to Work Bill. The provision by the State of machinery and money for the purpose of insuring workmen against spells of unemployment is in itself public acceptance of public responsibility in the matter. Though both parties reject the letter of the Labour Party's demands, both parties accept the intention; and the Bill to be introduced by the President of the Board of Trade may safely be prophesied an early passage through the Lords as well as through the Commons.

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Then there is the question of the removal of the pauper disqualification from the Old Age Pensions Act. On this subject, again, all parties are agreed. Not Mr. Balfour only but Lord Lansdowne and most of the Unionist leaders have, as the Buddhists say, "made merit" by unqualified pledges to this effect. It would be a crying shame if some idiot piece of Liberal pedantry were to delay for another decade a beneficent amendment of the best Act ever passed by any Government in England. For so we regard the Old Age Pensions Act. That Act, and that alone, put money and not mere words into the pockets of the disinherited poor; and the extension of such an Act is the high road of social reform. For ourselves we would gladly defer the reform of the Lords, Home Rule, Welsh Disestablishment, and the rest of the constitutional tinkering to the Greek kalends if we could ensure in their absence the security of life and comfort of the old people. With such an opportunity as the consent of the Unionists presents, the new Government will deserve to be hounded from power if it imperils the extension of Old Age Pensions by wilful constitutional scholasticism.

* * *

But Unemployment Insurance and Old Age Pensions are only the outworks of a still larger problem on the main means of solution of which both parties are likewise agreed. Everybody admits that the Poor Law system of this country needs overhauling. Two Reports of a Commission that sat over a period of three years have this in common: that a drastic revolution in Poor Law administration is essential to the renaissance of England. We are not concerned for the moment with the respective merits of the constructive proposals of the Majority and Minority Reports. What is more to the purpose is to note that the points of agreement between them are infinitely greater and more important than the points of difference. Even if we were to accept the least common denominator of both Reports and legislate on that, the result would be a revolution in the Poor Law. On this ground, again, there is no suggestion of party strife. Among the

members of the Committee for the Break-up of the Poor Law are to be found politicians of every shade of party. Several members of the new Cabinet are in entire sympathy with the main proposals; so, too, are several members of the last and next Unionist Cabinet. No reason whatever exists for making the reconstruction of the Poor Law a party question in more than a technical sense. In essence both sides are in unison on the subject; and a Government that means business, and not mere Radical bounce, will ensure that the whole question is discussed and settled with as little delay as possible.

* * *

All these measures that we have named as in the main non-contentious have the additional merit of being sound social reform. And it is social reform that we need before anything else. But they will have to be paid for with money, and the money must be raised by a Budget. Here we come to what appears at first sight to be an insuperable obstacle to any legislation by agreement among the parties. But is it really so? Mr. Balfour, it may be remembered, speaking for his party, declared that of the new taxes proposed by the recent Budget he had no objection to the super-tax, to a graduated income-tax, or even to some form of a land tax. Lord Hugh Cecil, whose intellectual influence is in some ways as great as Mr. Balfour's, went even further, and declared that the fault of the Budget was that rich men were not taxed enough. Are we honestly to suppose that the wealthy people of England are too mean to pay in proportion to their possessions? Would they fail to recognise the justice of the rich paying more than the poor if the matter were put to them fairly and without the suspicion of malice, revenge, or pedantry? We do not believe it. We believe, on the contrary, that it would be possible to devise a Budget, and to carry it by practically universal consent, which, nevertheless, was infinitely more favourable to the poor than the last Budget was. The fatal defects of Mr. Lloyd George's Budget were not the super-tax, a Socialist proposal; nor the graduation and differentiation of the income-tax, another Socialist proposal; nor even the land taxes, ill-devised as they were. Its fatal defects were, first, its attack on Puritanic grounds on the poor man's beer; secondly, the additional tax it levied on the poor man's tobacco; thirdly, its maintenance of the taxes on tea, dried fruits, coffee, and the rest of the breakfast-table articles; and, fourthly, the more than suspicion of its malignancy in regard to landed property. Add to these the comparative favouritism with which it treated all other forms of property than land and licences, and its unpopularity is amply accounted for.

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Now, there is not the least reason why the next Budget should contain any of these defects. If Mr. Lloyd George remains Chancellor, and can profit both by experience and by the advice of his political opponents, he will be able to introduce a Budget this year every clause of which will in advance have been guaranteed a passage through both Houses of Parliament. The substitution of a steeply graduated income tax for the cumbersome, onerous, and invidious land taxes will be all to the good. More immediately profitable, it will be also more immediately popular. Further, it is financially an unassailable method of taxation. The super-tax should be maintained and strengthened. All taxes on food should be abolished, and the taxes on beer, tobacco, and other popular necessities reduced. The net effect of such a Budget would be to raise ample funds for the social reform programme, as well as to ensure the Government the support not only of the country, but of the best minds in the Unionist Party.

* * *

There is another question on which likewise a common understanding between both sides of the House may easily be found: the question of the Navy. We may think it foolish to spend additional millions on building Dreadnoughts, and we may, as a matter of private propaganda, do our best to make it unnecessary; but the fact remains that any proposal to reduce the supremacy of the Fleet spells disaster to the party that raises it. And why that party should be the Liberal Party there is nothing to explain. On the supposition that the Liberal Party is the party of social reform (a contention, by the way, that cannot seriously be maintained), it is almost criminal of its leaders to bring discredit on their social programme by associating with it proposals so unpopular as the diminution of expenditure on the Navy. Nothing is more clear from the election than that the so-called Little Englanders represent only a small section of the British people. In any emergency their strength, even if one could rely on it, is too small to be of much value; and their sentimentality is a real danger to the party whose other causes they only feebly espouse. The long and the short of it is that the so-called Little Englanders—by which we mean the people who oppose expenditure on national defence—are penurious all round. They are almost always the people who oppose expenditure in every form, including that on social reform. We, at any rate, have no more sympathy with them than the rest of our countrymen. And if the Navy requires another fifty millions to make assurance doubly sure, there is no reason to deny the demand so long as the money is drawn from the right sources, is spent efficiently, and does not diminish expenditure on social reform. A good, thumping provision for an increased Navy would do a great deal to sweeten a drastic Budget for the rich as well as strengthen the appeal of the party which professes to be advancing the cause of the poor. On this subject Mr. Asquith may well find common ground with Mr. Balfour.

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To all this it will be said that agreements of this kind are traitorous. The "Star" and the "Daily News," the "Nation" and the "Daily Chronicle" will rise in their wrath to denounce a Liberal Premier who dares openly to avow that he will legislate only with the consent of the people of this country. But the puny wrath of a handful of theory-bitten journalists will not weigh in the balance against the desires of a people. We *know* from the election that there is no mandate to either party to legislate without reference to the other. We *know* from the election that every articulated fad of both parties has been rejected by the country at large. We *know* that Tariff Reform has not conquered, and that Conscription is unpopular. But also we *know* that a little Navy, the abolition of the Lords, licensing taxation, Welsh Disestablishment, Home Rule, and Nonconformist education are out of the minds of the people. If a Liberal Government lays the smallest pretensions to popularity and to democracy it will not only oppose the Protection and Conscription of its political opponents, but also the undesired measures emanating from its own political friends. There is not one of the measures we have named for which a mandate can be found in the electoral returns; and while that is the case, no Liberal Premier would be justified in attempting to force them through. If it should be said that Mr. Asquith has given pledges, we would reply that his pledges were either contingent on the approval of the country or they were totally immoral. No Premier has any right to pledge himself against the wishes of his people; or, having pledged himself, to remain obstinate and insist upon them. Doubtless his fanatical partisans will accuse him of breach of faith with his party, but that is better than that he should be open to the charge of breach of faith with the country. It is time that Mr. Asquith should shake himself free of his bawling parasites. They have already wrought his party considerable mischief without bettering the condition of England by so much as a hair. The occasion is ripe for agreement. Let all partisans be dumb or ignored.

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NEXT WEEK.—"The Order of the Seraphim—II," by Allen Upward. "The New Preacher," by Francis Grierson. "A Third Chamber," by Robert Ross.

Foreign Affairs.

THE serious political situation in Germany has been aggravated by the Oldenburg incident in the Reichstag. Herr von Oldenburg, a respected Conservative member, suggested that the German Emperor should be able to say to any lieutenant: "Take ten men and shut the Reichstag." Herr Ledeboer, a Social-Democrat, protested against this remark, which had been received with loud applause from the Conservative benches. Prince Hohenlohe-Langenburg, the Vice-President, having allowed Herr von Oldenburg's statement to pass unchallenged, rebuked the Social-Democratic member for his interruptions. Herr Ledeboer moved a resolution of censure on the Vice-President, which was defeated. This motion was a mistake in tactics, as the Vice-President previously stated that he considered Herr von Oldenburg was jesting. Otherwise he would have taken stern measures to uphold the dignity of the Reichstag. To concentrate attention upon the conduct of the Vice-Chairman instead of on the offending member was a blunder. The incident is regarded as an indication of the lengths to which the German ruling oligarchy might be prepared to go in face of the "menace of social democracy."

* * *

Matters will not be improved by the introduction of the promised reform of the Prussian franchise system. Income is the chief franchise qualification in Prussia, and the new Reform Bill does little to remove this class anomaly. The practical disfranchisement of the working and lower classes will be maintained under these new proposals. Open voting is to continue. The German Conservatives persist in their objection to the secret ballot. The institution of the secret ballot is resisted on the "moral" ground that it would be a slur upon German national character to establish the method of secret voting! The Socialist leaders in Prussia some weeks ago warned the Government that no half-measure of reform could be peacefully accepted by them. This intimation has been interpreted as a threat of civil war. How far the powerful vote of Social-Democracy in Prussia can be relied upon to support a resort to violence has never been tested. The Social-Democrats have just gained a fine victory in a by-election at the reactionary stronghold of Eisenach. Grave events are impending in Germany. The relative position of the various parties makes it exceedingly improbable that there can be any compromise, as the Social-Democrats are determined upon securing a fair representation, which would put them in power at the next election.

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The Cretan crisis has been postponed for a period. All the dangerous elements remain, but the spark necessary to cause the explosion has not been applied. There are two factors which have to be reckoned with: (1) The belief of the Young Turkish Party that the Austro-Bulgarian insult to the prestige of Turkey must be avenged upon some minor country. Greece is the one nation against whom a military campaign would be most successful and most economical. (2) The impetuosity of the Cretans, who refuse to believe that the Great Powers would permit Turkey to overwhelm Greece and Crete. The great hope of a peaceful settlement lies in the interests of the Great Powers, none of whom desire a conflict in the Near East. A wild and whirling article in the "Outlook" urges the despatch of a strong British fleet to the Dardanelles to teach the Young Turks to respect the power of England! This ridiculous proposal is followed by the insulting suggestion that a great corps of British skilled administrators should be sent to take over the Turkish Government, as in the case of Egypt! Nothing more calculated to undermine Turkish confidence in Britain's good faith could be conceived than this stupid vilification of the Young Turks, which will be circulated in Turkey by England's enemies as an important pronouncement of "a semi-official English journal"!

Sir Herbert Risley, an Indian bureaucrat whose special hatred of freedom has surprised even Anglo-Indian officials, was in his happiest mood when introducing into the Indian Legislative Council a new Press law. Sir Herbert Risley and his co-bureaucrats have deprived the Indian of personal freedom, of liberty of thought and freedom of speech. Public speaking in India involving any criticism of the Government is carried on under peril of deportation. Public speaking in praise of the Government is a most remunerative occupation. Still, there remained one piece of liberty which rankled in the Risley mind. Notwithstanding prosecution after prosecution, editors ventured to speak out in the Indian Press. The misguided Risley has hatched a bill which will enable local governments, without undertaking prosecutions, to suppress papers which are mischievous, though not technically seditious. Sir Herbert related to the Council the methods of the Austrian Government in suppressing newspapers for the purpose of proving that he had a precedent for his tyranny. Fancy an Englishman appealing to Austria for justification! Under this new law no new journal can be founded unless the proprietors deposit a security for good behaviour varying between 500 and 5,000 rupees. In order to keep out English criticism the Customs and postal officials have been empowered to detain and examine suspected matter.

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The objection to this kind of legislation is twofold. It is tyrannic. It is useless and pernicious. Tyranny only accentuates unrest and discontent. An examination of Sir Herbert Risley's figures will prove the soundness of this contention. He said that in 37 years preceding 1907 16 Press prosecutions had been instituted. Repressive measures against liberty have been actively pursued from 1906 up till now. Sir Herbert stated that there had been 47 prosecutions since 1907, when the policy of deporting men without trial began. The effect of legislation such as this Press Bill is to drive all reformers into the secret agitation of the Anarchists. The Government should permit the fullest criticism, but should subsidise native papers itself, and compete with the vernacular Press. If the Government is as beneficent as Englishmen believe it to be, an ably conducted Government native Press would soon squeeze out the worst specimens of native journalism. If the Liberal Government had the powers granted by this bill, every Tory paper could have been seized during the election on account of "their mischievous character."

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Two recent instances of the tyranny now rampant in India will show how the Indian people are being provoked. The following telegram is quoted from the "Times" of January 31: "A Madrassi youth, who was arrested yesterday in the French steamer 'Sydney,' having in his possession a Browning pistol, formulæ for making bombs, and seditious pamphlets, was sentenced, after a long hearing in camera to-day, to two and a half years' imprisonment for importing arms without a licence." Such a sentence must incite this Madrassi's relatives to join the advocates of terrorism. The whole incident was an abominable misuse of the powers conferred by the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908. The other case is even more astonishing. The trial is proceeding of a man named Lal Chund Fallak on the charge of having published the translation of a pamphlet called "British Rule in India." This pamphlet was the reprint of an article contributed by Mr. W. J. Bryan to the "New York Sun," and has been circulated in England for some years. The Indian people are floundering in the morass of sedition and repression. Lord Morley failed to hold the bureaucracy in check at the critical moment. Philosophic Radicalism is not the best training for merciful and firm government. Lord Morley has mistaken a pedantic insistence on the maintenance of order for good government. To theorise about liberty is a dangerous practice when the natural inclinations of the theoriser are towards pedantic tyranny. This is the calamity which has overtaken India.

"STANHOPE OF CHESTER."

The New Party.

There is hardly any more melancholy reading than the prophetical literature inspired by Rousseau. From his time down to the present a long series of brilliant writers of whom we need only mention Schiller and Shelley, Mazzini and Hugo, Tolstoy and Wells, have been engaged in drawing Man in their own image, and foretelling that universal suffrage would bring about the millennium. One or two more logical spirits, like Marat and Mr. Keir Hardie, have seen that it would be necessary first to exterminate every one of superior intelligence, and the result of their reflections has been the creation of the so-called Labour Party.

The difference between the Labour Party, as we have it in England, and a true Socialist or democratic party, as conceived by the founders of modern democracy, is practically the same as the difference between the old gang of Tite Barnacles and Stiltstalkings and a true aristocracy.

In the eyes of Socialists government is, or ought to be, a science, a view in which every wise man will agree with them. Indeed, it is pretty evident that no government that is not conducted on scientific principles has much chance of continuing in these days, a moral which may be commended equally to all political parties. It is the acceptance of this fact which has made Germany what it is; and it may be said without much fear of contradiction that if England ever does go down before Germany it will be due to the refusal of the English people to perceive that government is a science.

Now the English party most steadfastly opposed to that view in our own day is the Labour Party. Both Liberals and Unionists now-a-days pretend to believe in Napoleon's principle of the career open to talents, or in other words, the job to the man who can do it best. It may be no more than a pretence; the Tite Barnacles may have been found clustering with suspicious thickness round the last Cabinet of Mr. Balfour, and Nonconformist Stiltstalkings may possibly be detected by a microscope in the ranks of the present Ministry. But the homage which vice pays to virtue is paid by both parties to the principle of efficiency.

It is not paid by the Labour Party. The whole tradition of Trades Unionism is dead against it. Now Trades Unionism, regarded as a defensive principle adopted by the employed classes as a means of protection against heartless and hellish exploitation by wicked Christian capitalists, deserves everything that can be said in its favour. The British workman has every right to feel pride in it, and in what it has done for him. But when the system is carried into public affairs the case is entirely altered. The best tactics for defence are the worst tactics for attack.

Nothing could be more pitiful than the confession of jealousy made by the system of continually changing the chairman of the Labour Party, in order to disguise the leadership of Mr. Hardie. But now suppose that the Labour Party were called upon to take office. On the same system, we should have the Premiership changing hands every few months. The Secretary for Foreign Affairs would be removed and renewed in the same bewildering fashion. The Lord Chancellorship would have to be abolished, as of course no lawyer would be tolerated in a Labour Ministry. But generally speaking the different Government Departments would resemble those scenes on the stage in which one set of people keep coming in at one door while another set go out at the other.

The only result, of course, would be to put the whole power and control into the hands of the permanent officials, representing that very class which it is the Labour Party's professed aim to exterminate. And that is pretty much what has happened already. A few years ago, just after a Labour Government had been allowed to hold office for a few months in one of the Colonies, the writer made the acquaintance of one of the chief permanent officials of the Colony. We asked him how the Labour Ministers got on, and he smiled. "At first they thought they were going to do great things," he told me, "but as soon as they came face to face with the actual work of administration, they were as helpless as children. The result was that they drew the salaries, and we did the work."

Now contrast that with what happened when Mr. John Burns took command of the Local Government Board. Before he had been at his post six months it was the common gossip all over London that he was the one Minister who was master of his Department. And a few months ago, before the Lords had decided to give the Liberal Party a renewed lease of office, and there appeared to be some chance of the Unionists coming back, many members of that Party were so impressed by Mr. Burns' services that they were actually talking of inviting him to remain at the Local Government Board under a Unionist administration, a compliment without precedent in the history of English politics.

The triumph of Mr. Burns is a Labour triumph. It is a proof that a man born and brought up in the working class, who has remained in its ranks, and identified himself with its interests, is the equal and superior of the best products of Eton and Oxford. The result is not merely a benefit to Labour, in the narrow sense of the word, it is a benefit to the nation and to the empire and to humanity. It is one more proof that brains and character are not hereditary, and that class distinctions are false and mischievous.

But it is not a triumph for the Trades Unionist principle, on which Mr. Hardie's Party appears to rest. So far as can be gathered from the public utterances, and still more from the public conduct, of that Party, it regards government, not as a science, but as a perquisite. It agrees with the Tite Barnacles and Stiltstalkings in considering public posts, not as opportunities for public service, but simply as highly-paid jobs to be secured by one class or set of men to the exclusion of all others. Its policy is a policy of loaves and fishes.

Up to the present the Labour Party has been the spoilt child of politics. In the House of Commons its members have been listened to with a deference out of proportion to their debating and voting strength. They have been dealt with by the press with equal tenderness. The result has been naturally that they are unaccustomed to criticism, and are not very tolerant of it. But that state of things cannot last. In exact proportion as the Labour Party grows strong, it must expect to be tried by the same standards as other parties. A Labour Ministry will have to learn to tolerate an Opposition.

In the meantime, if Mr. Hardie cannot be persuaded to modify his attitude, it must become a very serious question for idealist politicians, whether calling themselves Socialists or Individualists, whether they can any longer consider the Labour Party as their party, or as any real improvement on any other party.

In a broad sense it may be said that all thoughtful men have the same politics. All alike aim to do good in their day and generation, and the only questions that divide them are questions of tactics and expediency. One man may feel that he can render most useful service by joining the Conservative Party, and educating it, as was done by Disraeli. Another may believe in the gradual transformation of Liberalism into Socialism. And others again may hope to convert the Labour Party into an instrument of freedom and progress.

Yet there are signs that some of those who have cherished such hopes in the past are beginning to despair. The Unionists appear to be falling into the clutch of an unscrupulous capitalism, and to be cherishing schemes of an oligarchic revolution. The Liberals seem to be unable to shake themselves free of the Puritan tradition. And the Labour Party seems equally fettered to the Trades Unionist principle.

If that be so, it will soon be time for those for whom politics is the art of promoting human happiness by scientific government to form a Scientific Party to carry out their policy. At present, should such men desire to enter Parliament, they have no banner under which they can fight with entire satisfaction to themselves.

A Military Debate in the Reichstag.

AN interesting Debate was held last week in the Reichstag on the Budget of the Ministry of War. The Social Democratic Deputy, Sachse, who is also Chairman of the Miners' Union, brought up, in the course of a discussion on the military, the provocative action of the military authorities during a recent mining strike.

One case gives in such a manner the way in which the soldiers come to regard the public, taking the cue, no doubt, from their military superiors, that I cannot forbear to quote it.

A shop girl going out to dinner with a companion passed a soldier standing with fixed bayonet—which in itself is most unusual. The soldier turned round, and in turning nearly cut her face with his bayonet. The girl remarked then very quietly: "Take care, you will be hurting someone." His answer was: "Hold your jaw, you filthy pig!" (Halts Maul, Dreckschwein!) The girl got angry and answered him pretty much in the same strain, whereupon she was arrested and only released on the appeal of the mining officials, who no doubt feared a scandal.

Of course it must be mentioned that on strike occasions only so-called trustworthy regiments are employed, that is regiments which are as far as possible made of elements who cannot be suspected of having come under Socialist influences. The Government here have the power to send the ordinary recruit to whatever part they think fit, and Berlin recruits are always sent away from Berlin—often to Alsace Loraine—while the Berlin regiments are recruited as far as possible from the country districts, or at least from elements who are felt to be proof against the Social Democratic poison. Of course it would be idle to lay too much stress on this incident if it were not symptomatic of the manner in which those youths who come under the influence of the military spirit are taught to look on the public. Naturally enough, the more the Social Democratic influence extends the less does that spirit show itself, but there are still large elements of German Society who are untouched by it—notably, of course, the handworkers and peasants.

Sachse brought up a further case of a man who was chased from his own land by the military authorities. In this the captain called out: "Shut the fellow up in his own shop." The use of the term Kerl, which I have translated fellow, was meant to be as insulting as it could be, and not even the Minister of War in his answer attempted to defend it.

The Minister of War, General von Heeringen, answered in the usual tone taken by the high officers towards the Reichstag. A military debate in the Reichstag has to be seen to be appreciated. It must be remembered that in the Reichstag the Ministers and the president sit on a high raised platform confronting the Deputies. The President sits at the back of all and highest, while below him on both sides are two rows of seats occupied by the members of the Bundesrath, or Federal Council. These are occupied by the Ministers, who are all members of the Bundesrath, and the representatives of the various States, so far as they happen to be likely to be called upon to answer questions in connection with the policy of their various Governments. On the occasion of a military debate these seats are occupied by the officers of the Staff and so on, who stand about and even walk about during the speeches. Members can when they speak do so from the Speaker's desk, which is just below the President and situated in an open space which divides the two rows of seats allocated to the Bundesrath into first and second row left and first and second row right, and I have seen these officers standing and passing so close to the speaker as almost to brush him. It makes a curious impression to see men who are not members of Parliament and not qualified to take part in its proceedings swaggering about in so insolent a manner in it. That they dare to do so is of course because they know that the Bourgeois Parties, with very few exceptions, are perfectly prepared to support them should any complaint be made.

To return, however, to the War Minister. He could hardly have adopted a more provocative tone.

After pooh-poohing most of the statements of Sachse and minimising the importance of others, he remarked that no woman had been reported as arrested, but supposing a non-commissioned officer had thought it well to take a woman under his charge for five minutes, what then? And the House is reported to have laughed.

He capped his speech, however, by remarking that only civil officials had taken an oath to observe the constitution—the officers had only taken one to obey their King, hence were not bound by the constitution. Not bad that from a Minister of the Crown in a so-called constitutional hall.

However, his speech was put in the shade by that of the Junker Herr von Oldenburg.

What the Junkers are I hope to show at greater length in a later article. It will be sufficient to say here that they are the squirearchy of Prussia—squires who have almost all been officers and have more power than any English squire had even before the county councils and parish councils were invented.

Squire Oldenburg, if I may so call him, began by expressing his regret that the good old days were gone. In his days as a lieutenant he did not care a rap what the Reichstag said. Now every officer was in a mortal terror lest what he said should get into the newspapers. And he went on in that strain till he finally wound up with the declaration that the Kaiser should be able to tell any lieutenant to take 11 men and shut the Reichstag.

There ensued a tremendous row, the entire Left, even National Liberals, protesting, and the indignation was only increased by the Conservative Vice-President's attempting to explain him away, instead of calling him to order.

The Conservative Party has since made a fresh attempt to explain this speech away, but at the same time declared their agreement with it.

The subject came up two days later in connection with the conduct of the Vice-President, who had called one of the Social-Democrats to order. But this time the Catholics and National Liberals both voted with the Conservatives in refusing what was virtually a vote of no confidence in the vice-chairman.

This vote was thoroughly characteristic of the whole policy of the National Liberal Party. On all decisive occasions they have invariably played into the hands of the reaction—when the decision lay with them.

J. B. ASKEW.

The Sociologist upon the Streets.

V.—Country and Town.

By Professor Patrick Geddes.

KEW GARDENS we have seen is the very vantage ground for recovering the true, the truly Roman, outlook of empire, and for preserving it from that deterioration now dull, now debased, now frantic, which it has been undergoing in London for the last half-generation especially, as in decadent Rome itself. We return to town, then, with that new idea of reviving John Bull which at Kew and other culture centres is quietly, indeed unconsciously, preparing. What is this? The old yeoman farmer has vanished, the squire is urbanised, Hodge is still only awakening; yet here and there we begin to see the coming John Bull, the

peasant renascent, equipped with all the resources of the sciences and their application, engineer and electrician, chemist and bacteriologist, physiologist too, and this of plant, of animal, and of human life, and selectionist, therefore, above all. He is an economist too, but of the newer, the neo-physiocratic, that is, physical, biological, evolutionary school, which even now is arising to attack the pecuniary economics even here, in its very citadel of London, and which must ultimately silence into mere grumbling, if not wholly overpower, its too alternately predominant factions, the free-trading and the tariffading alike. Behold him then, this next approaching avatar of John Bull, a yeoman, that is a peasant, still, but no longer senescent, no longer fuddled by prosperity when not crushed by poverty, half-dulled, half-debased either way, but with his youth renewed by contact with living nature, his mind by contact with living science. Behold him, then, coming up to town! Before him expands and bubbles bigger than ever the Londonian Empire, Whitehall-cum-City in all its administrative and business elaborations, and all their mutual entanglements, yet not without the resonating glories, the glittering promises, the manifold, alluring seductions which inveigled and involved his predecessors, his elder brothers, prepared as they were for all this by an "education" sedulously kept conventional and devitalising. Not but that this education is far short of what his son's may be, still he has not been inhibited for life by the mimicry of "good form." He has had a touch of nature-knowledge, too, and thus instead of the usual static and mechanical view of all things, he has some touch of the biologist's vision of the perpetual renewal of life, of the energies of things mechanically insignificant, like the leaven and seed. Now I think it is not libelling the mental attitude common to most Londoners you meet, whether they be Progressives or Moderates, Fabians or Fashion-models, Fossils or Furies, to say that they can hardly imagine such a person as I am describing, much less admit him as a coming (even a dominant) type throughout England. But what else is Sir Horace Plunkett? And with him in our eye, as the reformer politician, the peasant aroused and efficient, may we not find an increasing few like him even in London to-day? In the persistent strength of the Tory Party, which our Liberal and Radical, Labour and Socialist friends are always forgetting, and of which they get such sharp and heavy reminders accordingly, there is an element of this genuine and vital rusticity in which their cleverer antagonists are too largely lacking often altogether. The Liberal manufacturer or lawyer, when he becomes squire and peer, and changes his party accordingly (or, at any rate, his son for him), is not a mere snob. Partially, very often, I quite agree; but there is more in him than that. He has passed from the simple mechanical and pecuniary view of town industries, with its correspondingly simple projection of these upon social life, to the far complexer rustic environment of living nature, wild and tame, and of the manifold adaptations of agriculture throughout the seasons. And the first effect of this is to make him lose faith in simple mechanical and pecuniary solutions which seem so easy to the urban mind, and to acquire that cautious and inductive attitude, that dread of simple deductions from first principles, that sense of the complexities and contingencies of things, natural and human alike, which in any given situation cannot but incline (I do not say decide), whoever realises them, towards the more conservative view of it. Hence I suspect, indeed venture to believe, the explanation of not a little of that exceeding hesitation and slowness which has been displayed by Mr. Balfour, as the responsible leader of the dominant rustic interest (despite the obvious and alluring bribe to it), in assimilating and accepting the beautifully simple panacea of Tariff Reform, so obvious, so necessarily convincing though it is to the ideally urban mind of Mr. Chamberlain and his city, the home and centre of mechanic industries, the forge of arrows against the hated "foreigner," the very mint of pinchbeck goods.

Hence this defence of the rustic mode of thought, this insistence that Squire and Hodge, Peer, Parson, and Potman are by no means such dullards and degenerates as they are often painted. Hence also the corresponding criticism of the urban mind, whose beautifully abstract principles of rights and wrongs, whose easy deductions and mechanical solutions, whose pecuniary notations and beliefs, and whose administrative methods (*pace* Mr. Webb) all came in with machinery, and now must all go out again with the advance of biology and psychology, not to say sociology, and still more with the revival of the arts, the renewal of agriculture, the recognition of human culture above all—this, of course, being understood as an active process eugenic, eupsychic also, and not as a passive state (that way snobbery lies).

In this way, in fact, our sociological rambles upon the streets force us out upon the fields. Like every one of its older predecessors among the sciences, sociology is a return to nature; and not until it has recovered the simple and early view of man in his rustic environment labours can we adequately understand their complex evolutions and deteriorations in our cities. These rambling talks are thus no more than mere suggestions, intended to provoke observation and interpretation here and there, argument, too, if it may be: sociology proper requires a far more orderly and evolutionary treatment—that of Region by Region, Country and Town. (THE END.)

The Whys of the W. S. P. U.

By D. Triformis.

BEFORE the leaders of the W.S.P.U. had published the political programme they intend to carry out if ever they get the vote, we used to hear them say that the vote was only a Symbol.

This programme we now find outlined by Miss Elizabeth Robins in a series of articles entitled "Why Women Want the Vote." It is a title, we see, which seems to indicate that herein are expressed the desires of all suffragists, so that we may, without distinction of society or league, examine the reforms advocated and decide which of them, or whether all, or whether any of them, may be safely presented to Parliament as truly expressing that of which the vote is the Symbol. We confess that we were made a little uneasy by the fact that Miss Robins was to undertake the exposition. We had read her preface to the work of Mary Wollstonecraft, and we had thought it harsh and unsympathetic. But we remembered how confidently Miss Robins adjudged the craftsmanship of the book, how she explained that it was "without system, without method, full of useless repetitions and for ever neglecting the main argument for trifling side issues," how it was "incoherent, hurried, and careless," and that the style was "turgid and bombastic." At least, thought we, from this confident critic we shall doubtless get a very brilliant and well-maintained thesis upon the rights of woman, even if we are deprived of Mary Wollstonecraft's charming method of leading us alongside instead of behind her. Well, since we are forbidden to suppose that Miss Robins is mentally incapable of constructing such a thesis if she cared to, we can only conclude that she did not care. The subject is developed in a way known to and feared by examiners of school papers—that is to say, in a way which defies comprehension, because the writer simply masses together more or less similitudinous facts; and these facts she proves either not at all or by means of unauthenticated anecdotes and the gossip of her particular friends. In the absence of any discoverable method of thesis, we must, if we would understand Miss Robins at all, examine her random articles one by one.

In Article I. we have ten questions one after another. The first question, and the only one answered in the seven articles before us, runs: "Why are women of all classes in England banding themselves together to work for political enfranchisement?" Miss Robins pauses for half a column to complain that a lot of people do not want to hear why; and to illustrate the assumption

that women are expected to be silent, she tells in twenty-three solid lines the familiar story of the little princess who let the King swallow the caterpillar, which, we take it, is intended further to prove that men would be wiser to hear what women have to say. At last, however, we get an answer to the question, in fact three answers. Out of considerable animadversion upon men and tedious redundancy we rescue them. 1. Women have discovered that the higher (we must note this "higher") interests of all classes are the same. 2. To work for the public good without working through the laws is to salve one's soul with charity-mongering. 3. All classes of women realise that each class needs the support of the others.

We should not be disposed to deny any of this. True, it savours more of Socialism than of votes for women; but, even so, Miss Robins, instead of proceeding to proof of what many people might consider hypothetical statements, propounds another question founded on their acceptance: "Why is the need more widely known to English women?" Because, we are told, the English political woman is a factor in social life and because we have had feudal relations with the poor. Here again, instead of showing how or why the political woman and the vicar's lady and the herd's wife are banded together by that of which the vote is the symbol, Miss Robins advances another argument for Socialism, and we have to listen to her views on the different conditions which England and America respectively present for the "social revolution." She goes on, innocently, to demonstrate the value of having to wait and work a long time for the vote by observing that the "leaders for forty years have been building up the will to serve and acquiring the knowledge necessary to be able to serve with benefit to the community."

Article II begins (after half a column of opinions) by contrasting "the penniless Englishwoman" with the Frenchwoman who is provided with a dot. That, we presume, is meant to indicate one way for a woman to become economically independent: by receiving a gift from her father. Mr. Gladstone is quoted upon the injustice of the Divorce Laws. Then we find ourselves discussing inheritance as affecting women, but this question is interrupted by a sensational headline, "Her Children Not Her Own Unless Illegitimate." Not another word in the article refers to this. We are told next: "The wife cannot legally compel her husband to provide for her and the children so long as they are living together." One can only conclude from this being made a plank in the platform that it is a general thing in England for a man to refuse to support his wife and children, even when they are living in the same house with him. The next reason why women should have the vote is a weighty one as proving how lightly women of property value morality. Miss Robins informs us that to tax a married woman's income separately is to put a premium on *immoral relations*. Oh, Kensington, with all thy rich single women! We hear that "a man can will his property away from his wife and children and leave the children penniless charges upon a penniless widow." But instantly, we find Miss Robins complaining that wives are compelled to leave their money to their husbands. And we are not allowed to believe she would have affairs equal, for whereas the wife is not challenged as to possible conduct, Miss Robins quotes an obliging lawyer to the effect that "the husband has not unfrequently spent the dead first wife's money on a second wife and upon the children of a second marriage, depriving the children of the first marriage of it either partially or entirely."

"Favouritism" is the final heading, and it leads us back to the subject of inheritance. In France, happy France, estates are divided equally among all the children. We in England have not decided even whether this is a good plan, but, whatever our opinion, we cannot help contrasting the favoured position of a daughter who expects a husband to maintain her and yet inherits equally with that of her brother, who is expected to support a wife and children. This section concludes with a reference to the marriage service. There is much to be said from the point of view of the woman to whom the vote is a symbol against the marriage service. It is a degrading ritual. Miss Robins rightly states that "it postulates the inferiority of woman." But she forces even here her ever-recurring grievance, the material grievance. "The husband makes the entirely false declaration that he endows his wife with all his earthly goods, when he usually neither does nor intends to do anything of the kind."

Article III. is entitled "Woman's Powerlessness in the Home." "The children's mother has no legal right to a voice in deciding how they shall be nursed, how or where educated, what trade or profession they shall adopt, or what form of religion they shall be instructed in." There are anecdotes enough in this article to supply ten mothers' meetings. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that in every case Miss Robins attempts to strengthen her argument by putting on a glaring patch wherever things might seem a bit weak. It is a needless procedure when the people she wishes to convince are not very clear-sighted friends, and a ruinous one when her audience is inimically intent on seeing things as they are. We are invited to consider the following case: "A devoted Churchwoman loses her husband when her children are young. He has never expressed any opinion as to the children's religious education. [Patch.] His family are militant Nonconformists. They are legally justified in bringing up the children in the father's faith, since he had not publicly broken with his sect." Let us suppose the law was equally in favour of both parents, and suppose the father to be still alive. Each parent might then lead the child along a path, and if one died, then, and then alone, would the child know which was the true path or at least which it was bound to follow. It is annoying that the law cannot rationally allow both parents to have the final say, but Miss Robins even does not suggest any solution but that only one parent shall have the decision. "If a father wants his child vaccinated, the mother cannot prevent its being done." Again, suppose he could legally have it done and she could legally prevent it? "Another instance: A woman studies medicine. [Patch.] She becomes a convinced homœopathist. Her husband, a stockbroker—[we cannot resist this touch]—insists on subjecting his children to the rigour of old-fashioned allopathy. The mother must stand by helpless. . . ." But can we bear to think of that hapless child being dosed with a black draught by its horrid stockbroking father while its studious mother lies in wait to dose it again with three pills of nux vomica? We scream for a settlement of this thing in favour of only one parent: and since fathers always seem irreligious, stockbroking, allopathic and vaccinating, the inference is clear that the law should be altered in favour of the mother.

Custody! "The mother may appoint a guardian to act jointly with the father after her death. If the court is satisfied that the father is not fitted to act as sole guardian, it may confirm the appointment." This, says Miss Robins, "wears an air of quasi-justice" (sic), but she gives us an instance of how it works out. Then comes an anecdote. It occupies more than half a column and rivals the "Family Herald." The parties are highly placed in society, and therefore nameless. We cut the cackle: "Man marries, tires, transfers his attentions. Heart-broken wife gives him up after a struggle and devotes herself to her little girl. Dies, after giving child to a guardian. Husband promptly marries his mistress. His family forgive him, but hesitate to accept the new wife. She desires social recognition. Induces husband to demand custody of child. Court actually gives child to her (him?) who had wrecked first wife's happiness. Second goes about parading her devotion to the child. Undisguised antipathy of little girl to her dead mother's enemy. Woman prevails on father to send his child to an idiot asylum. After several years (!) authorities decide child was never an idiot at all, and send her home. Step-mother promptly packs her off to school, where she wins prizes and in any dull moment obliges her school-mates by showing them what the idiots did, amid peals of laughter."

Here the story ends. Bad as it is, we fear that a very wicked man might find one quite as bad to prove that some woman once horribly treated her own child; from which the conclusion would be that women should not be allowed to appoint guardians!

Part IV. concerns the industrial woman. We disentangle three statements: (1) That factories have displaced homework; and for this Miss Robins seems to think owners and shareholders of mills are personally to blame. (2) That Mr. Burns wishes to prevent married women from working in mills: and to prove his iniquity (we certainly think him ill-advised) Miss Robins quotes twenty lines of conversation between a friend of hers and a tidy, contented-looking mill-woman in a tramcar, maintaining the felicitousness of a mill-woman's life. (3) That the Government encourages sweating. That women, in their days of power, will abolish sweating is one of the most vulnerable arguments we know of for giving votes to women. There follows a column of irrelevant detail to prove that Elizabeth O'Brien, who sewed police trousers at 3¾d. a pair, was an irreproachable woman with a good son in the dragoons. The police missionary is summoned to assure us. Would, we ask, the case for the Government have been improved if the poor thing had led a shocking life and had a bad son?

The fifth article is headed "The Spoilt Child of the Law." "Those who believe that the administrators of the law can be trusted to show that favouritism to women we hear about should take counsel with Mrs. A., of Chelsea." Our "Mrs. A." reported that the magistrate to whom she applied for a separation from her husband said that "a man was entitled to knock his wife about a bit." Miss Robins admits that she is not sure whether the magistrate really did say that, but she quotes it all the same. We, however, cannot reasonably be expected to judge an unverified statement. So we must leave "Mrs. A.," and take counsel with Miss Robins' second protégée, a certain "Mrs. B.," who, we are mysteriously told, "lives not two miles from Westminster." This lady's husband had introduced "a rival" not merely into the house, but into the nuptial bed. What did "Mrs. B." do to uphold the honour of woman? She applied to the magistrate for a maintenance order against the man. This being refused, as the husband was willing to support his wife in the house, "Mrs. B.," we are informed, was thus "coerced into accepting the degrading conditions laid down by the man." We cannot perceive any spiritual affinity between ourselves and "Mrs. B." She evidently wants the vote for a different reason from ours. Taking counsel with her might not uplift us. We are perhaps prejudiced, but we think her a very tame affair indeed. She might have taken lessons in cleaning steps; or if she was paralysed in any way so that even this method of earning "an undefiled bed" was beyond her, she need not have published her husband's weakness to all the world. We would not share a vote with "Mrs. B." if we could help it.

Article VI. The lesson of the Newcastle by-election! This contains only a spirited account of a speech delivered by Mrs. Pankhurst to a branch of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, then on strike while women black-legged at their machines. This speech apparently decided the contest, for we hear at the end of the article: "The Government lost that by-election!" Mrs. Pankhurst, over fearful odds, won the men's attention and "held it in that vice which never lets go until the last word falls." It fell: "Your only safety lies where our safety lies—in equal pay for equal work." Miss Robins comments: "It was a doctrine that pleased the engineers well. If they had to be paid the same, what employer in the iron trade would not prefer an Amalgamated engineer to a woman?" So they offer with lumps in their throats to steward for Mrs. Pankhurst. "The big, grizzled man with the hunched shoulders, who had sat with averted eyes . . . stood up and said gruffly that if the lady," etc., etc. It is very harrowing; and we are harrowed: we are harrowed to know that these ladies actually condescended to play diamond-cut-diamond in such a fashion and to appear over-reaching fools in the eyes of a group of working men. The whole incident appears immoral. If votes for women means equal pay for equal work, and that, further, means work for men and not for women, as Mrs. Pankhurst persuaded the engineers, then the factory women should be told so plainly. Mrs. Pankhurst informed the men that the women blacklegs would rather work in the home or learn type-setting and book-binding. We would hazard that those women, if they thought any such state of things would be brought about by votes for women, would not give their pennies to the cause, but would do their best to put off votes until, at least they themselves were safely dead. Into such ugly passes are we brought when we are working for material ends, and have forgotten that of which the vote is the symbol!

Part VII., the latest issued at the time of writing, deals with the "Motherless Children of the State." Men, we are informed, have done nothing for the children nor ever will do anything until women have the vote. They have "stood by for years and let the evil go on," while women—what poor things Miss Robins does depict us!—have "waited and hoped and despaired and waited and hoped again." Dr. Barnardo might have given women a hint.

Surely the real difficulty of the foundling problem is their increasing number. In Matthew Arnold's day this difficulty was not unnoted by hm. He described "the knowledge how to prevent these children accumulating" as "the first law of prudence." Can we believe the W.S.P.U. will help to disseminate this knowledge among their "poorer sisters"? Or, will they now place Arnold on their Index Expurgatorius?

In the course of this article Miss Robins comes almost for the first time in touch with that grievance of which the vote for women is the symbol. She complains that although women are eligible as municipal guardians, even when they are elected the contempt in which their men colleagues hold them renders them helpless to get their suggestions accepted. True! *Woman's real grievance is a moral grievance.* She is morally held in contempt. It is that contempt which we have to change before we may hope to gain any permanent material benefit. And shall we really change it by using violence, or by getting equal inheritance, or a lien on our husband's wages, or even by taking counsel with "Mrs. B." and warning ourselves and each other to eschew "the profession of wife"? Shall we not rather examine what there may be in us to cause this attitude of contempt? It is not improbable that we may find we have caused it. Perhaps the poor spirit which urges us to champion "Mrs. B.," perhaps the lack of humour which permits us to claim money from father and husband and to call the result economic independence, perhaps even the narrow and incompetent people we allow to represent why women want the vote may be signs of that within us which must be changed before men will come to think more honourably of us.

If we studied more frequently such works as Mary Wollstonecraft's "Vindication," wherein we find so many sentences to make our complacency uneasy, and if we turned a deaf ear to the false ideas of honour, the vain expectations and the facile flatteries such as are employed by those who would gain votes for women at any price, we might, through coming to see ourselves as we are and as we might become, find the way to be relieved from the terrible contempt of men. All our effort will be in vain if we cannot induce a change in the spirit of men beside whom we have to live. We see that women in municipal office are despised and neglected. Admission to the hustings would be no guarantee that women would be respected because they were women, though because they would be voters, politicians at election time would treat them as the working-man is now treated. And if we come to the hustings with the redressing of material grievances uppermost in our minds we may get certain material redressions, but our moral grievance, that of which the vote is only the symbol, will remain unsatisfied.

Stevenson Revived.

THE NEW AGE has this advantage over its contemporaries that it receives contributions from the immaterial as well as the material sphere of life. Several earthly politicians write for it, and at least one unearthly one is known as "Alcofrida." It is clear that a paper with this resource can speak with authority, particularly of things that have never happened. Dramatic criticism in these days suffers by not being authoritative: Mr. Ashley Dukes is not Moses, and THE NEW AGE is not Sinai, not yet; and there are occasions when something more than clear perception and brilliant description of what I may call the body of a play is desirable. Such an occasion was offered by the production of "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" at the Queen's Theatre: it was felt that this was an opportunity for the display of mystical power, and as Mr. Dukes has no acquaintance with spirits, I was commissioned to obtain the judgment of Robert Louis Stevenson. I offer the following report with all the deference due to a sceptical public, and, in prolepsis, explain the resemblance between the language of the spirit and the medium as due to the partial aphasia of the medium in trance. It is not to be supposed that the literary manner of Robert Louis Stevenson has suffered by his sojourn on the other side; on the contrary, his acquaintance with a distinguished writer on Homer and the Holy Bible, and several members of the Society for Psychical Research, has, if anything, improved his manner by the addition of matter. It would require another Stevenson to do justice to this improvement, and as the qualification of a medium is the inability to speak like a genius, we are not likely to be aware of the progress of Robert Louis Stevenson. But it must be understood that any lapses from good taste or grammar are solely due to the medium: for the opinions expressed Robert Louis Stevenson is responsible, and he accepts the responsibility.

On receiving this commission, I went to Pecunia's Bureau. Pecunia, I may say, is my spirit friend, and was well known on earth as Johnnie Walker. I placed the bottle on the table, and it was not long before my friend began to talk. He advised me to whistle Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and other tunes, and to compose my magnetic vibrations to harmony. In a little while the air was strong enough to support a legion of spirits, and Stevenson obtained control of my friend. I omit the preliminaries with this exception: Stevenson explained the ease and rapidity of his return to the earth plane by the "Brownies" who used to help him write his books. The way was opened for him in life, and was not closed by death. His friendliness for Pecunia, too, made it easy for him to communicate with Pecunia's friends.

He was hostile to the play from his first mention of it. "I do not think," he said, "that it can ever be dramatised satisfactorily. The story relies on the reader's imagination for its effect: the sense of mystery is awakened and its curiosity sustained by the fact that the identity of Jekyll and Hyde is not established until nearly the end of the book. A performance, no matter how clever, leaves nothing to the imagination; it is a literal rendering of the physical facts; and it is impossible to pile mystery on mystery when both characters are visible in one person. The secret is kept in the book, but it cannot be kept in a play."

"But that is a counsel of perfection," I objected. "The play has been written and is now being performed. I did not ask you to tell me that it should not have been written, but what you think of the dramatist's use of your story."

The medium was violently agitated for a few seconds, and then the voice continued:

"This medium is not strong enough to convey my opinion in my own language, and I am forced to choose equivalent commonplaces from his limited store. Why did Comyns Carr saddle Jekyll with a blind wife? Why did he make Sir Danvers Carew, whom I described as 'seeming to breathe such an innocent and old-world kindness of disposition, yet with something high, too, as of a well-founded content,' a double-lived, dirty reprobate of a diplomat married to an unfaithful wife?"

"I am not in Mr. Carr's confidence," I replied, "but I suppose that a cynical and pathological people like to know that even diplomats suffer from inconsistancy."

He sneered effectively.

"When you write books that dramatists misuse," he retorted, "you won't be in a hurry to find excuses or explanations of the misuse. But your reference to cynical people reminds me of another question. What does Carr mean by introducing a lot of 'old young people,' who were old when I was young, and making them pretend to be wicked with the aid of scandal, hot-water bottles, and ladies' cigarettes, when Hyde, my creation, is the embodiment of real wickedness?"

I suggested dramatic contrast.

"Dramatic contrast be ———." Here the spirit required a piece of sugar. After a moment, he continued more calmly: "I object to a good, straightforward tale being cumbered with unnecessary accessories. My Jekyll was a bachelor, and it adds nothing to the power of the tragedy to burden him with a blind wife. By the way, Comyns Carr is not complimentary to Miss Dorothea Baird. She made her first appearance as Trilby, the girl who could not sing; she has appeared since as King Réné's Daughter, the girl who could not see. Now she appears as the wife who cannot see, and evidently Comyns Carr thinks as the actress who cannot act, for he gives her nothing to do. A part that consists of a continual cry of 'Henry,' a walking with outstretched hands, an everlasting saying of 'good-bye' or 'come to me,' and 'Oh, how much I love you, and how I hate Mr. Hyde,' cannot be called a 'fat' one, and it is not Miss Baird's fault if she worries her audience as much as her husband."

At last we had come to grips.

"Don't you see," I said, "that her references to Hyde are a dramatic necessity if we are to be shown the struggle between the two natures. She may not be a character of any importance or interest in herself, but as a device for calling up Hyde in Jekyll and Jekyll in Hyde, and thus giving Mr. Irving his chances of subtle characterisation, she is very necessary"

"No, I don't," he snapped. "Lady Carew was created for that purpose, and I object to this duplication of an unnecessary character. The play is full of the same inept trickery. Not only is Jekyll a double person, but Dr. Wellaby is created to tell a story of another dual personality: Bellingham must be spoken of in a similar connection; and even Sir Danvers, my 'aged and beautiful gentleman,' prates of his being two men and leading a double life. Lady Carew is doubly created for dramatic purposes, for her double life results in an appeal to Jekyll that rouses Hyde to the murder of Sir Danvers. The trick is wearisome and unnecessary: my story would offer greater dramatic opportunities if these devices were destroyed."

I left the play and turned to the performance.

"What do you think of Irving's acting?" I asked.

The reply was astonishing when one remembers how the critics have praised Mr. Irving.

"He doesn't get a chance," was the reply. "He is a genius, but even genius requires opportunities for its manifestation. How can he do himself justice when he is interrupted either by his wife or Lady Carew, or a comic charwoman? Not one of these characters is mine, and they force a monstrosity into ordinary human relations in his most monstrous moments. It is no fault of Irving's that his Jekyll talks like Paracelsus before dinner, or that his Hyde mops and mows like the village idiot. The Hyde that I drew could walk about the streets without inviting anything but detestation; but the Hyde that Irving is forced to portray would be arrested as a criminal lunatic by the first policeman. My Hyde had at least the manners of a gentleman: Mr. Enfield, in speaking of him to Utterson says: 'There was the man in the middle, with a kind of black, sneering coolness—frightened, too, I could see that—but carrying it off, sir, really like Satan.

"If you choose to make capital out of this accident," said he, "I am naturally helpless. No gentleman wishes to make a scene."' That was what my Hyde had in him, but Carr could not show it, and Irving was obliged to assume a curvature of the spine that would have convinced the pithecanthropus erectus of the truth of the descent of man."

"But the murder of Sir Danvers," I said. "Wasn't that well done?"

"The strangling was excellent," and Stevenson chuckled, "but quite unwarrantably postponed to the end of the act. But I object strongly to the stabbing: it is never convincing on the stage, because no blood flows. Irving realised my idea of Hyde when he tried to pluck out the man's windpipe, but the stabbing was an added horror that did not horrify. The scene in the Soho lodging, too, was well acted, but that awful charwoman must be discharged. Irving is the man for the part, but he must find somebody who will give him his chances."

I suppose that the spirit was exhausted, for my friend became himself again, and was rather bored when I told him what had happened. Media never are interested in the drama: their minds cannot rise above politics. MYSTERYNSTEAD.

Rabelais Socialist.

I OWE it to no Socialist, to no political student of any shape or hue, but of all persons in the world, to the Ser Péladan, expounder of æsthetics and prophet of certain æsthetics, that I was sent to "Pantagruel" again the other day to seek for Rabelais's Socialism.

"The 57th chapter of the fourth book of 'Pantagruel,'" says Péladan in his "Clé de Rabelais," p. 95, "gives us the most positive statement of the anti-feudal faith that has ever been written. . . In truth it is the charter of Socialism, the literal text of what ever is legitimate and irrefutable in its claims." And this is not too strongly worded. Rabelais, for all his exuberant insistence on the gross material facts of life, was no materialist. Nay, he was an intellectual in the very fibres of his being; and his career was one long struggle for the ample and free nourishment of the intellect. But his feet were well planted on mother earth; and none knew better how life on this planet is conditioned. It is the veriest truism that man lives by bread—though not by bread alone. Unhappily, the truism needs repetition. At all events, the modern world is only beginning to recognise the extension of the truism: that, as man lives by bread, so man dies without it; and that bread, got by work or otherwise, is the barest elementary right of man, which has to be conceded at whatever cost to the most virtuous and amiable of those who have a surfeit of plumcake. Rabelais, at least, understood this extension of the truism. So, in the wake of the Ser Péladan, I point to the famous chapter, "Comment Pantagruel descendit on Manoir de Messere Gaster, Premier Maistre es Aro du Monde." I believe it has been interpreted to mean "Hunger is the best teacher." But that is to omit a good half of its significance, and to overlook the great and terrible rôle given to the "bonne dame Penie." When Messer Gaster is resisted, Penia the regent makes her progress—and all yield. The message is rather: "Ensure bread, and all that is to be got out of a race will be brought forth." Only, do ensure it. Do not offer merely Acts of Parliament and speeches; for Messer Gaster is deaf. "You cannot make him believe anything, cannot represent or persuade him to anything; he hears not a jot."

In the following passages which I set out for the refreshment of readers' memories, I use Smith's translation:—

"The Governor thereof [of the Island] was Messer Gaster, first Master of Arts in the world.

"If you believe that Fire is the great Master of Arts, as Cicero writes, you are in error and go wrong, for Cicero never believed it.

"If you believe that Mercury is the first Inventor of the Arts, as our ancient Druids believed of yore, you go greatly out of the Way.

"The sentence of the Satirist* is true, when he says that Messer Gaster is the Master of all Arts.

"With him resided peaceably the good Dame Penia, otherwise called Poverty, Mother of the nine Muses, from whom formerly companying with Porus, Lord of Abundance, was born for us here, the noble child, Mediator, Heaven and Earth, as Plato attesteth 'In Symposio.'

"To this chivalrous King we must perforce pay Homage, swear Allegiance, and offer Honour, for he is imperious, bears himself harshly and roundly, is hard, stern, and inflexible.

"You cannot make him believe anything, cannot represent or persuade him anything; he hears not a Jot. And as the Egyptian averred that Harpocrates, the God of Silence, who in Greek is called Sigalion, is astomous, that is, without a Mouth, so Gaster was created without Ears, just as in Candia the Image of Jupiter was without Ears.

"He speaks only of Signs; but all the world obeys his signs more promptly than the Edicts of Prætors and the Mandates of Kings; in his Summons he admits no Stay or Delay whatever.

"You say that at the Roaring of the Lion all Beasts around far and wide shudder, that is to say, as far as his Voice can be heard. It is written. It is true. I have seen it.

"I certify to you that at the command of Messer Gaster all the Heaven trembles, all the Earth shakes; his command is called, 'Do it you must without Delay, or die.'

. . . . . .

"To serve him all the world is busied, all the world labours; also as a Recompense he does this Service to the World, that he invents for it all Arts, all Machines, all Trades, all Contrivances and Crafts."

I leave it to Hecate to paraphrase, in a Ballade, Rabelais's description of the Progress of Penia the Regent. M.

BALLADS OF HECATE.

IV. The Ballade of Penia the Regent.

Pantagruel, l. iv., c. 57.

She rises from her low cold lair,
Shiver and quake the hearts of men.
Councils and camps stand empty, bare;
And laws are paper-pulp agen;
Our policies three score and ten,
But childish scrawlings on the sand
Her trailing rags brush from our ken.
Penia the Regent walks the land.

My Lady Poverty was fair,
Free mate of Lord Abundance then
Was she, high-hearted, debonnair,
The Muses Nine her children.
He hath her long forsaken,
From his high courts and presence bann'd—
She cower'd, slept, froze . . . Now doth she waken
To rule as Penia in the land.

Queen by her first wide-open stare,
Throne-chamber is her loathly den.
She may do all who all may dare.
And she is out. The roads are open.
The world is hers—a fierce Gehenn
Of white fire that her breath has fann'd.
Scattered our landmarks are and broken.
Penia the Regent walks the land.

ENVOY.

Lords and Commons make vain pacts' when
They catch the glint of her searing brand.
To her behests they quaver, "Amen!"
Penia the Regent walks the land.

* Perseus, Prologue, ll. 8.14.

The Order of the Seraphim—I.*

By Allen Upward.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Thus saith the Lord God of Israel: Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.

THE Editor of THE NEW AGE has asked me to put forth in these pages the second volume of that Overman's Library which begins with *The New Word*. It is not meant to be Everyman's Library. We have toiled long in the building of treasure cities for the Egyptians. The time has come to stand before the Pharaoh of modern civilisation, and say,—The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us: let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the Lord our God.

I.

In *The New Word* it was my task to dig down through all the layers of human learning and superstition to the spring of Verihood. I now seek help in the work of building a temple over the well-head, so that it may not become fouled again; and in clearing the choked-up watercourses, so that the water of life may flow freely.

The only criticism (of which I need take notice) against that book has been that it did not go far enough in the way of practical construction. That last word is often cant: he who hews away marble, and lays bare a statue, is not less a creator than he who builds a wall. However, I shall be glad if these pages escape the opposite complaint; for this time I am going to float a company.

It is not practical to build on the sands of a false sociology. Too many architects have built the House of Man, only to find that men refused to live in it; like those who should provide stately palaces for savages, only to see them roving forth again to their wigwams in the wood. Let us wake out of that old delusion, and be content if we can lay firmly the first stone of an Asylum for Architects, and City of Refuge for the righteous.

It is time that the Son of Man had somewhere to lay his head.

II.

In these pages I shall first try to distinguish the Order of and for which I write, in the spirit of a naturalist marking for different orders of plants and animals. I shall be obliged, in passing, to demonstrate that the theory underlying the cant word Humanity is scientifically unsound; and if it be so, it cannot, according to our faith, be morally or "pragmatically" sound.

Next I shall outline briefly the history of the Order, and criticise its successive avatars; the savage Wizards, the scientific Priesthoods, the Brahmans of India, the Mandarins of China, the Lamas of Tibet, the Hebrew Prophets, the Christian Monks, the modern Jesuits and Freemasons, and so forth; always with the aim of copying their merits and learning from their mistakes.

In the end I think it will appear that the Order is no other than that already known and recognised under the name of Genius; that it is Genius which is conscious of being the Messenger from Heaven to Man; and that just in so far as they have sought out and encouraged, or discouraged and suppressed Genius, human societies have met with happiness or misery.

The lesson I shall seek to enforce is this, that the Seraphim, being wiser than mankind, ought not to wait for mankind, but to undertake first the organisation of themselves, and so free themselves from that old reproach to the Son of Man—"He saved others; himself he cannot save." If masons and bricklayers can combine to protect themselves, so ought Architects to do.

When the Laws of the Seraphim have been discovered, we can pass on to consider their true office in relation to mankind. We shall then perceive that they are sent as servants, not masters; as overseers, not governors; as advisers, not lawgivers; as arbitrators, not advocates; as physicians, not policemen. Like the European living beside some Pagan or Mohammedan tribe, they will dwell beside Humanity, no longer interfering with it, and being interfered with, but giving counsel when counsel is sought, and judgment when both sides appeal to arbitration.

In the meanwhile the arts and sciences will be their especial care. They will be the trades-union of poets, the patent agency of inventors, the guardians of the poor in business.

Yet their highest function still will be to defend the rights of the Spirit, ascending and descending the ladder between Heaven and Earth.

As for the outward and material form which their organisation should take, I have in my mind's eye the old Order of the Knights of Malta, before its meaning and usefulness had passed away. The vision is of a real city of refuge, suffered to arise in some corner of the earth, and tolerated in the enjoyment of the same independence which has never been withdrawn from the tiny republics of San Marino and Andorra. There should be the headquarters of the Order, and from there, like bees from a hive, they should pass to and fro among the nations whithersoever they are sent in the service of Humanity. There, when Humanity refuses to be served by them, they may pass their time in tranquility of soul, laying to heart Milton's proud consolation—

> "God doth not need
> Either man's work, or his own gifts; who best
> Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best: his state
> Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed,
> And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
> They also serve who only stand and wait."

III.

The germ of much that I shall say is contained in a poem written twenty-five years ago, and printed for private circulation in 1890. At that time no one was prepared to understand it; but, unknown to me, a stronger hand had already begun to break up the ground, as with an iron plough; and, thanks to Nietzsche, I may now cast in the seed with some hope of a harvest.

It must not be supposed that I fall short in rendering that great man his due, if I follow him only the first step upon the way. I cannot pay a higher tribute to him than by using his word Overman as the shoehorn wherewith to fit my own words on the understanding of the reader. In the spirit of *The New Word* I shall take Nietzsche's version as the Adversary, in battle with which my own will gain a firmer outline.

The battle is between the Cherubim and Seraphim, that is to say, the Angels of Might and the Angels of Light.

The old Chaldæans in their prophetic sculptures represented those Messengers of Heaven, the thunder and the lightning, under the twin forms of winged bulls and winged serpents (*kirubu* and *saraf*). Both forms seem prophecies of evolution. The body of a beast, the head of a man, and the wings of an angel, indicate the stages of an ascent in which Humanity is only the middle term.

So far, the two forms are symbols of one order, and accordingly Carlyle has included both Cherubim and Seraphim in his Order of Heroes. Shakespeare and Luther, Burns and Napoleon, are indeed equally Messengers, but they are not charged with the same Message; so that Carlyle's category is too wide.

Nietzsche, on the other hand, if I understand him rightly, was thinking only of the Cherub, when he prophesied of the Overman. And Lombroso has, in effect, included the Seraph, or man of genius, in an order of Undermen, among criminals, lunatics and incurables. I am by no means certain that the "eugenic" policy, in some hands, would not be directed to the extermination of the Seraphim.

But the Rabbis of the Jews have delivered the tradition, perhaps derived from Babylon, that the Seraphim are the highest order among the angels. Milton has confounded the cherubim and seraphim together, yet he seems to have portrayed Nietzsche's ideal Overman

* We much regret that owing to indisposition Mr. Upward has been unable to revise the proofs of this chapter. All errors are therefore ours.—ED. NEW AGE.

in Satan, and to have summed up the gospel of the Overman in an immortal line—

"Fall'n Cherub, to be weak is miserable."

It so happens that both of these Chaldæan symbols have a history which throws light on their significance.

IV.

Animals were among the first words of man, and from an unknown date the Bull was a word for strength. Most likely it was first a northern, or Aryan word, introduced into Babylon from Persia, as the Bull afterwards figured in the Persian faith of Mithra, the most powerful rival of early Christianity. If so, Nietzsche was inspired by his racial affinities in imagining his cherubic Overman, as much as in his choice of Zarathustra for a nom-de-plume.

However that may be, and whether the Bull of the zodiac was named after the sun, or the sun after the Sign, it is certain that from about 5,000 years ago, when the sun rose at Easter in the Sign of the Bull, it was called the Bull of Heaven, and worshipped in the form of a Bull. In other words, the priesthood had made the scientific discovery that the sun was the great source of energy, and had translated their knowledge into language understanded of the people.

That is the meaning and the interpretation of the Golden Calf of Israel, and the Apis bull of the Egyptians. (The bull may have been already the local totem of Memphis, like the cat and crocodile elsewhere.) But the most famous of these solar Bull-gods was the dreadful Moloch, or Mêlek (king), the devourer of children, who reigned in Tyre and Sidon, and from thence to Jerusalem and Sardis and Crete and Sicily.

In this bull-headed idol, within whose brazen belly innumerable human beings were cast alive to be burned, it seems to me we have the true type of the conquering capitalist, militarist, imperialist,—in a word, the Overman of Nietzsche.

Such, as I understand it, is the Cherub, a true Overman, as the slave-driver is over the slave, and a true angel, as are the inhabitants of Hell. But the word Devil is less likely to be misunderstood.

It is the Order of Devils of which Nietzsche seems to me to be the prophet.

V.

The Serpent has been for all ages, and for all mankind except Christians, the symbol of wisdom. It is the Serpent who, in the true myth of the Tree of Knowledge, plays the part of Prometheus.* Nay, the Christians themselves have seen in the Serpent raised up by Moses in the wilderness a type of Christ. The Serpent is the badge of Æsculapius, the God of Healing. The prophet Shelley has chosen the Serpent as the type of the Saviour in *The Revolt of Islam*.

The worship of the Serpent has been world-wide, but it has been accompanied by fear. Man, like a spoilt child, fears the Good Physician. The brute strength of the Bull is what he understands. The fascination of the Serpent terrifies him. Lastly, in the Dark Age, in that catastrophe of science known as the Christian Era, the Serpent was changed into the Enemy of Mankind.

To care about symbols is idolatry. The Bull and Serpent, having served their purpose, may now be discarded. The Angel will be a better symbol, if it be understood that when I write of angels I am thinking of the Seraphim and not the Cherubim.

In the Tate Gallery there is a picture of Nietzsche's Overman, crowned and throned, and trampling on Humanity. The artist has named it Mammon. In the same Gallery there is a picture of the Son of Man, a winged child standing with bowed head before the locked door of the human heart. The artist has named it Love.

That is a more glorious symbol than the *saraf*.

And the word Angel has a yet more high significance for those who believe in a life beyond the grave, and discern in Man's age-long effort to become an angel here an apprenticeship for that Heavenly state, and a promise of it,—if not a promise, at least a prayer.

* See *The New Word*, XVII, 2.

It will be understood by men of good will (for whom I am writing) that these papers, put together from week to week, must be read as notes for a book, rather than a book. I do not pretend to write *ex cathedrâ*, and I shall be glad to hear from readers who wish a fuller explanation of anything they find obscure.

Controversy is valuable when it is carried on between those who are equally inspired by the love of verihood; who are more solicitous to learn than to teach; and who feel that there is more honour in being convinced than in convincing. When Seraphim are seen in the air casting fiery bolts at one another, they sin, and set a bad example to Humanity.

I should be glad if these papers could develop into a friendly conference between the writer and the readers. I like the part of arbitrator better than that of advocate: it is an instinct with me to see truth on both sides, and to seek the reconciling formula. Is not all I am saying here such a formula to reconcile angels with men?

(*To be continued.*)

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By ALLEN UPWARD,

Corresponding Member of the Parnassus Philological Society, Athens.

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Stéphane Mallarmé.

By Francis Grierson.

I.

STEPHANE MALLARME was one of the original members of the band of poets who called themselves Parnassians. His companions in the early days were François Coppée, Sully Prudhomme, and Catulle Mendès. There were many others. All became more or less celebrated later on, but Mallarmé broke away from conventional poetic bonds, and found himself, without wishing or trying, at the head of a literary salon the like of which had never before been known in Paris.

The real founder of the Parnassians was Louis Xavier de Ricard, a mere boy, the son of General Marquis de Ricard, who acted as aide-de-camp to Prince Jerome. The young Parnassians first met at the salon of the Marquise de Ricard, 12, Boulevard des Batignolles. Here in the soft light of the sumptuous salons, amidst rich brocades and rare Gobelins, the celebrated Parnassian School of poets had its beginning. Had there been no meeting-place like this, the Parnasse might never have become known.

Young Louis de Ricard was a dreamer, who had a passion for poetry, but not the gift to create it, a passion for philosophy, without being a philosopher. He founded a review, and proceeded to attack the Empire. He had his review promptly suppressed by Napoleon's police. He then dropped philosophy and republicanism, and founded a new review entitled "L'Art." Then came the first number of the "Parnasse Contemporain," the title being a happy inspiration of that wonderful youth, Catulle Mendès. When I arrived in Paris in 1869 the Parnassians were organised, and the meetings at the salon of the Marquise de Ricard had become regular functions.

Here François Coppée read aloud to a company of his young friends his unpublished poems, and Sully Prudhomme first read his "Vase Brisé," which later made him celebrated. Two of the poets of this extraordinary group were the two friends, Stéphane Mallarmé and Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, the first of whom lived to make his name known far beyond the confines of France. The young Parnassians were in need of a poet of mature years to lead them, and they found him in Leconte de Lisle, the creator of the "Poèmes Antiques" and the "Poèmes Barbares." From 1874 to 1884 Victor Hugo cast his vote, the only vote, in favour of Leconte de Lisle for the Académie, but the gifted author of the "Poèmes Barbares" was elected at last through the efforts of his two disciples, Sully Prudhomme and François Coppée. At the salon of Leconte de Lisle I met many of the leading poets and writers—José de Hérédia, Anatole France, Judith Gautier, Henri de Bornier, Ernest Renan, and a score of others.

II.

To go from the salon of Leconte de Lisle to that of Stéphane Mallarmé was like passing from a schoolmaster with a ferule and eyeglass to the presence of an amiable man of the world without the slightest ambition to please the public or to pose as a leader. Leconte de Lisle had become an official of the State, and was living in something like classical simplicity, his guests always more dignified than natural, the host somewhat arrogant in demeanour, affecting a marmoreal impassibility like that of his poems ; but Mallarmé was living in a small apartment, with a reception-room so small that a company of fifteen persons filled it.

Yet, to this little room, containing nothing but a centre-table and chairs, came the intellectual youth of France, representing every school and social grade—future academicians, deputies, diplomats, novelists, editors, historians, and composers, the visitors being of all ages, but principally under thirty.

The yoke of officialdom lies heavy on the neck of genius. Mallarmé was one of the few who remained independent. But even in this he did not try—it was the nature of the man. To see him stand by the fire-place rolling a cigarette, talking in a low voice, half to himself, half to his visitors, was to see a man free from conventional bondage. And it was like arriving at a cool mountain-spring after a long tramp through a burning desert. The visitor came here without fear, hindrance, or hypocrisy. The body rested while the spirit was being refreshed. There was no discussion, no attempt at wit, no striving after effect. This little room was the one place in Paris where the soul could manifest itself in freedom. Everywhere else pose and persiflage were in order. Anyone coming here with the airs of a patron would in a few moments settle down in his seat, subdued, transformed by the serenity of the place.

Once I witnessed the arrival of an obstreperous visitor; but Mallarmé, with his usual easy manner, let silence bring about the miracle of subjugation. The visitor, once seated, was soon overcome by the collective calm. When he tried to lead the conversation the host allowed him to talk for a time, then, turning to M. Henri de Régnier, sitting in the corner by the fireside, he addressed him in an undertone, thus adroitly shifting the loud talker to one side. This was the only salon where a company dared to sit for any time without a clatter of words. In the other salons animated conversation was considered the correct thing ; without it people would feel troubled or bored ; at other houses it was the custom for visitors to seek the acquaintance of other visitors, the host in many cases being, like Leconte de Lisle, incapable of holding the attention of a company.

Whistler and Manet have pictured Mallarmé at two periods of his life. Whistler's subtle portrait suggest- the apparition of an extraordinary personality between two epochs—the old and the new. Time, like a dream, has settled over his features as the mists of twilight over an enchanted landscape ; there is a suggestion of a poetic veil separating him from the world like the smoke from his cigarette, which, he said, he used as a screen between himself and the crowd.

In Manet's canvas the poet is younger and reminds one of Deroy's portrait of Baudelaire. The expression is anxious and the figure restless ; the conflict between the poetic and the material is at its height ; he has not yet learned how to discard the perplexing, dismiss the puerile, enter the sanctuary of his own gods and abide contented there. For the truth is that, although Mallarmé was born in Paris, and had experienced the innovations of the Second Empire, the Third Republic, the bourgeois realism of M. Zola, the pretensions of unoriginal minds like the Goncourts, and the provincial irony of critics like M. Jules Lemaître, he belonged to the ancien régime. Mallarmé was an intellectual aristocrat. His tranquil dignity, spiritual poise, politeness without hypocrisy or affectation, his freedom from the usual vulgarities of a society skilled in the art of sensation and puffery, made him conspicuous. But there was method in the obscurity of his literary manner. He was obscure with a purpose. He would make it an impossibility for the critic à la mode, be he a Brunetière or a Lemaître, to scale the barriers of his poetic domain.

The official professors were in a strange state of ignorance respecting his influence. Here was a man, living very near the borders of actual want, exercising a power which no millionaire could claim. Here was an intellectual magnet that attracted other intellects, causing young poets, artists, and journalists to mount

four flights of stairs once a week to sit and listen to what words might fall from the lips of the master. He drew them towards him, not by his will, but by his influence. He never made an effort to induce a visitor to return, never flattered, never tried to be more amiable to one than to another. Mallarmé, the poet and dreamer, was not only in Paris, but a vital part of its intellectual life. Yet with him, art and life were in no way connected with the fashionable world.

There was a notion prevalent that Mallarmé's salon was frequented exclusively by poets and artists of the symbolical school. But I soon realized the folly of believing in hearsay evidence. His visitors represented all the schools of the day; and it is easy to understand the jealousy of some of the Sorbonne professors who saw young authors of talent doing homage to a man who paid no heed to the examples of the academicians. It was but natural that "official" professors should pretend that Stéphane Mallarmé was without serious influence. Their attitude was, in part, the result of ignorance. Who has ever met with an official professor who gave himself the trouble to learn the truth by seeing the outside world with his own eyes, and hearing its voices with his own ears? It was by visiting this salon many times, during a period of several years, that I arrived at the truth. I learned, after repeated visits, what a far-reaching influence went forth from this obscure room. Little did the professors at the Sorbonne know of this ascendancy, revolving, as they were, in their own limited circle which they mistook for the universe. Louis XVI. imagined that the taking of the Bastille was an insignificant street brawl. How could he know what was going on in Paris when he spent his time at Versailles? The people were taking power out of his hands; he was not among them; he could not see the truth. At a time when academicians were ridiculing Mallarmé, he without trying, was undermining the old edifice with hundreds of disciples, many of whom had been the cleverest students in the lycées of the Latin Quarter. Some of these young men were already acknowledged journalists of talent, others would become critics, playwrights, politicians. So great was the outcry in 1885 and the following years that the question of abolishing the Académie Française was freely discussed, many deputies taking sides with the young writers. It needed only a few visits to Mallarmé's salon to convince me that here was the one vital force operating in the literary world of Paris. Renan was lecturing at the Sorbonne; Mallarmé was rolling cigarettes and talking nonchalantly to visitors at his own fireside. Renan, the giant, spoke from an official platform, but the poet of the Rue de Rome was now the man of power.

What illusions float about the academical chair! It is surprising that writers of independent means put themselves to so much humiliation to enter the Académie. When Renan became a candidate he began the course of official visits and found himself one evening at the dinner-table of Victor Hugo. The guests talked freely, but Renan sat like a timid schoolboy, with his eyes cast down, giving the réplique to Hugo in four words: "Oui, maître; non, maître;" not daring to go further for fear of offending the host, and so losing his vote.

The sphere of a writer's influence is fixed. Every soul has its own world. But sometimes one writer brings to mind another. In his personality Mallarmé made me think of Whitman and his artless simplicity and unaffected sincerity. But the features of the French poet were unlike any other poet or writer, living or dead. There was nothing eccentric about his face or his person, and he never put on evening dress to receive his visitors. His receptions were for men, and the poet appeared in the clothes he had worn during the day. In this he also reminded me of Walt Whitman, whom I saw in Washington in 1868. Mallarmé opened the door himself for his guests when they arrived, and went to the door with them when they left. I never saw him sit in the presence of his company. This might have led to some clatter among the guests. The guests came to hear Mallarmé, not to talk among themselves. At first I was not aware of the real nature of these evenings. Once I noticed that when one guest addressed another no reply was given; conversation between the guests was therefore impossible. M. Henri de Régnier, who on each occasion occupied the same seat in the corner at the host's right, was always silent. He seemed to be the guest of honour. Mallarmé frequently addressed his conversation to him, but M. de Régnier was not there to talk, but to listen; instead of replying he simply took a few extra whiffs at his cigarette. Every one understood. To a philosophical mind these evenings were so many lessons in the virtue of silence. No one tried to make the poet speak; he himself never tried to make others speak. And yet these evenings were full of instruction and charm. Thought came as in a Quaker meeting, with this difference: Mallarmé was the presiding Quaker who never sat down. He occupied the floor by the will of the guests. Here one learned the true value of silence in affairs of the intellect. Everything that is made up for the occasion belongs to the puerile and the trivial. The talk imposed by self-interest and vanity is never edifying. If you wish to influence others be natural; let Nature have a hand in your talk and your receptions.

Mallarmé owed much to his sojourn in England in his earlier years. Here he entered into the spirit and substance of English poetry, and attained that extra something which he needed to embellish the exclusiveness and delicacy in his nature which later made him such an ardent admirer of Poe.

I saw Mallarmé alone on several occasions. "Poe," he remarked, on one of these visits, "I regard as an Irish genius transplanted to America." "Hugo," I said, at another time, "advises writers never to dream." "He is wrong," answered Mallarmé; "dreams have as much influence as actions." And truth to say, this dreamer of dreams exercised a power seldom attained by any Frenchman before or during his day. Everything comes to him who seeks for nothing. The dreamer contents himself in a world of meditation and contemplation; his ideas are many, but his words are few. He dislikes action, yet he attracts the active. He seeks no réclames, yet he is acclaimed. In a study of Mallarmé and his salon, which appeared in 1892, I said: "In this poet we find a philosopher free from superstition and prejudice, a thinker who embraces all that is vital in art, music, and literature."

But the best minds are often led into foolish acts, even against their better judgment. The poet was inveigled into accepting a banquet in his honour, offered by a number of his admirers, at which conventional toasts, speeches, and responses, prearranged and machine-made, were the order of the evening. He was proclaimed "prince" of the young poets; but Mallarmé sat immovable, fatigued, and bored. It was no place for him. When a wise man is placed in a ridiculous position, the fools, as Goethe says, have their innings. We blunder the moment we cease to reason and permit others to reason for us. Mallarmé, who was king in his own sphere, cut a poor figure at this banquet. In this attitude the poet descended to the arena of strife, on a level with others of not half his merit who had dinners given in their honour. How difficult it is to refuse at the right moment! The art of saying "No" is the supreme art in the life of every thinker. Of all things connected with the daily routine of a man of talent, this thing of knowing when and how to refuse is the simplest and the rarest. It is so easy to know and so hard to do. But until we learn to do it we can expect nothing but misunderstanding and failure.

It was remarked by a journalist that Mallarmé, at this banquet, looked as if he had come to bury his last friend. And no wonder; for he had descended from his sanctuary in the Rue de Rome to a place where his star gave no light. He was attracted beyond his orbit by the comets and meteors of the phenomenal world, and he could say with Joseph Roux: "When I return from the country of men I take with me illusions and disillusions."

Books and Persons.

(AN OCCASIONAL CAUSERIE.)

M. JULES TROUBAT was the private secretary of Ste. Beuve. Ste. Beuve was a great specialist in the secrets of contemporary social history, largely because women, considering that he understood the alleged peculiarities of their psychology, liked to treat him as a moral doctor and a lay-confessor. It was doubtless by reason of his historic connection with the distinguished critic and amorist that a white-haired lady called one day in March, 1880, on M. Troubat, and said to him with simple ingenuousness:

"In my youth I was the mistress of Alfred de Musset, and I have kept a certain number of the poet's letters, as to which I am troubled by scruples."

"Can you tell me what these scruples are?" asked M. Troubat, probably imitating as well as he could the demeanour of the master.

"Yes, I have come here for that purpose. Our liaison was not publicly known, and I am asking myself whether I ought to divulge it or whether I should not do better to suppress the correspondence."

"Take care, madam," said M. Troubat, excited. "You have no right, in conscience, to burn any letters of Alfred de Musset."

"But they are so burning," said the lady, who was, in my opinion, guilty of a too feeble witticism. But I give the conversation as recorded.

"The more reason for not burning them. If I might offer advice, it would be to deposit them in the National Library. . . ." etc.

The lady agreed to this suggestion. The letters were deposited in the Bibliothèque Nationale, under agreement that they should not be disturbed for thirty years. The proceeding strikes me as deliciously French.

* * *

The period has now expired, and the letters have just been issued. "Lettres d'Amour à Aimée d'Alton," by Alfred de Musset, with a preface by that expert of experts on the romantic period, M. Léon Léché. I need not say that the "Mercure de France" has published them (3fr. 50c.). It is always the "Mercure de France" that gets hold of these elegant windfalls in literary history. The volume is entirely charming; but it must not be over-estimated. It must be taken for exactly what it is, the epistolary record of an ordinary liaison, into which heroically passionate and deathless love certainly did not enter. The affair lasted a couple of years, and then died quietly and gracefully of inanition. In middle-age Aimée d'Alton married Alfred's brother, Paul de Musset. Times are altered. Never could such a matter have been conducted in the same way in England. And even in France of to-day such a matter would have fallen out differently. As Aimée d'Alton wrote in a MS. note at the beginning of the orginal letters: "Ideas have changed so much since that epoch! What seemed quite simple then has become incomprehensible to-day. What will it be in 1930? At that period love had another 'way.' When the world found it excusable it went so far as to protect it. When people turned to love there were no half measures, and the exchange of feelings and of everything was without limits." True! Some of the letters are masterpieces in their kind. See letter 40, in which Alfred criticises his own faults of character. It is wonderful. We are not likely to be favoured with any volume written in similar circumstances by any English author of the nineteenth century. Yet materials for such volumes must exist, if they have not been destroyed by the sorrowing families of at least two "great Victorian novelists" (male).

* * *

I have been told that it is no part of my business in this column to criticise French verse, and that my views on French verse have brought tears of rage to the soft eyes of the poetic experts on the staff of THE NEW AGE. I therefore content myself humbly with mentioning a new volume of verse, "Au Loin, peut-être . . . ," by a poet whose name is fresh to me, François Porché (of course, "Mercure de France," 3fr. 50c.). Here is an extract:—

C'étaient de larges quais pleins de brume, un palais
Couleur de sang ancien, et, derrière des grilles,
L'hiver qui pourrissait sous de sombres charmilles.
La neige de la rue était jaune. J'allais . . .
Les arbres dénudés et les vieilles façades
Avaient de hauts profils impérieux, maussades,
Tournés avec raideur du côte du Passé.
Tout était malveillant, terne, humide, glacé,
Et, pareille au crapaud qui sort d'un marécage,
Soulevant de son dos la vase, une prison
Basse, accroupie, ignoble, une espèce de cage
Monstrueuse offusquait de partout l'horizon.
Nulle éclaircie au ciel, par où vînt l'espérance;
Dans l'air gris-mat comme un métal désargenté,
Un troupeau de pesants nuages, tourmenté
Par la bise, faisait des gestes de souffrance.

Combien s'étoufferont de cris et de sanglots,
Avant que la douleur qui couve là s'entende,
Que, sous sa pression, enfin, l'airain se fende,
Et qu'éclate ce monde hermétiquement clos?
J'ai regardé longtemps, fenêtre par fenêtre,
S'éclairer les maisons, le soir: chaque flambeau
Qu'est-il qu'une veilleuse aux voûtes d'un tombeau?
Ceux-là sont morts, ceux-ci pleurent, d'autres vont naître
Pour pâtir à leur tour, et c'est de la démence
Que ce Destin qui toujours frappe et recommence.

And if this is not original, individual, and exquisitely youthful in its charm, may all my works be censored by all the Libraries, may I contribute a serial to "Cornhill," and may I have my wife's dog's portrait published in the "Queen"!

* * *

The death of Edouard Rod does not seem to have caused much emotion in literary England. Personally I should not care to say more of him than that he was a very dignified and a very sincere writer. I never could get to the end of any of his novels; but I am acquainted with people, whose judgment I respect, who regard him as a great writer. I do not at present! He was, I believe, a man of exceptional charm; but for me his books lacked emotion; they were, in the French sense, pedantic. He was a Swiss, but he lived most of his life in France. One cannot conceive anybody who believes himself to be an artist living long in Switzerland, save under compulsion. I doubt if there is any European country, large or small, this side of the Balkans, more perfectly inartistic than Switzerland. No doubt this sad state of affairs is due to the disastrous influence of the English leisured classes on the composite Swiss character. I would sooner live in Hull, Wigan, Belfast, or even a south-English cathedral town, than in Lausanne; and I should say that Lausanne Museum is the inferno to which will be consigned insincere artists and sincere library censors. Yet Edouard Rod would not give up his Swiss nationality, and this was natural and right. He might have been naturalised a Frenchman, in which case he would certainly have been elected to the French Academy. Apparently he deemed that to remain Swiss was the lesser evil. His last novel, "Le Glaive et le Bandeau," is running serially in "L'Illustration," which would be a highly interesting periodical just now for its admirable photographs of the Paris floods, were it not rendered insupportable by its photographs of Rostand and all that is his.

* * *

Libraries Censorship.—The "Times" has given way concerning Miss Mary Gaunt's "The Uncounted Cost," of which it had refused even to allow an advertisement to appear in its columns, on the score of "doubtfulness." Last Thursday's "Times" contained an advertisement of "The Uncounted Cost." There is absolutely no connection between advertisements and reviews. However, the most felicitous coincidences sometimes happen. On the next page to the advertisement occurred a criticism of "The Uncounted Cost,"

slightly ill-humoured, but in my view a fairly just one. There was no reference of any kind to the alleged viciousness of the work, and of course no apology.

JACOB TONSON.

Shakespeare's Women.

ARE there any *women* in Shakespeare? Is it possible that a poet who acclaimed "Venus and Adonis" and the "Rape of Lucrece" as the "first heirs of invention" could ever have imagined a woman as anything but the pursuer or the slave of man? It is interesting to note how he treats his old maids. Cassandra is mad; Joan of Arc is a witch; the three old maids in "Macbeth" are witches; Ophelia becomes insane at the prospect of dying unmarried; and he is so disgusted with Rosaline, who has "forsworn to love," that he does not bring her on the stage, but promptly introduces Romeo to a less fastidious mortal.

Surely no poet was ever more certain that a woman's only purpose in life was to capture a man and stick to him. Rosalind has only to see Orlando win a wrestling match, and straightway she is in love.

> Sir, you have wrestled well, and overthrown
> More than your enemies.

Helena has scarcely exchanged two words with Bertram before she has doubts about the value of virginity and the possibility of preserving it. Juliet arranges her wedding at her second meeting with Romeo. Miranda loves at first sight with more excuse, as she had never seen any man before other than Prospero or Caliban, neither of whom was eligible. Perdita, in spite of her pastoral training, can yet fear that Florizel "wooed her the wrong way," and it was probably her comparative loneliness that inspired her famous simile:—

> pale primroses,
> That die unmarried, ere they can behold
> Bright Phœbus in his strength, a malady
> Most incident to maids.

Beatrice and Katharine the Shrew are no exceptions to the rule. Everyone knows that Beatrice intends to marry Benedick as soon as their store of "carefully prepared impromptus" is exhausted. Katharine's first words in the play are addressed to her sister:

> Of all thy suitors, here I charge thee, tell
> Whom thou lov'st best: see thou dissemble not.
> Is't not Hortensio?

Her reply to her father in the same scene shows her evident intention to have a husband before her sister:

> Will you not suffer me? Nay, now I see
> She is your treasure, she must have a husband;
> I must dance barefoot on her wedding-day,
> And, for your love to her, lead apes to hell.

It is curious to remember that Shakespeare improved upon Plautus in the "Comedy of Errors" by introducing "upon the unsentimental scene two figures of *young lovers*, a fervent youth and a fugitive maid, round which he has thrown a musical gloriole of lyric and elegiac poetry beyond all reach or all aspiration of all other comic poets," if one must quote Swinburne's splendid hyperbole. Desdemona, although "so opposite to marriage," as her father declared, was soon violently in love with Othello for his "bragging and telling her fantastical lies," as Iago phrased it. Shakespeare is so certain that his women must marry almost the first man they meet that he actually makes the Duke say:—

> I think this tale would win my daughter, too.

Shakespeare's thesis might well have been "Venus and Adonis," with this difference: that while in the poem Venus is unsuccessful in her chase, I cannot remember one case in the plays where a woman fails to secure a husband, or at least a lover of some sort. Even Dame Quickly gets Ancient Pistol as a sort of consolation prize.

On the other hand, Shakespeare is in no doubt as to the relative position of woman. She is always the "weaker vessel": the husband is always the "lord, the king, the governor."

> Such duty as the subject owes the prince,
> Even such, a woman oweth to her husband,

says that over-crowed bully, Katharine. Lear can actually interrupt his magnificent threnody over Cordelia to say:—

> Her voice was ever soft,
> Gentle, and low, an excellent thing in woman.

The best thing that Shakespeare can say of Desdemona when Othello is raving is that she is "truly an obedient lady." The prime compliment of Coriolanus to his wife is:—

> My gracious silence, hail!

Shakespeare is careful to make you understand that Lady Macbeth is ambitious for her husband, and not for herself.

> Glamis thou art and Cawdor; and shalt be
> What thou art promised.

Even Portia, in the "Merchant of Venice," does not attempt to save Antonio because of her ability as a lawyer, or because she is friendly with him, or that she is aghast at the injustice that he is about to suffer. She is careful to state "that this Antonio,

> Being the bosom lover of my lord,
> Must needs be like my lord.

Shakespeare, with that ever-present contempt of woman, could not let her win this case on her merits. He must pack her jury for her, allow her to plead without a professional opponent, and give judgment in favour of her own cause. Brutus' Portia, perhaps the finest of Shakespeare's women, has no other idea of her existence than that she is Brutus' self.

> Am I yourself?
> But as it were in sort, or limitation;

And her impatience of Brutus' absence drives her mad. Hermione and Imogen love their lords none the less for the vile treatment they receive. In an age that knew Elizabeth, who, whatever her faults, managed to govern England very well without the aid of a husband, it might have been expected that the "greatest of lyric and *prophetic* poets," as Swinburne calls him, would have had some faint glimmering of perception of the truth that woman is not an ancillary and subject person, but a self-centred entity, with capacities and powers that neither deny nor exclude the sexual nature, but are certainly not included in it. But his only interest in a woman is that

> She is a woman, therefore may be woo'd,
> She is a woman, therefore may be won;

Always with the man's proviso:—

> I'll have her—but I will not keep her long.

He cannot imagine any relation but a sexual one between the sexes: he murders Cassio and Desdemona because they are merely friendly. His imagination runs riot over filthy courtesans like Cleopatra or Cressida: one can imagine him gloating over the prospect of getting Juliet, or Beatrice, or Katharine married: he is interested, not in women, but in females. There is scarcely one of his women that would be tolerable to a modern man. It was to Desdemona, whom Swinburne described as "a figure even more tenderly to be cherished in the inmost heart of all men's love and pity than Cordelia," that Othello said:—

> I will deny thee nothing:
> Whereon, I do beseech thee, grant me this
> To leave me but a little to myself.

Brutus cannot even conspire against Cæsar without having his wife at his heels, and Macbeth is in the same plight. Were ever men so plagued by women as in Shakespeare: were ever women so abnormally and obnoxiously wrapped up in their chosen? But these figures of conquest and suffering are the common-places of femininity; they are the mere externals of the sex, are women unawakened. We await a poet who will show us a woman who can do something better with a man than marry him, who can see a star in the sky in

spite of a husband, who is neither an intolerable voluptuary nor an equally intolerable slave. If ever men are to be noble, women must be free; and when that day comes we shall hear less of Shakespeare's knowledge of womanhood, of his wonderful gallery of adorable angels.

Alfred E. Randall.

GHAZAL.

Guide, thou laughing fairy, home where laughter dwells,
Him from whom thy ever-bubbling colour wells.
Wing! From me, with wishing wings, now wings emerge;
Weaves he high in cloudland, his enwreathing spells;
Or, in million spirals, hath he million homes,
Voicing low from rhythm-haunted ocean shells:
Clings his ruddy form on buoyant mountain peaks:
Greenly, makes he heaven in enfolded dells,
Copses where creative music ripples through;
Is't his laughing voice among the woodland bells
Flatters these to flourish forth their shielded buds?
Lead me, lead me where thy god his story tells!
Yet, fay, wouldst thou still thy secret, secret keep,
Tell not me: for I to larks and philomels
Word will send—that these, by night, and those, by day,
Wing the path to Laughter may that Care dispels.

Beatrice T. Hastings.

ART.

I stood one summer day watching Como carving itself in dazzling sunshine. To me became apparent the artistic value of even the commonest things of life when bathed in luminous gold and shimmering light; when the sky becomes sapphire and the lake emerald; when the gardens become as clouds of tinted flame enveloped by the halo of vine-coloured hills; when flowing villas and exalted campaniles turn warm silver in the gossamer air. Thus seeing Como with the sun transforming all things with beauty, it was not difficult to understand that Luini, centuries before, being touched by similar influences and led to praise them in paint, should, in gratitude for so much inspiration, richly endow his birthplace with the finest examples of his art. Nor that other painters, touched by similar beauties elsewhere, should do likewise. That Titian and Tintoret inspired by the early beauty and splendour of Venice wrapped in an intense blue sky, and Da Vinci by early Florence, and, farther afield, Rubens by the richness and variety of his Antwerp, should adorn the palaces and cathedrals of these places with the highest achievements in good painting.

* * *

The truth that came to me then was that the only way truly to estimate the treasures the Old Men have left us—whether Umbrian, or Florentine, or Sienese, or Vincian, or Milanese—is to see them in those villages, towns and cities where these old fellows lived, worked and died. After seeing all the fine things in this way, if the traveller return to England with his eyes filled with the dazzling brightness of the southern sun, what is his impression of our old Masters? He goes to the National Gallery to refresh his memory of them. His first impression is that a transformation has taken place. His vision has changed and the pictures that once appeared fresh, lovely, perfect, now seem to be old, black, rubbed down, dirty, imperfect and doubtful canvases.

* * *

He examines them one by one. He looks into an old favourite, and finds, to his astonishment, that only the face of the Madonna is original. All the rest has been painted in from time to time. Its ill-fitting draperies of the sixteenth century, high lights of the seventeenth, landscape of the eighteenth, and so on. He peers into a big Botticelli to see how it is made, and is amazed to find that the landscape is by one set of hands and the figures by various others. He returns to an admired Lippi, and learns that Lippi never painted the trees nor the child, nor the balcony in it. So he passes from one disillusion to another. He finds a Titian—a show-piece of the Gallery—buried under centuries of varnish, the green of its grass turned brown, and the rest of its once-gorgeous colours undertone and uninteresting. At its side is a portrait by the same marvellous hand, with its beautiful texture almost hidden beneath the many layers of varnish. He wanders into one room hung with fourteenth-century masters, of which but three are original and untouched, all else being examples of the restorer's ingenuity through many centuries. Everywhere he goes he notices recent bequests and acquisitions. He spends a little time examining the Salting bequest, and observes, now without surprise, that among its Italian masterpieces are pictures that he has seen house-painters in Tuscan villages turning out by the hundred, and dreadful and uninteresting Dutch canvases, of which the small Dutch Masters left studios full, and which other men got hold of and finished.

* * *

His impression of the acquisitions is equally disappointing. He notices a large French painting of a nude which has been half burnt and atrociously restored, and is now attributed to Velasquez. For this the nation paid many thousands. He sees a Holbein probably worth three or four thousands, which a nobleman who knows nothing about art has turned into 70,000 golden coins of the realm given by a nation unbalanced by pathological sentiment. Elsewhere he sees a Raphael, with an original design and later additions, for which £100,000 was paid, and nearby another which cost a millionaire much less, but which, if only reckoned dealer fashion by the figures it contains, should have cost twice as much. He sees all these things, and, aided by his sharpened vision and knowledge, he perceives the truth. First-hand vision has taught him what an Old Master really is; knowledge and common sense have taught him that the best painter that ever lived never painted more than half a dozen masterpieces, that all the rest of his works are of little account, and it would not matter one jot if they were at the bottom of the Atlantic. But unfortunately they are not there; since neither sentiment nor greed will allow the hundreds of thousands of indifferent pictures painted by masters, pupils, imitators and fabricators, and re-painted, retouched and restored, even when in rags, by and through the dealer, to disappear.

* * *

The dealer has set his seal upon his mountain of rubbish, and he it is who preserves it; who forms the collections of Tate-Gallery millionaires without taste or judgment; who chokes our galleries with shoddy, to the exclusion of sound modern stuff; who gives impecunious picture owners the cue to use the National Gallery as an exchange and mart; who knows there is no law to prevent him effecting sales through our national art institutions; and who profits by the disgraceful trick of loaning pictures to the nation for the sole purpose of attracting buyers and realising huge prices. In a word, it is the dealer who controls the national sentiment and purse in art matters. He is the real director of the National Gallery. This is our traveller's final and lasting impression. He has seen this national collection of foreign treasures in its true light, and he hates and despises it accordingly, just as artistic England hates and despises the R.A. A month later he turns his back on this land of fools and hypocrites, and goes south, where gorgeous palaces, and sunlit skies, and transparent waters put on colour as fresh and golden as in the days of Giorgione.

* * *

Some day the monied classes will learn the truth also. Then they will come to hate and despise our dealer-ridden galleries as heartily as the traveller from Italy. And then they will no longer subsidise the dead, but

the living. That is, if there are any living artists left worth subsidising. So far as I can see the neglect of modern artists is tending to their extinction. There is so little demand for big canvases and so great a demand by the exhibition gallery for studies that will sell cheap, that, as a consequence, even the best men are handing out nothing but portfolio scraps. Scraps, for instance, predominate at the exhibition of drawings and etchings of the Society of Twelve at Messrs. Obach's Gallery. Messrs. Legros, Muirhead Bone, D. Y. Cameron, George Clausen, E. A. Cole, Francis Dodd, A. E. John, J. S. Moore, Charles Shannon, and William Strang have studied the market. D. Y. Cameron just washes in a dark foreground or two and leaves the skies paper, and sends them along. Francis Dodd does better, and exhibits some very individual work. Ernest A. Cole tops the lot. He is a newcomer, a draughtsman of immense power, whose work is so fine and strong that even John's vigorous line, with its note of contempt for the public, looks comparatively feeble. Hedley Fitton, whose drawings and etchings are to be seen at Messrs. Dunthorne's, has also gauged the market for cheap and scrappy things. His work is direct and well-drawn, but lacking in charm and individuality. The subjects are topographical, portraits of streets and buildings, and appear, most of them, to have been copied from photos rather than sketched from the things themselves. Mr. Fitton would be wise to spend more care and skill in finishing his work, and not leave so many inches of surface uncovered.

Huntly Carter.

Insurance Notes.

Mr. Harold Elverston, the proprietor and editor of the "Policyholder," has been returned to Parliament as the member for Gateshead. His election will be welcomed by those insurance papers who have cried long and lustily for the representation of insurance interests at Westminster.

* * *

We are not in any way affected by the superior and surly remarks of the editor of the "Insurance Mail" with regard to this column, as we find nothing in his style and matter to indicate technical expertness. He may rail at our prediction that State insurance is coming: it will come all the same. And, seeing he is interested in us, we shall from time to time keep him right on special subjects.

* * *

Under the new Act, says Mr. H. Kingsley Wood, solicitor, and author of the "Industrial Assurance Agents' Legal Handbook," a person who is unconnected with a collecting society cannot insure another person for funeral expenses in a collecting society. He is not a member, and is, therefore, not entitled to the privileges of the society. We must emphasise the fact that it is only members of collecting societies who are entitled to the widened scope of the new Act. Only a member can insure his parent, grandparent, grandchild, brother, or sister for funeral expenses. If a person not a member were to effect an insurance on the life of another with a collecting society the agent who got the business would be liable to a heavy penalty.

* * *

The Central Office of Friendly Societies has made the following communication to a correspondent who raised several questions as to the operations of the new Act. After stating that it is not strictly within the duties of the Registrar to express any opinion, he says:—

(1) The only persons who can effect assurances with a collecting society are the members of the society. Therefore, in order to effect any of the assurances specified in Section 36 (1), a person must be a member of the society with which an assurance is to be effected.

(2) The funeral expenses insured can only be those of the specified relations of the member. The parents, etc., must bear that relationship to the member.

3. The assurances can only be for funeral expenses. It remains ultra vires for a society to grant assurances on the life of any person other than a member. The assurance must be granted to the member and not to the person whose funeral expenses are assured. So the policy should be what is called a third party policy.

(4) Before granting assurances of the nature specified in Section 36 (1), a society should amend its rules so as to include such assurances within its objects or such of them as it desires to have power to effect.

Taking into account the importance of this subject, and the fact that we have had inquiries in regard thereto, we reprint a statement of the relative powers of companies and societies as established by the Insurance Companies Act, 1909:—

A man may insure	*Collecting Society.*	*Assurance Company.*
Himself for	£300	Any amount
His wife for	Funeral Expenses	Any amount
His children for	Funeral Expenses	Funeral expenses, if under 10 years of age.
His grandchildren for	Funeral Expenses	Funeral expenses.
His parents for	Funeral Expenses	Funeral expenses, in addition to amount o other insurable interest
His grandparents for	Funeral Expenses	Ditto Ditto
His brother or sister for	Funeral Expenses.	Ditto Ditto
Any other person in whose life he has an insurable Interest	Cannot Insure	The amount of the insurable interest.

* * *

With regard to canvassing, it is found useful to adopt illustrations from the topics of the moment. What better chance could there be than at this time to point to the propositions of the Government to introduce a system of compulsory insurance, and thereby show the need for insurance? The Government was so convinced of the necessity of insurance that it intimated the introduction of a Bill to make insurance compulsory for the working classes. This should be an answer to those who are still unbelievers.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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

THE HOME OF THE HUMMING BEETLES.

To the Editor of "The New Age."

The only occasion on which I died of hunger was at a great banquet attended by very learned and generous people who preached the gospel of right feeding. When I was about to take a sip of water one of the guests suggested that, for my own sake, I should make sure that the water was pure. I gave him thanks, and was proceeding to help myself to a little golden sherry when another guest hinted that, for my own sake, I had better refrain, as wine led to rheumatics. I deemed this attention as singularly kind, and I ruminated over the circumstance while casually breaking a piece of bread.

Before a morsel reached my mouth another guest told me that bread made with yeast should be avoided, because it was antagonistic to longevity. I commended my friend for his courtesy, and asked him to pass me the salt, whereupon his neighbour, with a most winning smile, advised me, for my own sake, not to take salt, because mineral salt lodged in the joints of the body and became a slow poison. Having taken salt from infancy, I was astounded at my own ignorance, and it was with difficulty that I regained my composure to thank my adviser.

I had a splendid appetite, and rejoiced exceedingly when the soup was served, but, alas! I had to let it go untouched, in deference to the superior wisdom of an elderly gentleman on my left, who asserted that the soup had been flavoured with a ham-bone, and, the pig being an unclean animal, he advised me, for my own sake, to shun the soup. I obeyed with slightly diminished grace, and when the next course came round in desperation I asked for fillet of sole and a pint of ale. One guest immediately informed me that fish was an inhuman diet, and another guest informed me that the effect of ale was demoralising, and a frequent cause of crime. For my own sake, they jointly asked me not to take either fish or ale. I consoled myself with the reflection that the next item would be roast beef, and in the anguish of my hunger I exhibited an undue importunity when the chance came.

My ignorance was once more exposed. A beautiful girl who sat fourth on my right informed me that butcher meat was the great source of uric acid, which bred disease, intemperance, and debauchery. I could not take roast after that, but I begged, for the love of God, to have a spoonful of green peas. A bespectacled creature, who spoke thickly through a mouthful of meat, advised me for my own sake not to touch peas, as they engendered flatulency and were dangerous unless followed by strong carminatives. Without a word I helped myself to a potato, but it was no sooner on my plate than a chorus of voices denounced potatoes as the cause of dyspepsia and the source of all manifestations of indigestion. For my own sake, I was asked to leave the tuber severely alone.

My strength was failing, and the severity of my schooling being maintained right on till the end of dessert, I wished to have a cup of coffee to revive me. Here again I was in error, for coffee is a destroyer of the nerves. Could I have a cigar? Tobacco was followed not infrequently by blindness, very often by impaired vision, and always by baldness. In a weak voice, not untinged with melancholy, I thanked my learned and generous advisers, and as a last request I solicited a liqueur brandy. With one voice they denounced brandy as the curse of the earth, the cause of shortness of breath and heart trouble, and an enemy to thrift.

After that they affected to be surprised when they found that I had died of hunger. A sympathetic coroner returned the cause of death as modesty. I was eventually restored to life while the wife of a cottager was cooking fried onions, the cottage door being open and the wind favourable.

It was evening, and, the wind having changed, I sauntered through the town. In this pleasant time came the shadow of a man who, without much ceremony, called me a miserable sinner. I entirely agreed with him. Thereupon he invited me to go along with him to a large room where he would show me more fully the scope of my degradation, and, nothing loth, I went. There were a few others present, to whom he had also spoken suchwise, and now, having us in a lump, he blackballed us for all he was worth. He called us fallen creatures, unworthy wretches, things of abjectness, worldly vipers, leaves blown about by every wind of doctrine, rotten, rudderless boats, and unprincipled ephemeralities. It was all true, and, having helped him to pay the gas and the rent of the room, we separated.

I didn't count the collection, but it seemed to me there might be more than would cover all expenses.

On the following week I went again to hear myself denounced, and was not a little grateful to see a larger audience to share the denunciation. He was a splendid speaker, and with considerable charm he again condemned us as spiritually blind, lovers of the belly, stomach worshippers, hypocritical knaves, lusters after the flesh, slothful drunkards, soldiers of Satan, foot-kissers of Baal, and egregious elementals. We were in general convinced of his charges, and when between the intimations and the benediction a collection was taken, we subscribed liberally. Week after week I went to hear this man belittle and condemn me, and a growing number followed my example, but in course of time his terms of reproach became stale and familiar, and we found it to our comfort to have the seats cushioned and the walls painted and the windows coloured, so that we might not be too wearied when listening. For his part, he stuck well by ancient adjectives and strong expletives, seldom inventing a new contumelious phrase, and at his request we hired a few good singers to enliven the proceedings.

Soon after we subscribed for an organ, and as these attractions were added he cut down the length of his attack on us, and one day, while listening to his usual denunciatory diatribe, it struck me that he looked very sleek and fat. Shortly after we had built a large, commodious villa for him, he passed me on the street without recognition, but I made no demur, because he was much better off than I, and I had always paid him to humble and deride me.

It was a matter of observation that he never used the illustration about foxes having holes. Such is the origin of the now universal institution known as the Home of Humming Beetles.

Count de P.

* * *

JOTTINGS FROM A NOTE-BOOK IN INDIA.

To the Editor of "The New Age."

I see that The New Age sometimes makes reference to the uncomfortable relations existing between the British and the Indians, and perhaps my personal observation of the condition of society after a year's residence in a Native State may not be without some interest.

In this city the Parsees, Mohamedans, and Hindoos are seldom on terms of intimacy, but at one house where we visit all these people are gathered together at least once a week for games and afternoon tea in a pleasant garden.

Some British attend occasionally, but the few "Army ladies," namely, officers' wives, who make their duty calls on these agreeable people, come openly armed with the determination to be bored and contemptuous.

The hostess is a charming lady, clad in a satin skirt with embroidered hem, and a picturesque gauze veil, which frames in her dark face with its sparkling golden border. She welcomes her guests heartily, and dispenses tea in as agreeable a manner as anyone could wish. The handsome host, dignified in his cream-coloured braided coat and golden turban, moves about chatting pleasantly with everyone in turn, and I notice he has an eagle eye for selecting anyone who may be of lesser rank and who is likely to shrink too much from notice.

Sometimes, as the quick dusk descends upon us and Badminton has to be given up, we move into the house, and music, cards, or general chat absorbs us for the hour before we disperse to our dinners.

The girls who can sing or recite, or play upon the zither or beena, come forward without a lot of uncomfortable pressure and contribute their part to the entertainment; and the room, full of bright saris and turbans, becomes an animated and picturesque scene upon which the fashion-plate figure of a stiff Englishwoman is a distinct blot.

However, as I am the only remaining blot, I can easily forget my own unæsthetic appearance, for the other English ladies have made excuses for their earliest possible withdrawal. Nevertheless we get on very well without the supercilious stare and the lifted eyebrow of the lady who has scarcely been able to suppress her smile of contempt as some innocent little Parsee girl has thrust out a hand to be shaken, instead of confining herself to the conventional bow of introduction.

Somehow one gets more out of life if one is more interested in mankind than manners.

I have been making great efforts at trying to discover in what the tremendous superiority of the "camp lady," as she is called here, consists. Is it in education? No; for the Mohamedan lady I speak of is the possessor of many languages, and much tact. She has the grace to put her acquirements in the background, and to talk on any subject which may be interesting to her companion; and she can also discourse on abstract matters which I certainly have never heard "a camp lady" attempt to do.

The gymkana, for certain political reasons, has been thrown open to Indians during the present year, but I understand their company is more tolerated than welcomed, even though the Maharaja is a generous contributor to its support. But some charming Indian ladies, who are highly educated and entirely up to date in their ideas, have told me that the cold manners of the Englishwomen attending there have rendered their visits more a duty than a pleasure.

But it is when one spends an evening in Anglo-Indian company that the attitude of the Britisher to the Indian comes out fully. It is impossible that anything but bad feeling can be stirred up by the shower of scornful epithets lavished on our brown brother.

On one occasion I began to be so uneasy that I suggested it might be quite possible that some of the servants—waiting upon us so humbly, with the most impassive faces—could hear something from the conversation. "Oh, we don't study the servants; they can take in as much as they like; we never pretend to do anything but hate the native," was the reply of mine host.

I tried to lead the conversation towards artistic channels, as sketches by my hostess were hanging upon the walls, and she was complaining that in this "deadly hole" time hung so heavily upon her hands.

"Why not paint?" I demanded.

"Paint what?" she demanded, and added in an undescribable tone of scorn:

"*Natives?*"

"Yes," I answered; "there are magnificent subjects crying out to be done. Look at the coolies, the milk-women, the water-carrier, the——"

"I could not paint a native; I dislike them too much. I can't see any beauty in them, and when you have been here a few years you will feel the same!"

I wonder if I shall. I think and hope not.

If the time comes when I cannot see the beauty of a mother bending over her baby; the touching helplessness of the decrepit old man; the appealing grace of joyous children at play; if, I repeat, I cannot see these and other human attributes simply because they are illustrated in a darker-coloured clay than I, I hope that Nemesis will be just enough to wipe me out of existence.

A Looker-On.

* * *

THE FUTURE OF SOCIALISM.

To the Editor of "The New Age."

Will you allow me to give a few of my impressions strengthened by my experience in the last election?

The classiness of the Labour Party seems to me fatal to its success. The sole argument put forward by the candidates is that they can best look after the "interests of the working class." But by the "interests" they apparently mean only such things as school feeding and old age pensions. They never inspire their hearers with the thought that they are part of this great nation which has much greater interests than these. There is never a word about foreign policy except to jeer at militarism, etc. This is not Socialism, and never can be, for Socialism is the combined interest of Society, not of the very poor only. Even as an appeal to the working class it is very meagre, because the greater number of them are not unemployed or abjectly poor.

Following on from this, I do implore the intellectual Socialists to stand for Parliament. We must get the

scientific array of facts which the Fabians and the Minority Report Commissioners have gathered up during the past twenty years. thoroughly known by the nation. The power of Lloyd George and the new Liberals lies in the fact that they have made some of these things known throughout England. Just as the Tractarian movement had very little effect in the Church until the "Ritualists" began to popularise the views of Newman and Pusey by "Limehouse" sermons and hard work in the slums, so it will be with Socialism. But the Ritualists have always kept in touch with the intellectual movement. This is their strength at the present time. For Sidney Webb to refuse to stand for Parliament is as if Bishop Gore had refused to be a bishop.

One other thing I wish to say. Could not the Labour Party (and the Socialist Party, when we have one in Parliament) deliberately stand outside all the peculiarly Liberal policies in regard to Church Schools, Disestablishment, Temperance, etc.? We lost heaps of votes by being mixed up with them. I should like Socialists to say to the Liberals, "When you bring forward your Education Bills, your Disestablishment Bills, and the rest, we will not support you at all. We think these things are wasting valuable time." I do not say this because I want the Church left alone, but because I honestly believe that there are far more important things to do than to reduce the Bishops' incomes. If Churchmen who are keen on social reform felt that to vote for a Socialist was to vote for a genuine social reformer, apart from these little ecclesiastical matters, he would often choose us in preference to a Tory.

Briefly then, what I want is a Socialist party of intellectuals, patriots, Nationalists, Independents.

James Adderley.

* * *

SECULAR EDUCATION IN FRANCE.

To the Editor of "The New Age."

"Stanhope of Chester's" remarks on Secular Education in France seem so unfair that I would be glad if you would find room for the following comments:—

I agree that character must have a moral basis, but this is not produced by religion. Morality has evolved through past ages from experience. Such moral traits have persisted which had a survival value and were found beneficial to the race.

Religion should not be taught in State schools, but moral instruction should be given on the lines indicated by the Moral Instruction League. What child ever learns any morality from the ordinary Scripture lessons? Throughout school life one is taught to be truthful, straightforward, honest and sincere; one's whole school training should be pervaded by such teaching. Scripture classes are useless for teaching morality. The instruction cannot be separated from theology and superstition.

In France the State schools are excellent, and criminal statistics show no lowering of the "morale" since secularisation. In every parish in France there is the church; the priest and his assistants hold regular classes preparing children for their first Communion.

M. Grousseau's complaint is a baseless one. Excellent training, both moral and educational, can be had gratis at the State school, and religious instruction, for all children whose parents so desire, is obtainable from the local priest. I speak with the experience gained from a three years' residence in France.

E. J. Fairhall.

* * *

"ON CAPITAL PUNISHMENT."

To the Editor of "The New Age."

The right of trussing a brother man into a state of helpless passivity, and then ceremoniously strangling him with a thick rope, is one of those sacred "vested interests" which your free-born Englishman is not going to surrender without a desperate struggle.

Capital punishment—that final expression of modern society's cruel cowardice—will find its stoutest defenders in the Churches, and among the reactionaries generally. It is too good and safe a weapon against an increasingly insolent democracy to be lightly discarded. Its staunchest supporters will be the priestly caste, and particularly the priests of the State religion, which, among its formularies, expressly enjoins the killing of criminals, "witches," etc., as a pious obligation; the religion which always deputes one of its officials to attend the solemn stranglings aforesaid in order to mutter throughout the ceremony something about "the most merciful Saviour," "the body of our dear brother," and "the love of God."

Until, therefore, we Socialists have completed the tedious task of imparting to official Christianity some of the rudiments of Christ's teachings, there is small hope of any definite progress towards the abolition of those twin brutalities, penal servitude and capital punishment.

But, in the meantime, we men Socialists can, if we choose, strike an occasional stealthy, deadly blow at these two revolting "Christian" institutions. As thus: An appreciable percentage of Socialists are summoned to the duties of jurymen. Let each man resolutely set himself (whatever may be the circumstances of the "crime" in question) to fight for a verdict of acquittal where a verdict of "guilty" would involve the least chance of a sentence of penal servitude or death. Observation has taught me that argument is quite useless with the ordinary juryman intoxicated by the sense of temporary power, and tainted with the bloodlust. Ordinary mulish obstinacy and silence is the most effective weapon.

"Immoral," "dishonest," "revolutionary!" howls the priest, the pandar-Press, and the pale person. Maybe, but the Socialist must choose the lesser of two evils; and, in any case, he can only fight with the weapons to hand.

No plea can avail the Socialist who consents to be hangman's assistant or deputy gaoler to the reactionaries.

Brandon Blake.

* * *

To the Editor of "The New Age."

I think Miss (or Mrs.) Hastings is unduly severe on the legal profession (to which I belong) in her remarks on capital punishment. I am willing to admit that the judges of a past age strained the plain words of the indictment, "wilfully, feloniously, and of malice aforethought," in the interests of the hangman, and also that they laid down the law of insanity in a manner which showed (even at the time that it was thus laid down) their ignorance of the subject; and owing to the fiction that the judges do not make the law, but merely interpret it, these early decisions hang like a millstone round the necks of the present judges, who have not the moral courage to free themselves from the trammels in which their predecessors involved them. But your correspondent writes as if the judges of the present day passed sentence of death on persons convicted of murder voluntarily and without compulsion, and never did anything to mitigate the penalty thus pronounced. The judge has at present no option but to pronounce sentence of death on every prisoner convicted of murder. This is not his doing, but the work of the legislature. And in the numerous cases in which the death sentence is pronounced, but not carried out, the judge is usually the moving party. The Home Secretary always consults the judge, and seldom departs from his recommendation. Moreover, even if the judges were harsh and cruel, it would not follow that the members of the legal profession were so. The lawyers have no power of altering the law. It is not, I think, correct to say that the lawyers "invented" the death penalty or that they "uphold it." Indeed, the mitigations of this penalty during the last century (though, of course, they had to be passed by the Legislature) actually originated with lawyers, who are usually pretty well represented in Parliament. There is no ground for alleging that the "law party" will not repeal our "murderous laws." There is no "law party." Lawyers sit on both sides of the House of Commons and of the House of Lords, and their opinions are divided on this subject of capital punishment as well as on almost every other subject.

A Bill to modify the law of murder (though probably not one to abolish the death penalty) would, I believe, be carried in the present House of Commons, with the assent of the majority of the members of the legal profession who sit in that House. But the Government has not taken up the question, and any measure introduced by a private member has very little chance of becoming law.

B. L.

* * *

UNIVERSITY INTELLIGENCE.

To the Editor of "The New Age."

The authorities of the Oxford University Press have decided to produce a sumptuous edition of the works of Oxford's greatest poet, Shelley. The edition will be the most authoritative ever published. The Professor of Poetry has consented to read the proofs, and the text will be equipped with a unique apparatus of critical notes, contributed to by over twenty dons, some of them holders of three or four degrees. The edition will be dedicated, by command, to His Majesty, and the proceeds arising from the sale will be expended in placing a memorial statue of the poet in the chancel of Christchurch Cathedral.

In this connection much annoyance has been caused to the authorities by a disgraceful practical joke perpetrated by an undergraduate of twenty, who has just issued from the press of a local Radical paper a blasphemous and obscene pamphlet, purporting to be the work of Shelley. In this disgusting production, which is written in verse, the Queen of the Fairies is introduced railing against royalty and religion, and advocating incest. The author of the outrage, whose real name appears to be Percy, has been expelled from the University, and the copies of his shameful performance are being called in with a view to its suppression.

L.

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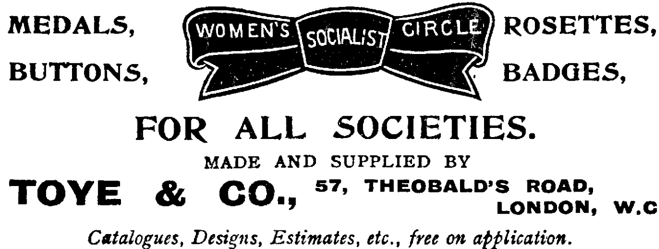

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