THE NEW AGE

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THERE have been rumours during the week that the Government has burned its boats on the subject of guarantees and is prepared to approach the King with a demand for the creation of Peers. Mr. Winston Churchill was responsible as usual for the first impression to this effect, but for once he has been seconded by another Cabinet Minister, Lord Crewe, who laid down the doctrine at Winchester that the Royal prerogative was not really a Royal prerogative at all, but merely one of the weapons of the chief Minister of the day. This may be true in fact if not in theory; but in practice the habitual use of the Royal prerogative by a party leader would end in tyranny. We do not say that the Ministerial exercise of the Royal prerogative is never justified, but the danger of employing it lightly or of employing it except in the very last resort lies in this, that what is done by Royal prerogative under one party leader may be equally easily undone by the same means by the leader of the opposite party. Our objection to the present use of the Royal prerogative is not based on basilolatry but on democracy. We are concerned that the contemplated revolution, if it should take place, should take place finally and irrevocably. A revolution that may be undone is a revolution that should never have been done.

* * *

The only means whereby the contemplated revolution may be made final is the consent of the people; and we may add that this consent needs to be much less passive and much more active than it appears to be at present. By an elaborate series of tactical movements in the House of Commons and elsewhere it is quite possible so to confuse the public mind as to give it the impression that nothing particular is taking place; but the upshot will one day be evident, and unless the people have really consented, their discovery of what has been done and of the means employed for doing it will simply arouse their indignation and determine them to reverse the changes. And Mr. Balfour in that day will profit more by the reaction than the Radicals will profit by the action of to-day. No great constitutional change ought to be made without the full consent of the people.

* * *

This, we should have thought, was so obvious a democratic principle that no Radical or Socialist should be found to deny it. Perhaps they do not in words, but by implication we find our friends almost as prone as the Lords to leave the people out of account, as if a constitutional revolution were a mere matter of Parliamentary procedure or an administrative change. Only on such an assumption is it possible to explain the genuine alarm displayed by Radicals and Labour men alike at the prospect of a General Election on the single issue of the Veto. Rather than an appeal to the people in the democratic form, Liberal journals, Radical and Labour politicians, are prepared to have recourse to any means of settling the question, even to means which merely promise to settle it. We have referred more than once to the suggestion that a Referendum should be taken in lieu of a General Election held. This wild notion has now left the pages of the "Nation" to find a lodgment in the brain of Mr. Barnes, the leader of the Labour Party. Familiar as he is with the practice of balloting in trade unions on subjects under discussion the idea of the Referendum no doubt appeals strongly to him; but we must point out that circumstances alter cases. Trade unions are managed by delegates and are run on the principles of delegacy; and the result of a ballot in a trade union is therefore an instruction to a servant. But democratic national government is not by delegacy but by representation; and members of Parliament are not the delegates of their constituents but the responsible interpreters and, if we may say so, their collective self. The introduction of the Referendum would infallibly lower the status of representative to that of delegate; and for this reason alone it must be opposed. There is a practical objection also which we have mentioned before, namely, that the taking of a Referendum would leave the present parties at their present strength. The difficulties at Westminster are largely arithmetical, and these difficulties would not be reduced by a change of expressed opinion in the country; particularly if that change were as usual expressed in the language of Babel.

* * *

The other device for avoiding an immediate General Election is, as we have said, the suggested use of the Royal prerogative. Apart from speculative but nevertheless contingent dangers, not unconnected with the present health of the most popular King England has ever had, the device, as we have already pointed out, is undemocratic. Besides, it would certainly prove unpopular. If the late election proved anything at all, it proved that the country had not completed the process

of making up its mind. We will give ourselves the benefit of the doubt and conclude that the national mind is being made up in the direction of abolishing oligarchical government, but we cannot go the whole length of Radicals and declare that the national mind is finally and clearly resolved of all doubts on the subject. To demand, therefore, that the King, even on the advice of his Ministers, should anticipate the decision of the national mind is to ask him to take the risks of a partisan and to identify himself with a party that conceivably may prove to be unrepresentative. No king who has so carefully as King Edward VII avoided the appearance, if not the reality, of partisanship would care to be placed in such a situation; and, what is more to the point, no king of King Edward's power and popularity could be placed in such a situation without endangering the very existence of the party that put him there. If we were malignantly disposed towards the Liberal Party, there is nothing better we could ask them than that they should allow themselves to be wagged by their Radical tail in this matter and pushed into forcing the hand of the Crown.

* * *

Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, in the "National Review" for this month, says: "I do not even admit that another election is necessary to make his (the King's) course clear." But is this quite fair? Doubtless if Mr. Macdonald were the King the King's course would be clear indeed, but so also would the mind of the country. Can anybody, however, pretend that there are no elements of doubt in the present situation? Is everything so clear that only two opinions are possible to intelligence? We would that it were. We would that everybody could see as clearly as Mr. Macdonald that the present problem is one of Democracy versus Oligarchy, and that either Oligarchy is doomed or England is; but, because we wish for such general lucidity, we cannot pretend that such general lucidity exists. The King's course, we repeat, is not clear, nor can it be made clear except by a fresh General Election, preceded by the vivid education of the country in the meaning of democracy.

* * *

But let us enumerate some further reasons in favour of a new election. At the risk of wearying our readers, we venture to repeat an old contention, that the present muddle is due to the mistake made by the Government in dissolving last November *before* producing the text of their Veto resolutions and *before* securing the promise of Royal guarantees. Mr. Macdonald, if we understand him rightly, now accepts this view as the "Nation," "Daily News," and other Radical organs have accepted it before him. But this view carries with it the implication that the last election was premature, and hence the uncertainty of its issue. It was premature because nobody outside Westminster knew very clearly what it was all about. The Budget had been thrown out by the Lords, it is true; but that act was so novel as to have no popular significance of a very definite kind. The general view was that the election was fought, if on anything in particular, on the Budget and on the Budget only. Mr. Asquith did his best to transfer attention to the question of the Veto of the Lords, but popular attention cannot easily be diverted until it has run its course. We do not say that the Lords' Veto was not an issue, even a paramount issue, in many constituencies; but it was inextricably confused both by the presence of the Budget, Tariff Reform, and the Navy, and by the absence of any textual propositions for dealing with the Lords.

* * *

We have the advantage in the coming election of being able to ensure a clear fight on a precise issue. The actual text of the Government's plans for dealing with the Lords is before the country; electors can be educated in it, and can be made to understand it. The instructions will no longer be carte blanche to the Government, but definite approval or disapproval of specific propositions. All that is needed is a vigorous educational and democratic campaign for the purpose of eliciting an unmistakeable decision in favour of democracy or of continued oligarchy. No other question of any electoral magnitude is likely to be raised or should be allowed to be raised. The Navy is out of the way, our thirteenth "Dreadnought" having been laid down last week. Tariff Reform will have validity only if the Budget is not passed; and we have every hope that by the time of the election the Budget will be law. Under these circumstances it will be possible to retrieve the error made in November and to repeat with better hope of success an election which everybody now admits was premature.

* * *

With better hope of success. That is worth repeating, in view of the pessimism which we understand prevails in Radical circles. Writing last week, the "Nation" says: "What all [meaning the "Nation" itself] do not understand is why this advice (to the King) should be delayed over another election, the favourable result of which is gravely jeopardised by this very process of delay and the doubts it generates." We are inclined to comment in the words of Emerson's Nature: "So hot, my little man?" What a state of mind in which to contemplate a great revolution. If the country cannot be trusted to repeat six months later its verdict of six months ago, what sort of revolutionary force is behind us? This attitude is a confession of weakness and an invitation to the enemies of democracy to cause delays. But we do not believe it to be justified. Fought with vigour and intelligence, the coming election will prove, we believe, a victory for democracy, such as the last cannot be said to have been. These Liberal augurs, optimist or pessimist, are generally wrong.

* * *

Another reason for an immediate General Election lies in the fact that the alternative is an election immediately *after* the Revolution. We are supposing that the Redicals have their way, that the Royal perogative is exercised, that sufficient peers are created to overcome the opposition of the Lords, and that the resolutions and the Bill based on them become law. These are impossible assumptions, but we will make them. Even then does any Radical suppose that the Government could continue in office as if it had done no more than eat its hors d'œuvres? Or suppose that it attempted this, would not one of its constituent groups in the inevitable squabble over the spoils of victory defeat the Government and send it packing to the country? The Irish, for example, would be quite prepared to insist on Home Rule without further ado, and also without a further appeal to the predominant partner. Would the Government have any escape from hasty legislation but in dissolution or in incurring defeat? And what, we ask, would be the attitude of the country to a Government that carried a resolution without general consent and came for approval when it had failed to mainstay itself? A Government defeated on the morrow of revolution would be a discredited Government, and the revolution it had done would most assuredly be undone.

* * *

Again, we may warn our rash friends that in the present doubt about the mind of the country there is the certainty of division among their leaders. It is known that the Cabinet is at sixes and sevens on many collateral problems connected with the Lords: the problem of a Second Chamber, the problem of Reform of the Lords, and even on the question of the advisability of abolishing the general legislative veto of the Lords at all. Mr. Haldane, for example, was put up to move the abolition of the financial veto solely because it was the only veto he would personally have abolished or, in fact, touched. And who, in the absence of any definite public decision, can say he is not entitled to his opinion or that it is not representative? We are tired of the iterated charges of treachery brought by Radicals against their leaders, charges which in the end only amount to saying that their leaders differ from them in the interpretation of public opinion. On the result of the last election any Cabinet Minister is entitled to hold almost any opinion regarding the reform of the Lords. The abolition of the financial veto is the only common

denominator. A fresh general election is necessary, therefore, on the text of the resolutions to give clear guidance even to the Liberal leaders. Without that we venture to prophesy that a compromise will be effected, and without any "treachery."

* * *

Finally, we return to the democratic ground where, in fact, we are safest. Constitutional changes are, of all changes, those in which the people have the most intimate right to be fully and freely consulted. We dissent entirely from that reading of history that attributes constitutional revolutions to a minority. Such revolutions have been in all cases no more than administrative changes in oligarchy. But democratic changes require the consent of democracy, and without that consent they are nothing, and worse than nothing. If we deplore the apathy the public are at present displaying in the presence of proposed changes in the constitution the remedy is not to carry out those changes behind their backs or above their heads, but to enlist the understanding and the active sympathy of the masses whose future political fortunes are involved. That they will understand what is being done in all its fulness and in all its potentialities is improbable, even when lucidity has been exhausted in explanation, but that they will consent to the next step in democratic development, if it be fairly put to them, is as certain as the fact that they have taken all the steps which have led : p to it. The moment is come for acting on the old Liberal watchword: "Trust the people that they go forward!"

* * *

To the current "Fortnightly Review," Mr. G. F. Abbott and Mr. Zangwill have contributed two able articles upon the future of the Jews. These articles are of particular moment to the Socialist parties, because Socialism will have to grapple, sooner or later, with the Jewish Question. Both these writers hint at the revival of an anti-Semitic agitation in England. Were such an agitation launched, the English Jews would find themselves, largely through their own fault, in a perilous situation. The humane Liberalism of the nineteenth century, of which the Jews availed themselves, is dying out. The materialism of the age, promoted by the Jewish financiers, who rarely assist any humanitarian movement but usually oppose it, is overcoming the Liberal sentiment for the rights of man. The old-fashioned Liberal argued that the Jew was a man and was entitled to the benefits of citizenship. The new Liberal has found that the rich Jews have ranged themselves against Liberalism. The Socialist is forced to recognise that the Jews are so identified with financial exploitation that they will be powerful enemies to any proposed economic alteration in the basis of Society. The South African War, and the intrigues preceding it, warned many Englishmen where the financial influence of the Jews was carrying England. Liberalism lost hope in Judaism when the conspiracy of Beit and his distinguished accomplices was unravelled.

* * *

Is the case for Free Trade stronger than most Socialists have hitherto believed? Count Posadowsky, an impartial witness, has drawn a gloomy picture of the lives of the German masses, as was pointed out in these columns last week. This week a British consular report on New York warns English working men against assuming New York is a paradise of wealth, wages, and employment, as the Tariff Reformers are always pretending. These are the Consul's words :—

> Expenses of living are so high and are so constantly rising, that a man in regular work in the United Kingdom at lower wages is as well, if not better, off than his fellow-workmen in New York at higher wages; whilst, if he is out of work, he is better off at home. It is estimated that to live in decency a man, his wife, and a couple of children must spend just £200 a year.

So much for Germany and the United States. Taking their two best countries, the Tariff Reformers are refuted by impartial authorities who state that the economic state of German and United States workmen is as bad as, if not worse than, in England.

The Prevention of Destitution Bill.

By Hilaire Belloc, M.P.

Most people who have anything to do with politics, amateur or professional, have been shouted at for the past few weeks in favour of a scheme drawn up by Mr. Sidney Webb, the statistician, with the aid of his wife, for dealing with the lives of people much poorer than themselves—people so poor that they have not even that minimum which our very elastic modern humanity demands for the lives of its citizens.

This scheme of Mr. Webb's has been drawn up in a Bill bearing the ominous title "Prevention of Destitution Bill." I say "ominous" because titles of that sort nearly always go with eccentricities, and latterly have gone with very dangerous and wicked eccentricities. The proposal recently passed into law to leave habitual pickpockets indefinitely at the mercy of their warders (only the active opposition of a very few led to the warders having only five years instead of a lifelong power) was called "The Prevention of Crimes Bill," and I have no doubt that when a Bill is brought in to prevent anyone eating meat or drinking beer it will be called "The Prevention of Diseases Bill."

Now what I have to ask of Socialists in a Socialist journal (if the editor can spare me the space) with regard to this scheme and the ten thousand others which it resembles, and the whole spirit out of which it has grown, is this question: What connection is there between all this and Socialism?

I do not ask the question merely by way of an intellectual pastime, still less with the object of catching out an opponent under conditions so obviously in my favour as to be almost unfair.

I ask it because it seems to me the prime question of our time, and because if people get in the habit of shirking that question, or of thinking about it in the muddle-headed way which is the effect of too much statistics, or of thinking along lines of words instead of along lines of ideas, and calling such reforms "Socialism" without having taken the trouble to analyse their meaning, we shall soon end up in a state of society the very reverse of that which Socialism sets out to create.

No one out of a booby-shop denies that, on the material and temporal side of human life, the great evil of our time in England is the ill-distribution of the means of production among the citizens.

The control of the means of production has, through the action of a detestable philosophy which has been steadily at work for many generations, drifted into the hands of a small minority; and meanwhile the vast majority (whose lives are rendered by this condition of affairs for the most part insufficiently nurtured and nearly always uncertain and perilous) are still in theory free citizens in a free State. They are as much responsible to the common law as though they enjoyed economic security, they still live under old institutions which presuppose economic security, and they are permitted by their votes (in theory again) to direct the Commonwealth.

It is self-evident that such a state of affairs is not in moral equilibrium. In other words, it can't last. And it is equally self-evident that it must end in one of two solutions. Either we shall end up in the Servile State, or we shall end up in a state where the means of production, whether distributed or collected, are under the control of the great mass of the population: the latter of these solutions, the collection of the Means of Pro-

duction into the hands of the community, is Socialism, and nothing else is Socialism.

It is never possible to forecast the future, and nothing is more ridiculous among the ridiculous diseases of our time than the confident habit of prophecy. But it is often possible to say that one of two mutually exclusive and collectively universal results must follow from a particular situation; for instance, if a man falls into a tideway he will either get drowned or he won't. If a man is in bed with double, pneumonia he will either die or get better within a given time; and if a society is wobbling on the top of a wall it must fall on one side or the other.

Our society is wobbling; and though we cannot yet tell which way it will fall, because it lacks political initiative and a corporate will, yet it must of necessity either fall into the Servile State or into a state where the means of production, either (as Socialists desire) through collection or through distribution, are controlled by the great mass of the population.

Consider what is meant by the Servile State.

It is a state in which the means of production are controlled by a certain restricted number of people who alone have the full advantages of citizenship, and who alone are politically as well as economically free. They are responsible for their actions, they direct Government, they react upon the State, and with them alone does the State directly deal as citizens. The rest of the people, the great mass, do not enjoy or suffer this civic responsibility: the few free citizens are responsible for the rest, and are in legal theory as in economic fact their masters. The servile mass so constituted has lost its political freedom, but has gained security and perhaps sufficiency. Every act tending to make the capitalist class responsible for those who are not capitalists, every such act which defines the duties of the capitalist without tending to nationalise or to distribute capital, every act regulating the proletariat without putting the means of production into their power is an act tending towards the Servile State. For instance, if you make A responsible for what B has done to C, pro tanto you make A the master of B or of C or of both; for you give A a claim to prevent B from hurting C, or to prevent C from putting himself in a position where B may hurt him. Again, if you establish compulsory arbitration for the settlement of disputes between capital and labour, you are not only binding capital to employ labour under certain conditions, you are also making labour under those same conditions compulsory by force of law. You are establishing a political bond between master and man which recognises the master as master and the man as his servant. You are separately defining the status of the capitalist, admitting this peculiar privileges and responsibilities, treating him as a recognised organ in the State, but you are not tending either to nationalise or to distribute his capital. Far from it. You are building barriers which prevent the collection into public or the distribution into numerous hands of capital as it is now owned by a privileged few. Conversely, you are defining the status of the proletariat, you are recognising it as occupying a definite political position, but you are doing nothing on earth to make it cease to be a class dispossessed of the means of production; contrariwise, you are erecting barriers which will make it less and less likely to attempt a control of those means of production.

I am not arguing here whether the Servile State is the vile thing I think or the excellent thing others may think it. I am quite sure that in their heart of hearts the people who frame such Bills as the Prevention of Destitution Bill think it a good thing. "Running" the poor is their hobby, and the occupation of the ample leisure which their own position as capitalists affords them. But whether it is a good thing or a bad thing one thing is certain: the Servile State is the negation of that state which Socialists by definition demand. It is a negation of it in theory and in practice, and once even partially established as a tendency it would make any return upstream impossible.

Let anyone pick up this document, the Prevention of Destitution Bill, and consult the whole of its ninety-five clauses, to discover, if he can, in any of them the machinery by which it may even tend to put the control of the means of production into the hands of the mass of the citizens.

I am not talking of those details in its provisions which betray or adumbrate a dislike of democracy—I am talking of the actual machinery it proposes to set up. Let us examine this machinery.

The Bill proposes the appointment of a Minister for Labour, who is to be nominated by "the Crown"—that is, in plain English, co-opted by a little clique of professional politicians who divide between them the power exercised by the two Front Benches in Parliament, and who are themselves the result of previous co-option like any club or a college common room. It gives to county and borough councils already elected upon the most numerous and therefore confused of issues a special power to decide upon all causes and cases of destitution within the area they govern, and permits this little group, whose constitution proceeds from a jumble of inept "party" voting and local demands, to appoint committees (sub-oligarchies utterly removed from popular pressure) which shall have despotic control over such enquiries.

In that province of enquiry which is most offensive to the poor (cross-examination upon their physical condition, interfering with domestic arrangements, the enforcing of compulsory vaccination, etc.), Clause 29 specifically insists that the Committee shall be absolute. It gives to the Council the specific power (in Clause 38) to apportion money arbitrarily in the shape of pensions to those whom they happen to favour. By Clause 42 yet another Committee will decide who is and who is not (among the poor—not among the rich) mentally defective; nor is the Committee bound (by Clause 4, which defines the term) even to pretend that their prisoners under this power are imbecile or lunatic. If the precious Committee find that they drink too much, it will be able to get them in its clutches. Of course, arbitrary powers of this sort have already been set up and are already in the hands of irresponsible busy-bodies. No one who has studied complaints from inebriate "homes" or from poor people imprisoned in great asylums, doubts the present power of "the authorities" in this respect. My point is that this document, which claims to appeal especially to Socialists, vests these new and much wider powers not even in the general and therefore intangible body of a Council elected upon every sort of issue, but actually in a Committee of such a body!

In connection with all this there is, as you may imagine, the creation of salaried posts; and it is the Council, note you, that is to appoint to those new posts. The officials who, enjoying such salaries, register the cases in which the Council has seen fit to give a benefit or to inflict restraint, are responsible to the Council, not to the public, and the public may not consult their registers (Clauses 52 and 53). The Committee alone decide whether one of their protégés is receiving benefits from several sources at once or not (Clause 55). The wretched man or woman whom the Committee does not approve of has an appeal; to whom do you think? To a popular vote or even to a court of justice? Not at all; to the Council again (Clause 56). Clause 58 allows indeed any person claiming to be entitled to relief to apply as he does to-day, but it is for the Council to decide whether he shall have relief or not.

So far I have only been examining this typical document where it regards those whom society must in one way or another keep alive, because they cannot keep themselves alive by labour; the way preferred, of course, by the document, is that they should be kept alive with as much fuss, registration, running, and

restraint generally, as can be crammed into the system; and under the impersonal motive of a body not tangible by its victims, and it proposes to do this without a hint even of that public endowment or monopoly in some one trade which might give the whole a Socialist tinge; that is only what one would expect from the source whence the Bill proceeds. But when we come to its third part, which deals with the able-bodied unemployed, we can ask with even more pertinence, "What has this to do with Socialism?"

The very first clause centralises every power in the professional politician who shall have been co-opted from one of the two Front Benches, as "Minister for Labour." He shall have the further power to nominate off his own bat any number of well-paid under-secretaries, each presiding over one of at least half a dozen great departments. He shall be master throughout the kingdom of the labour exchanges, of insurance against unemployment, of seeing to the operation of the laws which limit the conditions of labour, of a statistical department, of the supervision of emigration and immigration, and above all of that new division concerning "maintenance and training" which is created in Clause 82, and which is the gist of the whole Bill.

The object of Clause 82 is to give to this politician and his staff the management of that margin of the able-bodied proletariat which is not absorbed by the labour market at any given time.

In the first clause of Part Three which defines this new category of, I will not say citizens, but at any rate human beings, vagrants are, of course, included. The vagrant is meat and drink to the peculiar moral appetite which frames such Bills as these. He can be bullied with an impunity which must, I think, irradiate with an almost indecent joy the mind of your reformer. Meanwhile, let us see what is to be done for the margin of the proletariat. Assistance in a labour colony is to be "granted" under Clause 82 by this new all-powerful Minister of Labour to those who can find no employment through the national labour exchanges. His actions are to be sifted (under pain of punishment), he is to be cross-examined and turned inside out like any applicant to the C.O.S. to see whether he is not a recalcitrant worker who is or has been sullen in his previous efforts to maintain the landlord and the capitalist. (Clause 84.) If his service to these classes has hitherto been cheerful and ungrudging he is to be "granted" assistance.

What assistance?

Why, when this charitable action has taken place the beneficiary of it is "to receive" (by force of course) "such physical and mental training" as the politician "may think fit." He is (Clause 83) "required" to be in attendance in a compound termed "a colony," where he will do such work as he is told, while his family in some place apart are receiving relief from public moneys. What is to happen if he gets bored in the "colony" and knocks off for a day, or in a mad moment of virility climbs the high wall, Mr. Webb's scheme does not tell us—but we can guess.

The reader may ask whether this scheme for putting citizens (or should I say comrades?) into compounds, applies to the whole population. The answer is in the negative. It does not apply to the class to which the Webbs belong, nor indeed to anyone, who, under the present capitalistic system, is in possession of the means of production. It applies only to the very poor. The authors of the proposal cannot wriggle out of it by pretending that this imprisonment will only result upon a voluntary application—though that would be bad enough. A man who asks another man for money to keep him alive can be condemned to twelve months' servitude in these compounds. A man who has despaired in our dreadful society even of that resource, and who takes to the road, picking up his living as he can, will also be condemned if Mr. Webb has his way to this form of forced labour. So, for the poor there is to be no choice, they must go into the compound or gaol. If they are wise they will prefer gaol.

There is this Prevention of Destitution Bill in a nutshell.

All that I might have quoted to show by allusion what its general spirit was I have omitted. As, for instance, the providing of the professional politician in question with £100 a week, the very sensible (and also very significant) exclusion of the Irish from such proposals, and twenty other points. Every line in the Bill reeks with the spirit of drouth, of an inhuman interest in figures without vitality; and the whole of it titilates with that itch to manage the affairs of others, that eagerness to enjoy a mixture of petty mastery and clerical occupation, which is the nearest emotion such reformers betray to a creative appetite.

But even suppose there be any considerable number of those most interested, the poor, who could be found to approve of such a scheme? Even suppose that the intolerable conditions produced by morals and an ancestry of which the Manchester school was the blossom and these reforms are the fruit, have driven a considerable number of citizens to such despair that a scheme of this kind seems preferable to their unhappy lives, even granting that dreadful postulate, I ask again: What has it to do with Socialism?

It gives the middle class, the politicians and the rest, a fine time of it! It organises the poor like a flock of sheep. It effects plenty of those results which the opponents of Socialism tell us Socialism might bring; but of the main principles of Socialism it contains not a word. Of that democratic judgment which is the genesis (among other ideals) of Socialism, it presents flat contradiction. Of the prime concrete proposal of Socialism—the proposal which makes Socialism Socialism—the proposal to transfer the means of production from private hands to the mass of the community—it contains no hint.

It is easy to point out why the ordinary fellow who never has had or will have any Socialism in him (but who, on the contrary, thinks that society can never be healthy until the means of production are widely distributed) should spew out from his mouth inhuman stuff of this sort. It is equally easy to see why those who look forward to the Servile State as the ideal end of our present troubles love such schemes. But why should a Socialist support it?

Women and Literature.

By D. Triformis.

It has been suggested to me that I should write about the standard of woman's intellectual ideal. The phrase is formidable, and not least so for the reason that it indicates a mystery. How may I convey in language which will not cause our friends, the apotheosists of woman, to seek my destruction that I am not at all certain that such a standard exists or has ever yet existed? Besides, my soul is scarcely healed of the wound given it by the militant Suffragettes. I pointed out to them the folly of violence. They ceased violence two weeks later; and though I take no responsibility for anything it is certain that my word was not untimely. I suggested that the absurdities catalogued by the militants as reasons why women want the vote would influence statesmen against trusting women with the vote, though I admitted the force of persuasion in these demands to impel married women to cry for the vote. The demands, when scheduled by Lady McLaren and presented seriously to Parliament, the militant leaders could not too hastily renounce. Yet, far from inviting me to discover further errors in their ways, far from recommending me to their members as a long-headed and clear-sighted person, they attacked me with the "refined ferocity" of silence. Only Miss Florence Underwood, W.F.L., came to say that since THE NEW AGE existed for free discussion it was not worth threepence of her money, and she wouldn't buy it any more.

Now with such an experience rankling in my mind, and knowing as I do know that my remarks upon the intellectual standard of women may still further embarrass the people who do not wish to see things as they are, it is with diffidence that I venture even a few observations, backed though they be by example. For

we see that in these days it is not sufficient that a woman should claim mere equality with men. She must proclaim herself superior. As Mrs. Philip Snowden so nobly expresses it: "There are no heights too great for a man to rise to if woman will only point the way." That shows very plainly the respective levels of man and woman. We cannot suppose that woman is to point the way from the swamp up the mountain She is there high up, waving man on to glory. Perhaps it would be better if we made the sentence even clearer and were to say: "There are no heights too great for Herbert to rise to if Mabel will only point the way." Then we can appreciate the deep inner spiritual meaning of this great truth.

But to people who look at facts instead of listening open-mouthed to the woman's gospel, there come disquieting demonstrations which force them to believe that women do not precisely estimate their moral and intellectual influence. I am not concerned here with the failure of woman's moral influence, as evidenced beyond dispute in her own moral and physical subjection to man. But the vanity of woman's intellectual claim is scarcely less prodigious. Unless we can bear to see ourselves as we really are there is small hope, no hope, that women may ever rise to men's intellectual level, let alone point the Higher Path. And we shall gain nothing but a questionably flattering quotation of our silly remarks in men's newspapers if we persist in delivering ourselves of inflated sentiments. Mabel, indeed, cannot point the intellectual way to Herbert.

To begin with, women have no tradition worth calling intellectual. We have yet to make one. We have no standard but the standard of men. A more useful standard we cannot easily imagine. But, judged by this standard, what have we done? It will be urged that we have not had a fair chance. Agreed. But the admission sweeps away all our claim to intellectual equality.

Now let us try to see where we are weakest that we may begin, in the liberty of education we may reasonably hope to keep henceforth, to amend our defects and fortify our strong places. We shall make no improvement until we have applied self-criticism. Men have criticised us in vain. When they derided us with not being able to mould an idea, with producing everything a little incomplete, we must surely have shut ourselves up and read syntax instead of living so that our view of the world might become more embracing. In the literary branch of letters and memoirs critics applauded our skill; and surely we must have grown to believe all our little doings important, for such reams of trivialities as go to make the modern woman novelist a plague and a persecution to reviewers could not otherwise have been thought worth the trouble of writing.

We suffer most from a weak and limited grasp of ideas. Ideas form style. We see how in memoirs, where our ideas are related to life, we can create lasting works. If to produce chronicles is the literary pinnacle we aim at, our satisfaction is fairly certain, even if we do not widen our interests; but if we wish to create works of imagination we must first have knowledge of life to preserve us from sentimentalism and false ideals; and to be sure that our standard of production is not a common one, we must know the best which has been done in the past. The necessity of humbling ourselves to hear these essentials as if they were truths just newly uttered will be evident to any woman who will study the current literature produced by women and will put out of her mind the inane dithyrambs of platform eulogists of woman. Woman is behind, far behind, in the intellectual world.

The "Dictionary of Current English Literature," published by Messrs. Dent, makes unpleasant reading for a woman. We have to read such catalogues as these:—

Lord Avebury, Arthur J. Balfour, Sir Robert Ball. Then comes seventeen names of men before we find: Annie Besant, theosophist.

Sir W. Gilbert, Israel Gollancz, Edmund Gosse; and the next woman is Sarah Grand, "The Heavenly Twins."

W. S. Lilly, Sir Norman Lockyer, Sir Oliver Lodge; and the next woman is Helen Mathers, "Comin' Through the Rye."

So little do we seem to matter that the compilers of this dictionary have inadvertently omitted the name of a woman of real, if ephemeral, genius, Olive Schreiner. There may be other serious omissions (some people will believe Miss Alice Gardner equally worthy with her brother Percy Gardner), but they cannot make an appreciable difference. Except by Constance Garnett and Jane Harrison scholarship among women is unrepresented. There are three or four—not more—minor poets and essayists, and the rest of the women's names are those of novelists, some of them being notoriously unliterary.

Is it not time we ceased waving flags and pretending to point the heights for men to rise to? Can we doubt that men are laughing at us when they quote such pomposities as that sentence by Mrs. Philip Snowden? This type of genius makes all of us uncomfortable when she offers as contributions to literature her articles on the superiority of woman. We have yet to earn *equality* in the intellectual sphere, and superiority is at least further away than that. And we ruin ourselves by rhapsodising!

It is not easy, but it is necessary, for women writers to realise how fast we are yet chained by superstition, convention *and* the tradition about ourselves and our view of life handed down to us by literary men. All these illusions limit our conception and execution of works of art. We have no religious touchstone of our own upon which to try our ideas. Our religion is a purely masculine affair, even when separated as far as possible from dogma. But that subject cannot be dealt with at the end of an article.

Twopence on Treacle.

By Wordsworth Donisthorpe.

Is it photography that has taken all the starch out of our battle-cries? "Charge, Asquith, charge! On, Winston on!" fails to thrill. We must fall back on our banners.

> Yet still their banners tossing in the blast,
> Bore "Ever ready," faithful to the last.

But even the mottoes and legends of modern days have lost their savour. The opposing hosts muster and deploy; the rival battle-cries rend the air—but listen to them. "Budget or Death," "Twopence on Treacle." Somehow we are not inspirited.

> It was a goodly sight
> To see the pennons rolling their long waves
> Before the gale, and banners broad and bright,
> Tossing their blazonry.
> *Twopence on Treacle.*
> St. George might waken from the dead,
> To see fair England's standard fly.
> *Budget or Death.*

Or is it that we are getting more logical, more practical? We want to know not so much that we are fighting the infidels or Saracens, but why we are fighting them. What is it all about? Where do *we* come in? Name-calling may be a useful adjunct, but it is not everything. Rival religious sects call one another Infidels and Heretics; rival dynasties call one another Pretenders and Rebels. Political parties used to call one another Bog-trotters and Whigs. And perhaps there was a sense of glee in getting one's knife into a Bog-trotter.

And now we Unionists are summoned to gird up our loins and go at something; and that something is called Socialism. The Budget, we are told, is socialistic. It sounds horrid, and we buckle on our armour. But is the Budget socialistic? And if so, why? Let us begin at the beginning.

There is one item of expense which the shareholders of all companies and the citizens of all States must agree to bear; and that is the cost of the management. Neither a joint-stock company nor a State can be managed for nothing. Therefore, if the joint aim of the members is worth pursuing (and both Socialists and

Individualists are agreed that it is) taxation of some kind is necessary. Then what is socialistic taxation? Mr. Lloyd George walks up to your door: "How much property have you got? How did you get it? What form is it in—land and houses, pigs and turnips, stocks and shares? How long have you had it? Did you earn it by work? Did you get it from your father or your second cousin? Let me look at your books. What is your income? What has it been on an average over the last seven years? Very well, then I will take so much." Mr. Balfour stands at the gate: "What have you got in that bag? Cigars? I will take forty of them. And that brandy, is it overproof? Allow me; I will take half that. And this is butter from Denmark. Let me see; I have just put threepence extra on that. And this sugar. Ah! we have to consider the marmalade vote. Yes, that will be—thank you."

Is it not obvious that there is nothing to choose between the two systems? Both are variable and shifty, and therefore unjust; both are irritating, oppressive, costly, and impeditive of trade; and both bring into existence an army of tax-gatherers, spies, and busybodies on the one hand and a gang of shufflers and smugglers on the other. If one system is socialistic so is the other. Individualism cannot breathe in a land full of prying and fumbling officials. As John Stuart Mill said: "An Englishman dislikes not so much the payment as the act of paying; he dislikes seeing the face of the tax-collector and being subjected to his peremptory demands." Quite so; good old Englishman! Both systems of taxation now before the country bring the taxpayer face to face with the tax-gatherer; both empower officials to interfere with the freedom of the citizen in ways and to an extent which the needs of the State in no way warrant. The coming battle is not between so-called Socialism and so-called Tariff Reform, but between Radical socialism and Tory socialism; that is all. And now, my dear free and independent elector, which will you have? The burglar in the house or the highwayman on the road? That is the choice before you; there is no alternative.

The late Mr. Auberon Herbert maintained that all taxation is socialistic; and this position is tenable. He held that the State revenue should be raised by what is known as "the circulation of the hat." I prefer to say that taxes properly levied for performing the necessary duties of the State are not socialistic; but that taxes levied for socialistic purposes are themselves socialistic. This seems a rational view. Thus we are all agreed that it is the essential duty of the State to defend the country against foreign invasion, and to maintain an efficient judiciary and police-force for preventing and punishing crime and for enforcing the fulfilment of contracts. Taxes for these purposes are not socialistic. But what is the use of riding a tilt against Socialism in general and advocating it in particular? Why protest against pensioning old people at the general expense while at the same time you are educating young people out of the same pocket? Let us be consistent. If State crèches, free circuses and theatres, and free meals are socialistic so also are free schools, free libraries, and a State Church. And so are the taxes and rates levied for those purposes. They must all stand or fall together. Let pot and kettle play their usual part. Let Mr. Lloyd George, instead of parrying the taunt, get up and admit, "Yes, my Budget is socialistic, and so is the Budget you want to put in its place."

Yet there is a good and a bad way of levying taxes even for legitimate purposes. All taxation is an evil, though it may be a necessary one. But Henry George's 90 per cent. rent-tax is in no respect more socialistic than Mr. Balfour's twopence on treacle. Either or both may be inexpedient; either or both may be foolish or unjust. Some forms of taxation are less objectionable than others; that is admitted. And all can be thrown into one of two classes—direct and indirect. Last winter the country was asked two or three questions carefully tied in a knot by both parties deliberately with a view to obfuscation. And it answered limply: "We don't quite know." Four years ago it was asked a plain question point blank: "Will you stick to Free Trade or return to Protection?" And the answer was equally plain and unmistakable: "We will stick to Free Trade." Thundering it came, and all heard it. And yet we are now told that the same old question is about to be asked again. Are we, then, Athenians? England has expressed her determination to have nothing more to do with the Artful Dodger. Since new taxes are always unjust, does it not seem the height of folly to set up a Jack-in-office empowered to shift taxes from one commodity to another, and from one class to another, without any guiding principle other than his own whims and caprices—perhaps even his prejudices and his pocket? Import and export duties, as at present levied, clog the wheels of commerce. Industry should march boldly and securely instead of, as under the system of Protection, tremblingly, with one eye on the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Our grandfathers clipped that gentleman's wings sixty odd years ago; but they are beginning to grow again. Our rulers are again arrogating to themselves powers and abilities long ago disclaimed. They imagine themselves cleverer than the rulers of foreign peoples—a view which is reciprocated. Each State vainly tries to cheat or out-manœuvre its neighbours by selecting certain commodities for custom duties. But although our tax-manipulators hope to succeed in scoring off our rivals, it is more than probable that our rivals will put up tax-jugglers quite as capable of scoring off us; we have no monopoly of the talent.

If the famous compromise at which the two sections of the Unionist Party have arrived is based (as I believe) on the adoption of indirect as opposed to direct taxation, let us be told so, and we shall know how to act. But there is no time to lose. The country expressed itself quite clearly four years ago, and it is not going to stultify itself now. It is commonly supposed that indirect taxation cannot be adopted without setting up some functionary to fix from time to time what things shall pay custom dues and how much. But it can easily be shown that such is not the case. Indirect taxation is quite compatible with Free Trade! Visions of Custom-house fumblings, of revenue cutters, and of smugglers' caves need not disturb the sleep of those who would substitute optional taxes on consumption for arbitrary taxes on the natural reward of industry and intelligence. The former are just and merciful; the latter are unjust and highly inexpedient, tending as they do to drive capital and, worse still, intelligence out of the country.

Down with the Custom-houses, away with the income-tax. If the new Centre Party is not prepared to sweep away all direct taxes sooner or later we have no use for it. A uniform tonnage-tax should take the place of all the direct taxes. The change may be gradual, but it must begin at once. Englishmen, poor and rich alike, are tired of these straw-coloured papers asking insolent questions. I have this morning received one of these impudent papers, requiring me under a penalty of £20 to make a declaration which only a liar could make before wading through all the directions and rules of the Income Tax Acts, whatever and wherever they may be. Is my house used partly for trade or business purposes? If the Editor of The New Age sends me a tenner for this article am I now using this house for business purposes? I know several well-to-do ladies who breed Persian cats and make quite a nice little income by selling the kittens for £10 or £20 each. Are they engaged in trade? The framer of the interrogatories will not use plain English, and clearly does not understand law-English, if English it can be called. I am asked for the name of the owner, but whether the legal or the equitable owner I am not told. I am asked whether any land tax is paid, and if so by whom. Surely this is a question which no responsible payee need ask a payer. A little note at the bottom right-hand corner informs me that if I happen to be a woman I must add particulars of my sexual relations! Thank heaven, I am not a woman. I wonder how many women will forfeit £20 or go to prison for put-

ting this straw-coloured piece of inquisitorial vulgarity at the back of the fire?

Although not absolutely unversed in legal phraseology, I can honestly declare that I could not truthfully answer one single question out of the twelve asked. Do Socialists really want this kind of thing? Or do they only think they want it? Even the State might behave like a gentleman, and taxes can be levied without adding insult to injury. If I don't want to pay a sovereign for scratching a crest on my cream-jug, I use a plain one; if I can't afford to pay eightpence for a threepenny cigar, I buy a penny one for sixpence or smoke a pipe; if I grudge twopence for my 'bus fare, I walk; if I want a mahogany table, I am willing to pay my shilling to the sea-police (the British Navy) for safely convoying the wood from Honduras, otherwise I put up with a deal table. No tax is just or tolerable which cannot be evaded in time of stress and strain. It ought to be a real pleasure to pay our taxes; just as we cheerfully pay for our railway ticket in preference to walking. The pleasure of living in a free and safe country is worth paying for; better worth paying for than membership of a good club. Individualists voted in 1906 for Mr. Asquith and his friends because they were opposed to Protection; they voted for Mr. Balfour and his friends last winter because they were opposed to certain direct taxes. How they will vote in a few weeks' time I do not pretend to know. I personally intend not to vote at all. And I expect that most members of my party will do likewise.

The Philosophy of a Don.

IV.—Life in Bœotia.*

Every man has a certain ideal of happiness—of some form of existence which exists only in his imagination. With most men that ideal is as vague as a dream: something quite elusive, something that can no more be defined than realised. It is otherwise with us dons. We are perfectly contented with our actual existence.

To us Oxbridge is what Mount Olympus was to the gods of old, according to Homer; or what, according to a brother-Bœotian, the Valley of the Nile is to the fellaheen of to-day: a seat of everlasting peace and unruffled serenity. For this we thank Providence—Providence that has made life so easy and so uneventful in Oxbridge, where falls not hail, nor rain, nor any snow of distress, but the old stream of learning overflows year after year, certain examinations follow at certain seasons, and the lecturer drones day by day across an unchanging syllabus, enlivened by the witticisms—so subtle, so abstruse, so microscopic—which are sanctioned by the tradition of æons. There are no uncertainties in this life, no doubts, no spiritual travail, no searching of hearts, no financial tribulations; and it knows no contrasts; but it seems to follow one course, yesterday, to-day, and for ever, without pain and without joy.

Here in this rarified atmosphere the differences between profit and loss, between day and night, between right and wrong, even between black and white, are hardly discernible. We live in a twilight that might aptly be called the Twilight of the Gods. We love to view the lives of ordinary men from the empyrean, even as the gods view them, without seeking to understand how they hold together under the surface; and as the empyrean is some way distant, it is small wonder if their difficulties and contradictions are invisible to us. Not that we regret this divine limitation. Why should we trouble ourselves with things terrestrial? Our own life is enough for us. It is a life whose placid tenour care dare not disturb with its evil sting. It is a life in which the unexpected never happens, and one that knows no to-morrow. It is the nearest approach to celestial imperturbability possible on earth. If, thanks to its very perfection, it lacks the charm of progress, it possesses the superior fascination of permanence.

I have heard this Olympian existence described by many an unflattering adjective—all of which, when reduced to logical dimensions, may be synopsised in the one word "Useless." But it can easily be demonstrated that, whatever our faults may be, uselessness is certainly not among them. Well has the Wise Man said concerning us: "Immovably moored to the same station by the strength of their cables and the weight of their anchors, they enable the historian of the human mind to measure the rapidity of the current by which the rest of the world is borne along." Of how many communities—with the possible exception of the Roman Church, the Chinese Empire, and the House of Lords—could the same thing be truthfully affirmed?

It is quite natural that the crude social elements that have of late years risen to the surface of their own efforts should misunderstand and depreciate our cultured and inherited conservatism, and that our antique, statuesque repose should be stigmatised as an indolent pose. But we treat all such denunciations with the same lofty and tolerant indifference with which the gods treat the maledictions of petulant mortals. For, if we err at all, we err not on the side of humility.

This vulgar prejudice against elegant idleness can easily be accounted for. The scholar's spirit is so light, so ethereal, that it loves to hang loose in mid-air, as the refined sediment of hock hangs in mid-bottle, instead of collecting at the bottom of the vessel, as is the case with common spirits; and it offends the soul of a plebeian worker—if a plebeian worker can, philosophically speaking, be said to have a soul—fixed to his stool by dire necessity, to see another man floating in beatific freedom, as sorely as it offends the eye of the sensitive connoisseur to see a speck floating in wine. In both cases the objects of offence trouble the spectator's peace of mind even when they are quite harmless.

But the honest plebeian is not the only critic we have to contend against nowadays. There is a whole tribe, large and prolific, known, I believe, as "Advanced" men, and especially women, springing mostly from the recently manumitted middle-classes, who have nothing but impatient scorn for the education of our public schools and universities, who resent the authoritative yoke of the centuries and the classics, and who lavish their most extravagant superlatives on some prophetling of the hour. Of this heretical sect the hierophant is at present my noisy friend Shav. He is, of course, too much of a heresiarch himself to revere any of these rival "spirits of the age," unless they happen to share his own hatred of breeding and beef. Yet, being above petty prejudices of consistency, he uses them upon occasions as a cudgel wherewith to belabour his betters.

"You dons dwell in the hinterland of life," he said to me the other day. "You are blurred shadows, phantoms lingering in the dream-world of the past. You can make nothing—not even a mistake!"

I replied blandly that I preferred the hinterland of life to its suburbs; and that I would rather make nothing at all than make middle-class plays. This was a shrewd hit of mine and it went home, for Shav had written some plays. He lost his temper. "Who says that my plays are middle-class?" he exclaimed angrily.

"Everybody," I replied, "listen to this"—and taking out of my pocket two Continental journals which I had just received, I read to him the following paragraphs:—

"Mr. Barabbas Shav is the typical middle-class Englishman and satirises the faults and follies of his class; but he himself belongs to the class he satirises and shares its limitations. Accordingly, his plays are typical middle-class English plays, and they suffer from the faults inherent to this class of work: false sentiment and melodrama." That is what the first critic said. The second was a little more charitable. He described my friend's plays as masterpieces "of all that is retrograde and respectable." The reading made poor Shav tear his beard in speechless rage.

I was rather ashamed of my victory, and sorry to have hurt his feelings. But I thought it was time to let him know what the world really thinks of him, for

* Perhaps I ought to explain, for the benefit of the unlearned, that "Bœotia" is the Greek for "Oxbridge."

his little successes have made him unbearable. He seems to have, at some period or other of his picturesque career, cherished a sort of irregular affection for strenuousness, and upon the strength of that youthful indiscretion he presumes to lecture us. He speaks with most offensive enthusiasm of that class of big, breezy, and demonstrative demagogues who utter loud words for the applause of the vulgar, and laughs at the calm, passionless men that are Oxbridge's product and pride. He dismisses us all as a set of invalids suffering from what he is pleased to designate "atrophy of the heart." Of course, the sole effect of his opinions is to confirm us in our own. We would not exchange one term of Bœotian placidity for a cycle of popularity.

Why should we? Here in this academic paradise our spirits can nestle and give forth their fragrance, secure in the knowledge that it will delight none but our own noses—we, as wine-drinkers, respect our noses, which elsewhere are held in such scant esteem, as sincerely as we respect our palates—glad that the perfume, which has taken so many centuries to create, will not be wasted upon the coarse organs of common humanity.

But Shav, so invulnerable to reason, so full of crotchets and so unsympathetic, refuses to see the grandeur of our attitude. Even the stability of our existence fails to rouse his admiration. He describes it as "the quintessence of boredom!" "The wheels of the Oxbridge mind," he says, "go so slowly that they cannot make a Revolution in a hundred years."

"Who, in the name of all that is sensible, wants a Revolution?" I ask.

"I do!" he cries. "Life is much more interesting with its vicissitudes. Eliminate its chances and surprises, and what is life?—a plum pudding with the plums left out!"

But, surely, is not incessant change as monotonous, as wearisome, as boring, as perpetual sameness? Variety, I admit, may be stimulating, but monotony is restful; and what respectable man can live on stimulants? "Quintessence of boredom," forsooth! Has not solitude also its song, and is there no poetry in old cemeteries? And we dons dwell in the oldest of all cemeteries—a city peopled with the ghosts of the past; a city whose very air is mellow with the dust of things dead—dead and immortal.

Unfriendly critics may decry our quietism as soul-searing. *We* would call it soul-soothing; and, after all, we are the best judges of what is good for us. We do not seek roses where they do not blow. In fact, we are glad to dispense with roses altogether, knowing full well that where roses blow there also thorns grow. We are amply satisfied with such shrubs as spring in desert-sand: pale plants sapless and scentless.

It would be absurd to expect brilliancy of colour from so sober a soil. But brilliancy of colour is a thing we do not covet. On the contrary, we exclude it from our costumes as studiously as from our conversation. The result is that our community may look somewhat dark, raw, even gloomy, to one coming from the glare of the outer world. But, then, so look the canvases of Hals. The picture may be sombre; but the figures are beautiful. It is a beauty subtler than the beauty of brightness, this beauty which the true artist discovers in darkness, and more enduring than colour.

The absence of colour and vivacity from our costume and conversation reflects, possibly, a certain absence of colour and vivacity from our life itself. The very height of our aims, the severity of our studies, the intensity of our self-admiration may bring with them the loss of the genial delight in things human—they may produce a certain reservedness, not to say sourness, of temper, which shrinks from festivities and frivolities and similar vulgarisms. We live on the serene plateau of pure intellect, among untempted beings, with philosophical problems to ponder over, instead of those of real life. It is easy for us to make moral laws, easy to keep them, easy to judge contemptuously those wretches in the lower world who sin, or, even worse, offend against good taste. Dogmas and dicta of the scribes fill our inexperienced horizon. Self-sufficient and arrogant, we summarise cases we know nothing about, and pronounce sentence with a finality and a sternness that must stagger the Recording Angel himself. But then, has not lack of humanity always been one of the principal attributes of divinity?

It is, perhaps, the same isolation from the world around us that explains the contrast, which startles unsympathetic and observant visitors, between the sublimity of our studies and the pettiness of our actions. In this connection my friend Shav, though hyperbolic as usual, is not as far from the truth as usual: "Industry applied to the infinitely small, subtlety wasted on the infinitely insignificant, earnestness revealing itself in infantile naïveté. These," he declares, "are the virtues of the academic soul, and the result is infinitely absurd." Now, there is some justice in this criticism. Our absolute devotion to ourselves, no doubt, tends to rob us of our sense of measure and proportion. Little things become great in our eyes; we cultivate detail for its own sake; in pursuing the means we are apt to forget the end; and we often lose the spirit in the observance of the letter. Routine is dear to us, rules we worship regardless of their reason or lack of it, and we will punish an undergraduate for smoking in the college courts, or for going out after dark in the usual attire of civilised humanity.

What we need, according to Shav, is a public officer, corresponding to the Public Orator in dignity and emoluments, but whose function should be to temper wisdom with laughter: "A Public Jester, an academic fool in cap and gown." This, I fear, is a counsel of revolution. But it is impossible to deny that, owing to the want of such a functionary, there is a lamentable absence of the laughing gas from our atmosphere. Perhaps to the same cause are to be traced all those other peculiarities which make us the butt of the profane. There is a kind of dress and a kind of manner that are unlike any other dress or manner on the face of this earth. These things are Bœotian. They who come to Bœotia with little or no individuality, or they who consume all their lives here, end by becoming thoroughly Bœotised. You can distinguish the thoroughbred Bœotian among a thousand human beings. His ill-assorted apparel and absent, far-away look; the Cyclopean frown under which he strives to hide his fear of men and fails; his idolatrous worship of the past, because it is past; and his profound contempt for the present, because it is not; his excessive taciturnity at the beginning of dinner and as excessive volubility towards the end of it; his puerile narrowness of vision; his anile love of gossip; his uncomfortable vacillation between dumb timidity and truculent dogmatism—all these traits, combined in an infinity of proportions, proclaim the true citizen of Bœotia.

But, when all is said, these are blemishes which serve the same purpose as the spots on the sun. At the worst, be the blemishes of Bœotianism what they may, they are not to be confused with those of Bohemianism. The Bœotian and the Bohemian, often so alike superficially, are essentially as wide apart as the inhabitants of different planets. Both are eccentric; but, while the eccentricity of the Bohemian recognises no law except individual caprice, that of the Bœotian is subject to the Draconian rules of tradition. Bohemia is the nursery and refuge of Dissent in more things than dress; Bœotia's boast is that it has always been the citadel of orthodoxy. The Bohemian is a born democrat; the Bœotian is an aristocrat born and bred: he is most emphatically an English gentleman with all the attributes of the part which Shav sums up in the term "dulness," but which we call reserve and dignity.

Dyspeptic and thoroughly disagreeable must, indeed, be the critic who does not recognise in us the qualities of our defects. Our intellects, speaking generally, may be quite as opaque as our gowns. What then? Does not coal yield light, and does not the clever chemist extract the bright tints of the rainbow from blackest tar? He that finds us dull convicts himself of dulness. For the rest, ours is a contented mind in a contented body, and so we do not care to inquire too closely whether the one is quite sane or the other quite sound. I think we are all a little mad; but, surely, Shav is madder than any of us, because he does not know it.

Why Not Surrender to Germany?

By W. R. Titterton.

We have short memories in England for journalistic events—above all in London, that city of short memories, and it is possible that but for the drums and alarums of "the Islanders" we should by now have quite forgotten the fervid flag-waving of Mr. Robert Blatchford in the "Daily Mail." But it seems there are persons interested to keep that memory green. Well, have at them then.

I need not paint again the horrid picture of the future painted for us once and for all by Mr. Blatchford's graphic pen—German soldiers marching through our streets, German policemen directing our traffic, and so on and so on. I ask you to imagine it, if necessary, with the help of the excellent penny reprint of Mr. Blatchford's articles with his portrait on the front cover and an advertisement of the "Daily Mail" on the back. And now that you have got that picture clearly before you, I ask you, I beg of you to ask yourself the question which tops this article.

England has often been conquered, and it has always done her good. I think what England really stands in need of now is a fresh conquest.

I am not much concerned with preserving the national boundaries, but I want very badly to preserve the national character, and I have been grieved to note that the English national character becomes year by year less clearly defined. This is an effect of our insularity that allows us to visit foreigners as tourists and prevents us from rubbing shoulders with them as neighbours. To be invaded and conquered is our only means of remedying this defect of nature, and invasion and conquest we have not enjoyed now for several centuries. I plead for a fresh conquest.

And I plead for one of the pleasant incidentals of conquest—a fresh aristocracy, a new Prussian nobility: that is just what we want. A new Prussian nobility, cleverly competent to do the dirty work of ruling after having annihilated our brewing and financial lords and turned what is left of our old heroic aristocracy into raving democrats!

Here is something worth working for.

And when we had absorbed the German lords (as we always have absorbed our conquerors) I think we should find them an infinitely less objectionable class than our present oppressors. And if they too were oppressors, as perhaps they might be, we should anyhow know them for what they were. A thief cannot cheat you into the belief he is your benefactor with specious pleas framed in a language he doesn't perfectly command.

But surrendering, you will say, is not the same as being conquered. Well, no civilised country could be conquered nowadays; it would cost too much, and make too much of a mess—at the most you would get one or two petty battles, the siege of the capital (perhaps), and an arrangement. And if we see beforehand the benefits of being beaten, why not skip the uninteresting preliminaries and come to the arrangement right away?

The real difficulty, of course, is quite another one: would the Germans accept our surrender? That is the question. If they actually beat us at the muzzle of the Krupp, I don't think they would. They would simply dismantle Tilbury, appropriate a fat indemnity and a morsel of South Africa, and march away. Because governing England as a province would be an awful bother. For one thing, even if there were enough German officials to go round, the task of making the English people speak German would be colossal, and for another their national anthem and ours happen to have the same tune, and I suppose you realise the difficulty of subduing a people that has the same national anthem as yourself. It would be very awkward. And then just why should they want to govern England? What would they expect to get out of it? They would have to give decent pensions to the Kaiser's Royal relations, and the surplus revenue would probably not cover bare expenses—anyhow, not until our amateur public services had been put in good working order. To keep us going they would probably have to raise a subsidy from the already overburdened German taxpayer. The government of England would be a very dear and a very bothersome business. I am afraid the German Michel would think twice before he agreed to take it on.

But if we surrender right away there is an excellent chance for us, not, perhaps, of acquiring a complete rainproof Teutonic aristocracy, but of becoming a free and independent unit of the Germanic federation, which, as I shall now proceed to show, is in itself a sufficient reason for answering my query with an echo.

In the first place England would get in touch with the free German culture and the free and enlightened German public opinion.

Conquest by Germany would mean slavery for us, says Robert Blatchford. What arrant nonsense! Even if they Prussian-dragooned us, we should be freer than we are now. In a few matters (mainly connected with the police) we are agreeably freer here than in Germany; in all other respects we are infinitely less free, and it is not very unpleasant to live even in Alsace-Lorraine. The freedom of a nation has finally to be judged by its public opinion; it is public opinion that is the custodian of the rights of man. And in England there is actually no public opinion at all; there is only a public prejudice, which dominates and limits the individual in all sorts of insolent and pettifogging ways.

Let me give you a few examples of the action of a real public opinion. The Germans have a Press wherein the views of all minorities—however small—can find expression, wherein anything may be said, so long as it is said well enough—a Press that has no Mrs. Grundy among its editors, a Press that seizes new ideas with ravenous avidity, a Press that does not paper-basket an article because it is "clever," a Press that is not written by office-boys for office-boys, but by men for men.

The Germans have a reading public, a thing the mention of which will make an English writer laugh bitterly. There are actually great masses of serious people who read serious books—and frivolous books; read poems, essays, philosophical, ethical, scientific books and squibs, as well as novels, and actually prefer the books that contain ideas they disagree with. Here again Mrs. Grundy has no show.

So with the stage; repertoire theatres everywhere, giving the best stuff that Germany and any other country can produce. And the acting first class, no playing up to a star (the public wouldn't stand that), and every time a piece is given by fresh actors a new, careful studying of the parts for fresh meanings (whereas with us one actor "creates" the part, and subsequent performers take over the business as a going concern). Then there are no huge halls to kill the voice, there are no actor-managers nor three-year runs to kill the actors, there is no after-dinner public and no young person fresh from Mudie's to kill the play. Oh, marvellous stage!

I turn to art. The German public loves pictures and sculptures, pays in large shoals to go and see them, and does not begrudge money given to buy the work or to subsidise the workers. It loves, too, beautiful buildings and beautiful bridges, and when it is dealing with a fine river like the Thames does not haggle over how much art should be trowelled on in the making. Music it adores (with and without beer), but I think there is no need to insist on the German love of music.

As for science, the Germans are just beginning to teach us how the State should support and stimulate scientific investigation and discovery.

And all this springs at basis from an enlightened public opinion concerned more with essentials than with the phantasmagoria of political jugglery.

Then, in the second place, Germany has, especially in the south, a finely developed communal life—a life of the café and the beerhall, a democratic mingling of all classes in good-humoured social intercourse, a life of folk-festivals and carnival-making, a hearty, ample life of which you zealous, shut-up Londoners have no con-

ception. I will not speak of the beer they brew, I should become too lyrical. You Londoners have never drunk it; you think you have, but you haven't; no one ever has who has not drunk it in a German beerhall.

And that, too, all spells tolerance (tolerance of everything except bad liquor, about which the German is fierce), tolerance, the foundation of all culture and of all democratic life—tolerance, a thing which Englishmen have not yet tried to understand.

So much for that side of the question. We should become freemen of the German Empire, and tolerance would creep up our rivers like the tide—only, unlike the tide, it would stay there.

But the other side of the question is of almost equal importance. The rigid and aggressive officialism of Prussia (and in especial the unconstitutional extension of the personal rule of the King of Prussia) grows more and more repugnant to the rest of the States. The Pan-Germanic party, when it existed, was really Prussian, and if it ever revives again under the stimulus of the Blatchford fulminations, it is there it will revive. Now Prussia is a very powerful State, and the South German States, with Bavaria at their head, have difficulty in coping with him on the Imperial Council. But say that England joined the Federation and took the side of South Germany! Where would Prussia be then? I want to save Germany from Prussia.

Perhaps my readers do not realise as clearly as they ought to at this point how very independent of each other are the German States. Bavaria, for instance, has its own King, its own army (and, of course, its own flag), its own railway service, its own postal service, its own religion, and its own national character. *The Bavarian national character differs more from the Prussian than the Prussian does from the English.* England, if it joined the federation, would remain just as much and just as little a separate country as international traffic and finance at present permit it to be.

So that the objection you are burning to express—namely, that this is a curious way of preserving the English type—dies stillborn on your lips. It is obvious that *union with Germany is the only practical means of preserving and developing our national character.*

What, then, apart from the benefit which must ensue from closer communion with the Teutonic spirit of tolerance, are the political changes contingent on surrender to our "cousins"? They are (1) the coalition of the fleets and the death of Mr. Maxse; (2) a sudden and tremendous decrease in naval expenditure in both countries, and a consequent diversion of public attention and public capital to social reform; (3) the cheapening of the Anglo-German postage; and (4) a possibility one may contemplate with philosophic calm, that the free German States which in 1870 elected the King of Prussia as German Emperor may at some future time nominate the King of England to that high office.

This is a forecast of the results of a surrender before the war. The results of a surrender after the war are, as I have shown, more hypothetical, and at the same time more remote and less easily to be worked for. We cannot exactly ask to be attacked in order that we may surrender. That is the woman's way. Nevertheless the value of complete conquest would be so great that I feel reluctant to abandon the idea of it. In any case, the thought that we have this happy destiny ahead of us will quench that furious thirst for "Dreadnoughts" which at present consumes us. The fewer ships we have in the war, the more graceful will be our surrender at the end of it.

But for practical politics surrender before the war is obviously the thing, and I would ask electors to refuse to vote for any Parliamentary candidate who is not pledged to further this admirable scheme. The Teutonic nations have been parted too long. Blood is thicker than water, even when the water is as deep as the North Sea. (I beg pardon—the German Ocean.)

Of one thing I am a little afraid—of the tariff. I do not want England to adopt Protection. The deed above all others of which modern England has reason to be proud is the statement of the principle of free commerce—that reckless piece of wisdom worthy of the race that has produced the world's greatest pirates, whether they sailed under the skull and cross bones or the yard measure. It is queer, and yet, I think, significant, that so many of our burning patriots should want us to repudiate that splendid principle.

In Germany the effect of the tariff is obvious; it keeps on raising prices and leaves wages stagnant. A series of strikes has forced the wages up a little here and there, but the prices rise with all the greater buoyancy. The German housewife, of course, is a much better manager than her English compeer, and can make good dinners out of what would come on the English table as boiled lamentations and potatoes, and so she gets along somehow, but if the tariff attacked us here the English housewife would surely swiftly die. In the end German cooking would penetrate to the English housewife, but I think she would die first.

But, after all, the difficulty is not so great. The popularity of Free Trade in Germany increases proportionately with the raising of the tariff wall, and before my scheme has time to mature it is probable that the wall will have been knocked down.

So much, Mr. Blatchford, for your slavery, so much for the horrid future about which you and the "Daily Mail" and other notabilities so furiously rage together. To the "Daily Mail" and the other notabilities I do not speak, but you, my Robert, who have so often raged so furiously against the slavery in England, do you want to persuade me (and yourself) that if we joined the German States it would be worse?

Finally, let me explain why I disapprove of The War. It is because it doesn't come off. A little blood-letting and the loss of an odd colony or so do not matter much. It is expensive, but it is amusing, and complete defeat may be an unmixed good. I must confess that I like war. But the war that doesn't come off is the very devil. You keep on building "Dreadnoughts" and scrapping them. You keep on buildings soldiers and sailors and scrapping them. You keep on ranting and foaming and shouting and generally misconducting yourselves, and letting the government of the country and social reform go hang. The war scare, in fact, is a put-up job to keep the minds (would I could write it in the singular) of the people from the thought of oppressions nearer home.

Private battle between the English and Prussian fleets or the English and Bavarian armies for the pure fun of the thing I should not object to, but I object to this messing around. The union with Germany would stop all that. Jingo bulldogs of insular and continental breed could have a go at each other whenever they felt inclined, while the rest of us went on with our business of getting nearer and nearer to a mutual understanding.

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Why not surrender to Germany? I ask for the last time. The intelligent reader echoes "Why not?" Exactly! Well, then, is it to be before or after the war? "Before" carries it by a large majority, since the intelligent reader scented the possibility that in that case we may be able to find a dignified synonym for surrender.

And let me warn you that if I have overestimated your intelligence, if in your blindness you do not surrender, a worse fate will befall you. You will be conquered piecemeal by alien ideas you do not understand. Wagner has conquered you, Ibsen (who was really German) has conquered you, Richard Strauss is conquering you, "The Merry Widow" has conquered you, State Socialism (a gross folly without the democratic spirit of the Germans) is conquering you, conscription is conquering you, Protection is conquering you, German inventions are conquering you, German beer (a liquid insult in a stand-up bar) is conquering you, stronger and stronger grows your distaste for home life without any compensating growth of a liking for the broader life of the brewery and café. The Philistines are upon thee, oh Samson! You wobble drunkenly to and fro, rubbing your bleared eyes and shouting bald insults at the Germans through a megaphone made in Berlin. Surrender to the Germans! My dear fellow, you have surrendered long ago; it is only by a formal surrender you will get a quid pro quo for your humility.

Nietzsche and Wagner.

By Francis Grierson.

Great minds who attempt to subordinate other minds equally gifted are doomed to disappointment. A man of strong will has all he can do to develop and maintain his personality intact without dissipating vital force in the vain endeavour to identify that personality with the character, aims, and ambitions of a master. A follower is one who obeys orders and accepts instruction. If he possess will and ability he cannot long remain a disciple. The very moment he thinks for himself he ceases to be under the control of another mind. Everyone who possesses a natural endowment is destined to work out his own salvation. A gifted young man may, during a limited period, be led by a master older than himself, but the time comes when instinct will compel him to burst the bonds of intellectual control and be free. In these things Nature does not reason; she uses force.

When Friedrich Nietzsche freed himself from Wagner's influence he gave as a reason the egoism of his master. But this was not the cause. It was an excuse. Men of powerful personality are not moved by mere sentiment or reason. It has been said that Nietzsche was envious of Wagner's triumph at Bayreuth. Again, this was not the cause of the rupture. There was but one cause: the action of individual will, the expansion of inherent energy, the necessity to move and act according to the immutable law which governs the mind in every case where personal power is placed under the temporary control of another personal power. The rupture between Nietzsche and Wagner would have occurred on some other occasion had it not been consummated after the production of "Parsifal." The wonder is that no one seems to suspect the true cause. There are writers who see and hear everything through the medium of the sentimental. To such minds Nietzsche should have remained a passive disciple of the Bayreuth master; he should have received his inspirations from Wagner at second hand; and his duty was to sneeze if the master took snuff and hiccough when the actors partook of the Parsifalian grail.

Personal judgment based on physiological ignorance is bound to be unjust. It is not enough to call it error. Its consequences are widespread and of incalculable mischief. A man is condemned because his own powers compel him to be himself, to follow his own bent, and to seek out his own inspirations. If the sentimental point of view were applied universally to men of talent there would be no genius manifest anywhere. We might as well dictate to people in affairs of the heart as to expect men of creative ability to follow this or that master. Wagner was the first to blunder in expecting Nietzsche to become a constant disciple; Nietzsche blundered in ever dreaming to remain a constant follower. Both lacked a certain worldly wisdom. These things belong of necessity to the illusions of youth and early life.

If we wish to contemplate the deadly effects of "master" worship all we have to do is to listen to the operas composed under the dominating influence of the Wagnerian mode. All, without an exception, are inferior; they fall below the standard set up by the great Italian masters whom Wagner ridiculed. They have not attained the characteristics of good German sauer kraut nor the staying power of good Italian macaroni; they are neither fish nor flesh, but things that fly between the green sea and the blue heavens, for which there is properly no name, and for which there is no market except on the Fridays of compulsory fasting when a few morsels of the strange thing are not interdicted as a danger to the body or a risk to the soul.

Without Nietzsche's revolt the Wagnerian cult would have put a stop to all independent effort in the world of music. Nietzsche and Wagner both laboured under a surplus of nerves and imagination. They had wit, but wit is not enough to neutralise the ill effects of highly-strung nerves and a powerful imagination working together. The want of humour in Wagner spoiled a colossal genius; the want of it in Nietzsche made him exaggerate to the verge of fanaticism. Both possessed plenty of ideas, patience, originality, passion, will power, but there is nothing so fatal to a man of genius as the fixed idea that he has a mission to regenerate the world. The mission of genius is not one of regeneration, but to entertain and instruct and let the big world go on as it must and as it will. Another mistake made is to suppose that all great thinkers are philosophers. Things and people are taken too seriously by some and not seriously enough by others. Individualities like Wagner, Nietzsche, and Tolstoy fail by reason of the very thing their followers praise the most, namely, positiveness. It is the chronic positive state that makes them so negative. A writer becomes negative as soon as he asks the world to fall in with his opinions, tastes, theories, and ambitions, and the future fame of George Meredith is assured precisely because in his works he has no mystical axe to grind, no political saw to file, no religious harp to strum. He brings power and vehemence to the level of reasoned control, imagination and passion to the level of balanced judgment and modulated art. He is an artist who can smile, a philosopher who indulges in laughter, and he takes the world and the people in it as he finds them. This, too, was the way of Lincoln, Whitman, and Poe. Enthusiasm without fanaticism, independence without anarchy, sufficient human nature to make them weak and lovable mortals, these things make some men of genius only a little lower than the angels. For it would be impossible, with all the admiration and the best will in the world, to live long in a house where Tolstoyism is talked at breakfast, Nietzschean philosophy at lunch, and Wagnerian philosophy at dinner, with excerpts from the dramas at supper. For these reasons I prefer to admire the statue on the monument from a safe distance because it does not smile at grief but frowns at the poor distracted world.

A young French poet said to me many years ago in Paris with a gesture of despair: "Who can say how many poets were sacrificed to make one Hugo?" And who can say how many young composers were crushed by the Wagnerian Juggernaut while Wagner was living, and how many more it will take before his ghost is laid, now that he is dead. For it is not the real thing we have to deal with at the present hour but the ghost. It is the middle mind that is now haunted, the same middle-class mind that suffered from the hauntings of the Mendelssohnian ghost for nearly forty years to the exclusion of all other ghosts, white, brown, blue, or yellow. Before Mendelssohn's day the Handelian shade stalked supreme in these Islands, the formidable spirit of the man who ordered dinner for three, and when it was ready cried out to the cook: "Send up de dinner, I am de company." For music at that time was impregnated with the roast-beef and port wine languor, the sentimental comfort conferred by sacred melodies on human oxen chewing the after-dinner cud in the fashionable stalls of the stall-fed London world.

Viewed in this light the future of music in England is anything but hopeful, for the middle-class mind is only now beginning to be hypnotised by the shadow of the Wagnerian mountain. The middle-mind has already accepted "Tannhäuser." It has begun to nibble at a corner of "Lohengrin," while it has one eye and about half an ear on particular spots in the "Ring," with faint glimpses of "Parsifal" looming in the dim distance. In another decade the whole nation will be growing under this musical mountain of pretentious and impossible snobbery. Out of a hundred who listen to Wagner, even in our day, not more than one is able to distinguish the sublime from the mediocre, and in twenty years from now the number of discriminating ears will hardly be increased. The truth is the mob will always demand a master, it makes no difference how much or how little they understand in the work of the master, and similarly the individualist will never consent to be a blind follower of any master for the very obvious reason that the discriminating individualist knows how to appreciate all the masters, and he can never have too many on the principle that there can

never be too many flowers and beautiful landscapes in the world.

England has always been the special stamping-ground for people afflicted with the one-man mania. It was Carlyle at one time, then Ruskin, then Gladstone, then Browning. All who worshipped at the shrine of Dickens detested Hugo, and the admirers of Thackeray could see no virtue in Balzac, while the "Pickwick" enthusiast and the "Vanity Fair" enthusiast passed in the street without bowing. All this made the Victorian era by far the most provincial period in the history of England since the time of Elizabeth. Everyone had a master who was accepted, not for his strength and wisdom, but for his weakness and his absurdities. Of course there always will be individual minds who frankly admire the excellent as soon as they see it or hear it, but up to the present time the number of such minds has been small compared to the vast army of know-nothings waiting to receive the order or the sign from some high and powerful snob to go forth and admire. Admiration is the faculty of knowing why. This explains how it is that snobbery puts a damper on the progress of genius. Browningism was brought to a sudden halt as soon as it became known that clubs had been formed in America composed of elderly women with large spectacles and no idea of poetry, for the purpose of finding the key to that poet's enigmas.

It was the deep desire to revolt against mob rule in the world of art and poetry that caused Stéphane Mallarmé to write in a manner which made it impossible for even the cleverest literary snob to make head or tail of his writings. No one but his friends understood him, and it was his special aim that the others should not.

If anyone were to put the question to me, "Are you a Wagnerite?" I should answer without hesitation: "Not now; but I am willing to become a Grand Lamaite until the Grand Lama becomes lamentably common."

The Terror.

By Aage Madelung.

"SENTENCED to death. The sentence carried out by the Revolutionary Organisation."

So runs the verdict of the revolution. But the Russian Government announces: "On January 3rd the Prefect of St. Petersburg, His Imperial Majesty's Major-General à la suite W. F. von der Launitz, was murdered. The malefactor shot a ball through his own head, and was at the same time cut down by a sabre."

This was how it happened:—

On the evening of the 2nd of January von der Launitz received an invitation from His Highness the Prince of Oldenburg to be present at the solemn inauguration of a new division in the Institute of Experimental Medicine, of which the prince is honorary trustee.

About one hundred and fifty invitations were issued to the upper ten and to the leading men of the medical world. The greater part of those invited were persons of royal blood or of title. It was to be a very exclusive gathering.

As a matter of course, not all of the august personages accepted. Times are not favourable for appearing in public. And at about half-past ten only some fifty people were assembled in the chapel of the institute.

The Prefect drove up at a sharp trot, and had just time to jump out of his brougham and let it drive off when a big red-painted motor-car, containing the Prince of Oldenburg and his family, rushed up.

Von der Launitz hurried forward to assist the princely family to alight, and accompanied them through the last vestibule into the chapel.

At the same moment a very elegant sledge drove up. The fine horse moved with the long, elegant stride that is the unmistakable mark of the Russian high-stepper. By the way it moved you could see that the fur-coated gentleman in the sledge had calculated his time well, and neither cared to be among the first-comers nor feared to be late. As he got out of the sledge he said a few words to the coachman, who nodded in response and drove off at an easy pace.

The young dark man mounted the stairs tranquilly, passing among scores of gendarmes, policemen, and secret agents. No one took any particular notice of him. The vehicle was either a first-class lichatsch or a private carriage, and the young man himself evidently a doctor who belonged to the very best society. The agents at the top of the stairs saw his fur cap and collar and his burning eyes and pale face gradually approach, while those standing in the street only caught a glimpse of a pair of well-cut black trousers, thin silk-embroidered stockings, and black patent-leather shoes.

"Krasiwyi Barin! A fine gentleman!" the policemen muttered as the new arrival passed them.

In the vestibule he handed to the doorkeeper his printed invitation card and said in a politely interested tone:

"Has His Highness the Prince of Oldenburg arrived?"

The doorkeeper respectfully answered in the affirmative, and took hold of the young man's right sleeve in order to help him off with his coat. The young man slowly pulled first his right, then his left arm out of the fur coat; then, going up to the large looking-glass, added indifferently:

"Has the Prefect arrived, too?"

"He has, sir. . . . . Service will immediately commence," answered the doorkeeper, saluting.

The young man carefully examined his toilette in the glass—or so at least it seemed; but it might also have been the expression of his face he so minutely studied. . . . .

He seemed satisfied with the result, and proceeded slowly and steadily through the huge vestibule into the chapel of the institute. Service had only just begun. No one took any special notice of him. Everyone, after having looked round, probably thought that somebody else knew him. Besides, didn't he look like any other fashionable young man in evening dress and patent-leather shoes?

Careful not to make a noise or cause any disturbance, he advanced up the aisle, and as he slipped in among the other guests there was in each of his movements that apologetic politeness which disarms every would-be critic.

He placed himself just behind von der Launitz, and immediately fell into that attitude of seeming complete absorption in God and the service which is an unmistakable sign of high birth and good breeding. There was something in his bowed-down attitude which suggested pride as well as cringing. . . . . Yes, *he* had learnt how to comport himself under the eye of his Lord and Creator. . . . . Towards the end of the mass he suddenly looked up at the man in front of him; then slowly, politely, and apologetically, as he had come, began to move towards the door. Having reached it, he stopped and looked back impatiently, as though searching for somebody he had not caught sight of among the crowd. His face twitched nervously. He changed his position and cleared his throat. . . . .

All at once the chanting of the priests ceased and was succeeded by a subdued murmur of low human voices. . . . . Gracious words and smiles and condescending bows. . . . .

It was the Prince of Oldenburg who took leave and withdrew with the princess and their suite.

Von der Launitz followed officiously to see them into their motor-car.

The bearing of the young man near the door was so exceedingly respectful and deferential that the princess, passing by him, surely thought a thought of youth and beauty. . . . . And he, too, followed—at a little distance. But the distance between the princely couple and von der Launitz unexpectedly increased, the latter stopping a moment to shake hands with an acquaintance.

When he hurried on, a sudden and violent change took place in the young man behind him.

With a single deft movement he had plunged his hand into his inner breast-pocket, grasped the butt-end of his Browning, aimed and fired.

The whole thing had lasted but a second.

Three shots had been discharged, and von der Launitz fell. One could see that he had been hit in the shoulder.

There was another second's pause. A bound forward, and the Terrorist bent over the fallen man. At the same instant he fired three more shots, straight down, where von der Launitz's hot, horror-stricken eyes burned up at him through space. . . . .

One of the three balls extinguished them.

The fallen man stretched himself convulsively, while the Terrorist rose with a jerk, put the muzzle of his Browning into his mouth, fired, threw up his arms and dropped on his knees, at the same moment receiving a sabre-cut right on his upturned face.

It was one of the officers present who had rushed forward with drawn sword. He struck once more, and severed one shoulder from the neck.

The dead Terrorist had fallen half-way across von der Launitz's body; but another officer, with a revolver in his hand, seized him by one limp arm, dragged him aside and shot him in the belly.

So mighty a personality must he have been that two Russian officers regarded his corpse a fit match for them in a combat!

The princely couple shrugged their shoulders nervously: "Horrible! Outrageous! Carry him in—carry him in!"

Then they were off in their red motor-car.

Von der Launitz's fat, caftaned coachman tugged madly at the reins and hurried the ownerless steeds through the streets like a madman, in order to bring "my lady" the first news of the accident; while the doctors bore the dying Prefect into the Institute for Experimental Medicine. One ball had entered at the neck and passed out through the temple. Nothing was to be done.

The police and gendarmes surrounded the place and forthwith at random arrested two innocent persons who had hurried to the spot out of mere curiosity.

Half an hour later the highest legal authorities were assembled on the scene of the murder to inquire into the case and write their reports.

But nothing was found by which to identify the dead Terrorist. All marks had been carefully cut or burnt out of his clothes. He had a second loaded Browning in his pocket; but the registered number was scratched out of this one, too.

All that was left to be done was to note down the facts and have the corpses removed—one of them home to the Prefect's widow, the other one to one of the dissecting-rooms of the Army Medical College. There the head of the Terrorist is still to be seen, preserved in spirit. . . . .

They had him photographed, both in evening dress and patent-leather shoes and with no clothes on at all.

His cleft face looks like an open ulcer on the photograph. . . . . It would be difficult indeed to recognise the man from *them.*

St. Petersburg talked of nothing else. Everybody was interested in the smallest details, the police in particular.

The best of the city and secret detectives were employed, but to no purpose. There was no track to follow up.

The tailors sent for conjectured that his fur cap and coat might perhaps have been made in Moscow, his gloves in Warsaw. The dress suit was like any other, the linen of the finest, but whence . . . . ?

And the printed invitation card? Of course, one might find out from the official papers of the Prince of Oldenburg which of those invited had failed to appear. . . . . But as it was mostly the highest in rank, it would be difficult to do so, from reasons of etiquette.

How did the Terrorists come by the knowledge that the Prefect would be present at the inauguration? . . . He had received a private invitation, in the prince's own handwriting.

Nothing but mystery and unanswerable riddles. . . . . Time after time it is proved that the Terrorist organisation by far surpasses the Russian State Police.

For Terrorism is as the passion flower, growing solely on suffering. . . . .

The agitated youth of Russia has been seized by a religious frenzy for martyrdom, a feverish desire to make the Great Sacrifice for the salvation of the others. . . . .

No paid Dictator who, surrounded by all possible human precautions for safety, may still have a chance of preserving his life will ever quench this yearning.

For he who takes upon himself martyrdom sacrifices all without reservation and is invincible.

Yes, he is immortal! And the Russian People will remember his name and keep it amongst all those others who went down to a nameless grave for Russia's Great Cause.

Books and Persons.

(AN OCCASIONAL CAUSERIE.)

I made a little excursion across certain civilised and uncivilised countries of Europe. First to Paris, where I learnt that the young novelist Charles Louis Philippe was dead. I doubt whether outside the shop of Mr. Alfred Nutt in Long Acre Charles Louis Philippe was known in England at all. He was a slight man of singular appearance and frail physique, and he gained a living, not by fiction and criticism, but by inspecting shop fronts for the Paris Municipal Council. He had to see that shopkeepers did not stick their goods out beyond a given line. I think that his total output was half a dozen books, none of them very long. And yet he had made for himself one of these esoteric reputations which mean much in Paris and nothing in London. He was deeply admired by fellow-authors, and worshipped by the young enthusiasts. "La Nouvelle Revue Française" has consecrated a complete number to his memory, and there were articles everywhere.

* * *

M. André Gide's souvenirs of Oscar Wilde, to which I have already referred in this column, have now been republished separately by the "Mercure de France" in a slim and agreeable volume. To anybody who has enjoyed "The Importance of Being Earnest" and the Shaksperean fantasy about Mr. W. H., they should be indispensable.

* * *

It was not till after I had left Paris that the death of Moréas occurred. Moréas was really one of the chief modern French poets; personally he considered himself the chief. He was a Greek, and came first to Paris in 1872, at the age of sixteen. Soon afterwards he settled in Paris, and took the precaution of changing his name, which had been Papadiamantopoulos. It was ten years before he began to publish. Not everyone remembers that he once wrote novels in collaboration with Paul Adam. "Le Pélerin Passioné" is his best-known volume of verse. He was the very soul of symbolism at one time, and then he formally renounced it, and adopted the classic manner, doubtless in order to make sure of being a great classical poet. He was a great and heroical figure. He lived, without affectation, for verse alone. His manifestoes are still excellent reading. Latterly he took to writing little sketches, impressions of men, books, and scenes. Some of them were collected in a volume. The last of them—and perhaps the last work printed from his pen—appears in the current number of "Vers et Prose," where by the way there are some marvellous little sketches of provincial life by Jules Renard. Who shall say whether Jean Moréas was a really great poet? He was a poet. After his death came that of the Comte Melchiorde Vogue. The count was academic, dignified, and, according to rumour, erudite. He specialised in Russian literature. The only book of his that I ever read was "Le Roman Russe," one of those monuments of tedium which in all countries pass for distinguished and acute criticism. In my view, the Count carried dullness to the point of grandeur. An ideal academician! A sort of Courthope raised to the Curzon*th*

degree. May his tomes lie lightly on him, for he admired the right things!

* * *

I ventured forward to Switzerland, where in an hotel which seems always to be frequented by intellect and intelligence, I learnt that Octave Mirbeau had discovered a marvellous new author, a woman of the working-classes, and had commanded Alphonse Lemerre, the publisher, to publish her. That hotel is a wonderful place for gathering the latest Parisian news. I had, in fact, heard vaguely of this discovery of Mirbeau's in Paris. But in Paris she was an old woman; whereas in Switzerland, where my information was more authoritative, she was only thirty-three, at which I was glad. She had never written before. She simply sat down and wrote, out of her experiences; and Octave Mirbeau, who is either fiercely in favour of a phenomenon or fiercely against it, was staggered; his friends, of course, partook of the staggering. The book will appear soon; when it does, rest assured that it will be boomed with scientific skill. Mr. John Lane ought to publish it in England.

* * *

In Switzerland I also learnt that Paris is going to have an important new daily paper, price—not one halfpenny, but two. It is being launched by the house of Laffitte, which during the last few years has come into immense prominence and money by its ingenious adaptations to the French feminine public of the central idea of the Philadelphia "Ladies' Home Journal," the most successful monthly magazine in the world, as may be judged from the fact that its price for advertisements is £800 per page per insertion. Laffitte cannot approach that price for advertisements, but in Paris they now have the magic which turns whatever they touch into gold. I am informed that they are already assured of 30,000 pay-in-advance subscribers to their newspaper. This is success. You would never guess, not in 30,000 guesses, the name of the paper. It is "Excelsior." Imagine a daily paper in Fleet Street entitled "Excelsior"! You cannot. It is in these apparently trifling details that are seen the profound and unanalyzable differences between nations.

* * *

Then to Milan, where I made the acquaintance of an extremely alert young man who had translated several of my books into Italian. In an enormous café, to the music of an orchestra of brazen Austrian misses in white frocks and blue sashes, I listened to his account of the state of modern Italian literature. He was pessimistic. He began by praising Fogazzaro. But when I told him that we knew all about Fogazzaro in England, that Fogazzaro had been boomed in the most correct quarters in England as a great novelist, but that of course he was nothing of the kind;—when I thus spoke, he at once dropped the mask of conventionality, perceiving that he was in the company not of an Englishman, but of an artist, and we had a good heart-to-heart talk, from which it appeared that his opinion of Fogazzaro precisely resembled my own. He was enthusiastic about Grazia Deledda (as to whom Paris is also just now very enthusiastic—you may have read her in the "Fortnightly Review"), but on the other hand he was sick of Matilde Serao whom I always maintain to be the first woman-novelist in Europe. Never can I forget the scene in the night-train from Naples in "La Conquista di Roma," and never can I forget the enormous humour of the scene (is it in "Addio Amore"?) in which at the agricultural show the lady with her illicit lover faints at sight of the prize bull. I could not move my translator on the subject of Serao. He was convinced that she was much inferior to Deledda, and that her reputation could not possibly wear. I am now setting out on a course of Grazia Deledda. I learnt that Italian public interest in literature has diminished to almost nothing. An author of average established reputation makes no more than £100 out of a novel. And I was really surprised to be told, as an indisputable fact, that only 15,000 copies of d'Annunzio's new novel had been printed. The novel, I believe, is quite unworthy of its author; but 15,000 copies—for the Rostand of Italy!

* * *

Then to Florence, where I immediately sought out Mr. Francis Grierson. Fortunately, we were living within a few doors of each other. I found him still the most extraordinarily youthful veteran that I have ever met. His memories go back with startling clearness to the fifties, and yet he has not only the appearance but the gestures of a young man. All those who have recently been trying to obtain copies of Mr. Grierson's two volumes of essays without success, since they are long out of print, will be glad to know that new editions of them are in preparation. Mr. Grierson is also preparing for press a volume of new essays.

JACOB TONSON.

Verse.

By F. S. Flint.

Some Translations from the German.

"Heinrich Heine," Poems and Ballads, translated by Robert Levy. (Melrose. 5s. net.)

"Contemporary German Poetry," selected and translated by Jethro Bithell, M.A., lecturer in German at the University of Manchester. (Walter Scott. 1s.)

The translation of poetry is impossible,, for a poem not only contains meaning in words, but is created first of all, or creates itself, as music and rhythm of words, so that when the best words in the most appropriate rhythm conveying the greatest passion have been put together in one language the result is their final artistic expression in that particular order. If there were as many grammars and vocabularies of music as there are nations, one could imagine—or could not imagine—a prelude or a nocturne of Chopin being turned into English. Still, in language there is a "meaning" to be translated, and in default of the original rhythm and music another rhythm closely akin and another music, wholly dissimilar, can be substituted, sometimes by a queer fluke a better rhythm and music, though not when, in the original, the best words have been placed in the best order, Coleridge's criterion of a poem, or only when—not often—a better poet is the translator. Some songs have the inevitableness of the daffodil and the narcissus. How could they be otherwise? How could they be translated? Change a hue, change a tint, or the rhythm of a line, and they are no longer the same. I am afraid that Heine's best poems are like the narcissus and the daffodil.

But Mr. Robert Levy's translations are very good; he has not been afraid to set himself a high standard and to avow it in his preface, where he quotes from Rossetti's preface to the "Early Italian Poets": "The life-blood of rhymed translation is this: that a good poem shall not be turned into a bad one. The only true motive for putting poetry into a fresh language must be to endow a fresh nation, as far as possible, with one more possession of beauty." The French way of translating, as is known, is to give a literal and literary rendering of the sense, without any other artistic preoccupation than faithfulness and good diction. It is really the only way to save jarring the nerves and the sensitiveness of the reader; often it is the only way too in which to render the directness of the original; and it can only leave you unsatisfied. Ibsen in one of his letters says that a translator should put his translation into the form which an author would have been most likely to use had he been writing in the language of the translation; but this is asking the translator to have as much genius as his author, the same experience and the same use for it. The French way is much the safest; it is the least liable to do a poet an injustice. But when rhymed translation is well done, when it "endows a fresh nation . . . with one more possession of beauty," then rhymed translation is much more satisfactory and satisfying than prose. Alas! in England a foreign poet is at the mercy of any little rhymester who happens to know the language, whose zeal is often merely vanity, and whose virtues do not comprise artistic perceptiveness. All this does not refer to Mr. Robert Levy, who is valiant, he. But to show the differ-

ence in effect of his rhymed and the French unrhymed translation, I will quote one little song in the three languages:—

In mein gar zu dunkles Leben
Strahlte einst ein süsses Bild;
Nun das süsse Bild erblichen,
Bin ich gänzlich nachtumhüllt.
Wenn die Kinder sind im Dunkeln,
Wird beklommen ihr Gemüt,
Und um ihre Angst zu bannen,
Singen sie ein lautes Lied.
Ich, ein tolles Kind, ich singe
Jetzo in der Dunkelheit;
Klingt das Lied auch nicht ergötzlich
Hat's mich doch von Angst befreit.

On a time a gentle presence
Filled my gloomy days with light;
Now since phantom-like it vanished,
I am girt about with night.
In the darkness little children
Often fell, their courage cowed,
And, to drive away their terror,
Sing a little song aloud.
I, a frantic child, am singing
In the dark; and though it be
This my song lacks merry music,
It hath eased my misery.

Dans ma vie par trop sombre a brillé jadis une douce image; maintenant que la douce image s'est effacée, je suis comme enveloppé de nuit.

Lorsque les enfants sont dans les ténèbres leur petit être a peur, et, pour bannir leur crainte, ils se mettent à chanter bien haut.

Moi, fol enfant, je chante maintenant dans l'obscurité; si mon chant n'a rien qui réjouisse, il n'a pas moins délivré mon cœur de l'angoisse.

Mr. Levy's translation of this is not one of his happiest; nor is the song one of those that read so well in the French; yet the French translation is better than the English. Take the first line of the German:—

In mein gar zu dunkles Leben.

How sombre it is, with those two words "gar" and "dunkles" striking a chord which gives tone to the whole. And now contrast this with the first line of the English rendering: "On a time a gentle presence," which is quite ineffectual. The French is much better; almost a perfect rendering: "Dans ma vie par trop sombre." Then "girt about with night" is not a good translation of "nachtumhüllt." The poet is more than girt about; he is covered over with night. The word "girt" suggests a false image. I have said that this is not one of Mr. Levy's best translations, but it serves to show where metrical translation can go wrong. The English has a prattling effect which the German and the French have not. And "phantom-like" is not in the original. The metrical translation almost compels these additions, but it does not surely compel a direct perversion of the sense. In one of the Harzreise poems Heine pictures himself sitting in a cottage and the objects round about start speaking to him:—

Freundlich ernsthaft schwatzt die Wanduhr,
Und die Zitter, hörbar kaum,
Fängt von selber an zu klingen,
Und ich sitze wie im Traum.

Grave and kindly chats the timepiece,
While the fingers of the air
Fall to tinkling on the zither
As I sit a-dreaming there.

For the sake of a prettiness—"the fingers of the air"—the life of the picture is destroyed, and the zither, which, "scarcely audible, begins by itself to play," becomes a dead thing, played upon.

But all these are minor blemishes, and any translation of Heine could no doubt be improved. What remains to be said is that the general impression left by Mr. Robert Levy's translation is much the impression that Heine intended to make. That Mr. Levy has not been able to achieve the impossible is—to his credit! That he has produced a most readable and faithful rendering of nearly the whole of the "Buch der Lieder" is something to compliment him upon.

But "Contemporary German Poetry" is still more interesting than Mr. Levy's Heine. Heine by now is pretty well-trodden ground; to most Englishmen modern German poetry is virgin soil. Of one or two of the poets whom Mr. Jethro Bithell has translated—Dehmel and Hofmannsthal—we have heard a word or two occasionally in England; of these and of some of the others oftener in France in "Vers et Prose" or the "Mercure"; but how little in England! And now a whole bookful of them is flung at us at the ridiculous price of ninepence (discount price). And such poetry, too! Mr. Bithell must have got feverish with excitement as he extracted the gold from so rich a mine; his book of translations is a delight; it makes one wild with desire to have the originals; it contains stuff of the very finest, daring, tender, brilliant improvisations on the immortal theme of life; the old spell of beauty caught again, but coloured and shaped by modern thought, by the symbolist pre-occupations and the vers libre technique. In his preface Mr. Bithell quotes Goethe's saying: "The more incommensurable and incomprehensible to the understanding a poetical production is, so much the better." Goethe, the old warrior, who confessed to Eckermann: "If I were young and daring enough, I would purposely break all fantastic laws; I would use alliterations, assonances, false rhymes, and anything that might seem convenient to me." I imagine that that is what many of the modern Germans have done; they have studied the notes of their language until they have achieved the most cunning of verbal counterpoints, in which music of idea and music of word suggest and respond in an antiphony that echoes and echoes over the hungering sea of the spirit. How does this poem of Hofmannsthal run in the original:—

Many indeed must perish in the keel,
Chained where the heavy oars of vessels smite,
Others direct the rudder on the bridge,
And know the flight of birds and charted stars.

Others, with weary limbs, lie evermore
By the inextricable roots of life,
For others chairs are with the sibyls set,
The Queens, in whose abode they dwell at home,
With brain untaxed and soft, unhampered hands.

But from those lives a shadow falls athwart
On these the lighter, and as to earth and air
The light is with the hard life bound in one.

I canot free my eye-lids from fatigues
Of nations long-forgotten, no, nor guard
My soul in terror from the soundless fall
Of stars remote in deeps of cosmic dark.

Existence plies her shuttle through the woof
Of many fates indissolubly one,
And my own proportion of this common life
Is more than taper flame or slender lyre.

And this "Love Song" of Else Lasker-Schüler:—

Out of one golden breath
Heaven created us.
O tender our love is . . . .

Birds on the branches are buds.
Skyward flutter roses.

Ever I am seeking after thy lips
Behind a thousand kisses.

A night of gold;
Stars of night;
No one sees us.

Comes the light with the green:
We slumber.
Only our shoulders still like butterflies are playing.

Mr. Bithell must be a poet himself; his translations mark him so, though a habit of putting the adjective after the noun and one or two Germanisms are not to be defended—except the first, perhaps, as expedients.

There is a constant striving in these German poets to see life nakedly; to see through those two thousand years of materialistic religion and morals; to see life with the eyes of the imagination, which does not mean so much to weave a glamour as to see the wonder. This is all—and yet how much—symbolism is. A man who paints a carthorse so is a realist in the intensest sense, and such realists are Liliencron and Dehmel, great poets both—Goethe and Schiller to each other, Mr. Bithell says. And then there is Peter Hille, the "helpless happy nomad," whose poetry is "vague, mystic and drunken"; Peter Baum, "a fugitive soul split on a prism of sound"; Else Lasker-Schüler, quoted above,

"one flame of chaotic passion, consuming and consumed"; Maximilian Dauthendey and Alfred Mombert, "cosmic impressionists," whose "poetry, think their disciples, is the poetry of the future":—

Past the sweet lilac clover-field,
Where the twin pines stand and shield
The bench between,
Like a flute's soft note is stretched
The gentle fjord, a vision sketched
Blue in reedy green.
Give me thy hand,
So silent stand the twin pines there.
And thou shalt understand
The secret of the silence of the air.
Give me thy hand . . . .
And in thy hand thy heart.—DAUTHENDEY.

BELOVED.

BELOVED—
Hovering out in a bird's song
That over the trees
In the last coolness of their crests
Sings his breast's bright heat,
While at his feet
Sun red as flame
In the black forest is drowned—
Foresee, what once shall be,
When the song grows silent, and my soul
Comes only from the springs of woods invisible a sound.
—MOMBERT.

And so many more in this book. Darwin, Walt Whitman, Baudelaire, Verlaine, Nietzsche are the poets who have most influenced the poetry of the last decades in Germany, according to Mr. Bithell, and he asks whether this influence has been for the good of literature. "But one thing is certain: the lyric poets march with Ibsen towards an ideal which can only be approached by subverting all that is false and insincere." To subvert all that is false and insincere: in England, where this movement has had least influence, and where, if one speaks of it, one lays oneself open to the derision and scurrility of the imitative person, whose pingui-nitescent visage peers round the corner with alarm at any artistic advance which will sweep him out of the way—no, it is too much to ask.

The War in Wexford.*

By St. John G. Ervine.

LONG ago, when I was a child and lived in Belfast (for the which may God forgive me) there came regularly every year to the Theatre Royal a play called, I think, "Ninety-eight; or Lord Edward Fitzgerald," and whenever it came there was a bloody fight in the gallery between the Catholics and the Protestants. I never saw the play; indeed, I saw few plays then, for I came from a Puritan family, and was forbidden to enter the hellish portals, as my uncle facetiously called them, of the theatre. I look back with pride now to the fact that occasionally, when I was supposed to be taking part in a religious revival, I was seated in an obscure corner of the pit (my funny uncle waxed punnish about the pit and the aforesaid hell) watching a play. But no matter! One other reminiscence, and I will pass to this book. If you go to Belfast to-day you will see scrawled on most blank walls in the Protestant quarter lurid invitations to the Pope to go further than his customary afternoon walk, and in the Catholic quarters inscriptions like "God Save Ireland!" "To Hell with King William!" and "Who Fears to Speak of Ninety-eight?" I say, if you are odd enough to go to Belfast to-day you can see things like that on most blank walls. I saw such an inscription on one occasion—that about "Ninety-eight." I was a Protestant. That is one of those things for which a man has to thank his parents. My Orange blood boiled at the sight of that infamous legend, and furtively, and not without fear, I crept up to it and crossed out the word "fears," substituting for it "dares." When I had done that I crept away again, feeling that I had saved Ireland for the Queen of England and had dealt the Pope of Rome a hefty one in the eye. And, you know, I did not know what it all meant. I knew, indeed, that in 'ninety-eight there had been a rebellion. Had not a member of my own family, as I declared in this paper recently, been hanged because he was a rebel? But that was the extent of my knowledge. It was the extent of the knowledge of most of us. They did not teach history in Irish schools in my time. I suppose they were afraid that even little Protestants might have got their gorge up when they read of the abominable rascality of the English Government in the eighteenth century.

Therefore, when I opened the parcel in which this book was enclosed, and saw before me a green-backed volume, purporting to relate the story of the 'ninety-eight rebellion, I was very glad. I should now know more about the rebellion than I had known before. That was my feeling. A man cannot help emotions like that. I am no patriot, but I love my country. I cannot account for that. It is one of those things I cannot help, like breathing. My love of my country takes the common form of desiring to know everything that is in her favour and not to know anything that is to her discredit. I wanted to know more that was to her credit—so much of late has been the other way.

And I don't like "The War in Wexford." It is not a history at all; it is a catalogue. It is not a book; it is a series of notes for a book. It is vilely written. On page 156 occurs this profound observation: "It is not well to put too much faith in Dame Rumour, who is a lying jade nine times out of ten." God help us! Elsewhere France is referred to as "la belle France." This culture would do credit to the "Daily Express." But it is not only vilely written, it is vilely constructed. It is full of quite irrelevant matter and references to trivial incidents of the rebellion which distract the reader and delay the story. Most of the letters written by Lord Mount Norris, quoted in this volume, are mere padding. Here and there are great stretches of quotations from the Detail Book—successions of things like:

August 23.—One file, by order of Lieut. Smith, to apprehend a person named Keys, charged with being actively concerned in the conspiracy with the 4th Battalion, during their encampment at Ferns. After making diligent search, they returned without being able to discover him.

August 24.—Four file, by order of Lieut.-Colonel Finlay, to press horses and cars for the use of the Dublin County Regiment, they having received orders to be in readiness to march at eight o'clock to-morrow morning. The prisoner Heys made his escape from the guardroom about twelve o'clock this night.

There are a number of bald and uninteresting notes on almost every page. Here is a particularly fatuous note which I quote in its entirety:—

The Right Hon. George Wyndham, M.P., late Chief Secretary for Ireland, possesses a diamond pin, a sword-stick, and a seal engraved in Paris, which belonged to Lord Edward Fitzgerald, his great-grandfather. All the family papers dealing with his ancestor, including some notes written by Mr. Wyndham's mother, have been published by his cousin, Mr. Gerald Campbell, in his admirable "Life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald."

There are chunks of quotations from Froude and Lecky and Kavanagh, and many others, and when we have deducted all that from the book, practically there is nothing that was written by the authors themselves. What they have written is dull and commonplace—so much so, that when one comes to their quotations from Lecky and that fascinating liar, Froude, one feels that one has turned a corner and caught the wind blowing in from the sea full in the face.

I am afraid it is a very poor book. The authors have excellent intentions. They are painstaking to a remarkable degree. They have quite patiently worked very hard in order to make the book accurate and factful, and so far as the mere facts go they have achieved their purpose. I do not think they are Irishmen, and I doubt very much whether they have much sympathy with my country. I am inclined to think that they are like Lecky—the man who wrote the history of Ireland in the eighteenth century and yet remained a Unionist. They have made efforts to be impartial in their judgment on the whole affair, and I suppose their chapter, "Who Was to Blame?" (which sounds like an Elephant and Castle melodrama) is as impartial a

* "The War in Wexford: An Account of the Rebellion in the South of Ireland in 1798." By H. F. B. Wheeler and A. M. Broadley. (John Lane. The Bodley Head. 12s. 6d.)

piece of writing as one can expect to find in literature of this character. But no man has any right to be impartial. One has to get hold of a point of view and become bigoted about it, if one is to do anything at all. Many a man has gained a reputation for profundity of thought and splendour of nature by merely saying, when confronted with a problem of any sort, "There is a good deal to be said on both sides." The fellow, of course, is an intellectual shirker, and the world has no use for him and his like. When Mr. Broadley and Mr. Wheeler think of making another book I beseech them to gather their facts together and forward them to me. I'll write their book for them.

Drama.

By Ashley Dukes.

Is there indeed some subtle poison in the air of the English theatre, some pervading yet secret and rigidly exclusive freemasonry binding its audience, some uncritical, even anti-critical conspiracy of sentiment that laughs at definition and defies analysis? This feeling came upon me as I sat listening to Pinero's "Trelawny of the Wells," revived last week by the Repertory Theatre. The atmosphere of the theatre was curiously changed. Up to now its audience has been the highly-specialised, too slender audience familiar to all who frequent performances of "advanced" plays; the little eager group in pit and gallery, the interested people, the philosophers of modernity. But with the coming of "Trelawny" these, if they still were present, were effaced by the inrush of another class. I had almost written "snowed under," but that would hardly describe the process. Rather was it the thaw of temperate emotion, expressed in the one sex by a hasty, half-defiant blowing of the nose, in the other by the scented handkerchief held in readiness to mop discreetly beneath the lifted veil. In short, the London playgoer was there; he who, but the night before, had tasted the sweetness of the "Scarlet Pimpernel"; she still palpitating from recent worship at the sacred lamp of the Gaiety, with its revelation of the domesticities of "Our Miss Gibbs." Creatures of unspoiled mind; wayward, friendly children, gambolling to the theatre for nourishment as uncritically as newborn lambs at their mother's bleat.

Have you ever been a gallery first-nighter in London? If so, you will know these children of the theatre. It is there that they may be seen at their best. Shrill, captious persons there may be among them, mental dyspeptics who have come to hiss; but for the most part they are worshippers devouter than the common crowd. From early afternoon they will wait in the queue, provided with campstools and picture postcards, or illustrated weekly newspapers. Their organ is the Sunday "Referee," that healing plaster for the wounded pride of actors and dramatists, scorched, maybe, by the unmannerly criticism of the daily Press. They are steeped in the theatre, these children. You will hear them say of an actor, "He's lovely. I do hope he'll have a good entrance!" or of an author, "Oh, I *love* Pinero," hard upon the heels of "Isn't Barrie ripping?" Not that their worship is narrowly confined. If you are fortunate you may hear a cultured young gentleman attempting decorously to tell a cultured young lady the plot of Ibsen's "Ghosts," with many hums and haws, and some stumbling at difficult points, over which she assists him tactfully. This serves to pass the time until the temple gates are opened, and one more play is witnessed, one more programme, like a sacred relic of the Church, a leaf of a palm branch or a fragment of the true Cross, carried off as a trophy and added to the pile. It is this audience that chooses our plays for us, whether we like it or not. Its despotism is benevolent, but its benevolence none the less despotic.

And this was the audience of the Repertory Theatre the other evening. Old friends were there; the young lady in the front row of the pit who omitted to remove her hat, and upon being admonished from the rear continued to wear it from sheer obstinacy; the young man at her side aiding and abetting her in this anarchical defiance of opinion, as in duty bound; the two of them sitting there smiling self-consciously yet vastly uncomfortable at being hissed, until the summoning of doorkeeper and policeman gave moral sanction to surrender, and the crisis evaporated in laughter. In the stalls old gentlemen and old ladies nodded and told one another stories of the theatre of thirty years ago. That rough-and-tumble period of the English stage, by every artistic standard untterly contemptible, that lowest depth of a drama divorced alike from realism and from high romance, gained honour from antiquity. The moderns were completely out of it. "These newer men," said someone, "Shaw and Barker, you know, treat sentiment too lightly. They don't understand its part in life." Another nod of approval for this philosopher, and so to Trelawny, Rose Trelawny of the "Wells."

Of the play itself there is little to be said. It is Pinero at his best, and perfect of its kind. The fine unanimity and balance of the Repertory company make it worth seeing, if only for the acting. Add the modern technique of restraint, overlying its burlesque of the eighteen-sixties, and it appears almost the play that Tom Wrench, one of its characters, might himself have written in his revolutionary desire to make stage characters talk like real people. As for its "theatrical folk," the company of the Bagnigge-Wells Theatre, they are no longer to be seen in London. But travel down to Manchester on any Sunday of the year by the mid-day train from Euston, and you will find them all upon the platform, from the tragedian to the low comedy man. They have changed a little in externals, it is true, but the same spirit is there. In the intervals of musical comedy they hold the stage in the knockabout melodrama of the Midlands and the cotton towns. After all, the outward modernity of the West End stage and the art of the Repertory or of Miss Horniman's theatre in Manchester are no more as yet than a veneer. The revolution that they represent is a revolution, as Bismarck would have put it, from above—*von oben hinab*. The movement has hardly touched the life of the people, and the tragedian and low comedy man of "Trelawny" still remain the first cousins of the gallery first-nighter.

ART.

By Huntly Carter.

I find two things remain to be placed on record concerning the national property in Trafalgar Square—the utter worthlessness of the Salting pictures, and the immense amount of public money sunk in spoilt, indifferent, second-rate and worthless "masterpieces."

* * *

The Salting collection—pictures purchased by George Salting, and bequeathed by him to the nation—consists of 130 items selected by the National Gallery authorities. Of these items at least half are unfit to associate even with the doubtful company in the National Gallery. I have noted the numbers and chief points of a few of the worst samples deserving notice. I have not troubled to look at the names, except in one or two instances. It does not matter a jot who the pictures are by, the real question is: Are they good, and if not, why not?

* * *

Among the French pictures are some Corots that hardly qualify the National Gallery collection to rank amongst the great collections of Europe. Nos. 105, 106, and 64: Why were these feeble things included? Corot painted bad things sometimes, and the canvas with the most colour is one of them, if it is not one of the forgeries by a Londoner who manufactured Corots and Daubignys by the score. No. 25 has had a great deal done to it, and is spoilt. It is all undertone; its shadows and lights are half gone. A portrait of Costanza de Medici. Eyes not original. Hair once fluffy and golden; all brown and varnish now. No. 193: The man who painted the faces in this picture could not possibly paint the hands. The heads are beautiful, but the hands are unmistakeably bad. The

hands of the woman are like a carpenter's paw; those of the child like starfish. Then look at the different textures; the fine texture of the robe, and the Algerian cloth upon which one of the children stands. Ecole de Roberti: A very laughable thing. A picture of three figures singing with open mouths behind a parapet. The expression on these faces is exceedingly humorous. It is supposed to be that of singing; it is that of pain. The man is shouting for a policeman; the women are terror-stricken, they see ghosts. No. 166 has no right in the gallery. I would not accept it as a gift. "Dr. Fuschius," is this original? No. 152: A St. Jerome. It is not even grotesque or quaint, but simply bad work. Salting was entirely landed with this picture. No. 130 has been Byzantine, but now the whole thing is a farce; it is one mass of dirty varnish. Look at the dreadful details. For instance, the woman's eyebrows are entirely false. Alter them, and one discovers a face with the proper devotional expression. Now it is the face of a beautiful devotional virgin turned into a Jap. The thing ought to be burnt. No. 138: If a sane person saw this in a furniture shop in Italy he would roar with laughter. It is the sort of thing that a wild American or English tourist would buy if he saw it in a second-hand shop. The man with the great calf's head, and something in his hand that looks like a door-mat, but is intended for a head, is simply an understudy of Wilson Barrett at his worst. Italy is packed with such tame and unpleasant specimens of Old Masters, all waiting to be snapped up by the tradesman collector and presented by him to his precious National Gallery. There are many other Italian pictures in this collection of such indifferent character as would seem to point to the fact that when Salting, accompanied by his cheque-book, went out to buy pictures he was seen a long way off by the enterprising and long-sighted shopkeeper. In other words, this industrious and ingenious person plainly saw Salting coming. The Dutch pictures are not much better. No. 109 is simply two-thirds restoration work. In No. 15 two different methods can clearly be seen. The Cranach should be put on the fire. Some of the details are an insult to one's intelligence. The small Dutchmen were in the habit of painting things like life; they put life under a microscope and recorded what they saw with an amazing hair-for-hair fidelity. They did not leave a record of incorrect drawing, and of empty-featured men and women seemingly dressed up to have their portraits taken. Look at some of these Dutch pictures; what are they? Very ordinary drawing-room paintings done up, and fashion-plates in which the heads, true to their purpose, are just vacuous crumpets.

* * *

As to the draught of miraculous fishes secured for the nation at an enormous sacrifice, I may not say much. I have not the space here to give a full and exhaustive list of these treasures. To mention, however, a few, there is the wretched "Adoration of the Magi," £2,000; the indifferent "Ansidei" Raphael, £70,000; the second-rate Holbein "Duchess," £62,000; Titian's ruined "Ariosto," £30,000; the damaged, badly-restored alleged Rokeby Velasquez, £45,000; the Frans Hals pot-boiler saved for the nation at the vastly extravagant sum of £25,000; the three disgraceful Guidos (191, 193, 196), £3,300; Velasquez's half-rubbed-out "Boar Hunt," £2,200; the two "dealer's" Van Dycks, £2,700; the Longford Castle trio, £55,000, including the alleged Velasquez swashbuckler, in comparison with which a little Guardi near by is worth millions. As to the dubious and much damaged pictures, all I need say is what I have said repeatedly, they hurl themselves upon you at every point. Madonna-of-the-Towers, Interior-of-Rotundas, Eton-Colleges, Baptism-of-our-Lords, Christ-Blessing-Little-Children, Franciscan-Monks, and so on, loudly proclaim themselves to be the best things by Raphael, Canaletto, Perugino, Rembrandt, Zubaran and Co.

* * *

Miss Phyllis Campbell, whose work I noticed recently in these columns, is again exhibiting at the Doré Gallery. There is nothing to add to what I have already said concerning the amazing cleverness of her work. Miss Campbell is a born caricaturist. She revels in ideas. Every line she puts down is an emphatic statement of some human weakness or folly. Every picture tells its own tale; every detail counts. Note the weird Eastern effects, together with the soft indescribable dreamlike expression in "Opium," the pure caricature of "The House-Maid," the biting satire of "What are you doing, Louise?" "Making the tea, Henrietta." Louise is doctoring the tea with poison. Note, too, the charming colour, clever composition, and Hogarthian spirit of the "Fortune Teller." Clearly work to be seen and applauded. Charm is the keynote of the exhibition at the Carfax Gallery. The selection of the works of twenty-one artists has been made with nice judgment. Both monotony and violent contrast are avoided. One passes in turn easily and with intense pleasure from John's delightful "Woman on a Cliff" to C. J. Holmes' very interesting decorative landscape, to Conder's beautiful colour harmonies and spontaneous invention, to Dechaume's charming and very delicate landscapes, with their beautifully-painted trees and Ruisdael-like feeling, to A. W. Rich's clever topographical notes, to the Hon. Neville Lytton's quaint harpsichord decorated with spirited white Arab steeds, seemingly imbued with the spirit of a Baccherina minuet. In short, the gallery contains a lot of fine, delicate, and refreshing work. A great deal of unnecessary nonsense has been talked about Miss Ciardi's work at the Leicester Galleries by critics and other brilliant gentlemen who have undertaken to form a public opinion favourable to art. They appear to have been studying Signor Ugo Ozetti's appreciative prefatory note, and to have been led thereby to attribute all sorts of things to the pictures which they do not possess. The main fact that deserves to be stated is that Miss Ciardi has been exceedingly well treated by heredity. It has richly endowed her with a painter's soul, and training has highly developed the natural skill of her hand. She is touched by the spirit of the old Venetians and to some extent carries on the poetical traditions of Guardi. It is interesting to compare her two best things—"The Piazzetta, Venice" and "From St. Mark's Church, Venice"—with the same subjects treated by Guardi in the National Gallery. If Miss Ciardi will consent to produce more of the Guardiesque things and to neglect her feeble imitations of Watteau, posterity will be richer. I have but space to note briefly the exhibits at the Baillie Gallery. These comprise paintings by J. Campbell Mitchell, who seems to have derived intense pleasure from being much in the open air and has described his emotions with a great deal of technical skill; pictures by Miss Annie M. Patterson, who is at her best in aquarelle work, wherein she discovers a charming sense of colour and composition; the water colours by John Wright, mostly interesting notes on civic forms of art and land and seascapes, passed quietly in review and painted with much sincerity; and paintings, "Roman and Arabesque," by W. Alison Martin. Mr. Martin's very clever work discloses three styles: studies of nudes; a wild debauch of reds, greens and yellows, in which the painter sets down what he wants, but not what he feels; and simple, strong and dignified landscapes. If Mr. Martin will continue in the fruitful line of study of "The Joy of the Wind" and "The Mill Lads," his artistic future is assured.

CORRESPONDENCE.

"SOME CONSIDERATIONS."

To the Editor of "The New Age."

It is with great pleasure that I give Mr. Dunkley my rejoinder. (1) My "chief" point against Christianity was *not* the imperfections of the Christ-figure, but the principle of bigotry and persecution the religion of Christ introduced into the world—but of that more anon. The imperfections of the Christ-figure and the resultant encouragement of hypocrisy by Christianity was my *second* point only. (2) The "disputing with the doctors," and the fig-tree incident I expressly did not lay stress upon. However, as regards the

first I can only say that the words used in the Luke Gospel I must still maintain, give a notion of a precocity which we should nowadays characterise by the word "priggish." More than this I did not mean to suggest. I may mention that the incident has from time immemorial been commonly referred to in the phrase above placed in "quotes," and objected to by Mr. Dunkley. With respect to the matter of the fig-tree, I need only refer my critic to Mark xi, 13, where he will find the words, "for the time of figs was not yet." Mr. Dunkley, however, evidently has special sources of information, since he informs us that "the time of fruit had already come." Observe it is Bax, and not Mr. Dunkley, who is accused of "not knowing his New Testament"!! It is easy to read a hidden meaning into any mortal narrative or occurrence if one "goes for to do so," but I would appeal to any fair-minded person whose judgment is not distorted by conventional "reverence," whether, on perusing this story of the fig-tree for the first time, it would be any cryptic, "parabolic" meaning that would suggest itself, and not rather the fatuous childishness of the pettish imprecation that would strike him. A parable, to serve its purpose, must be on the face of it effective, and judged by this standard, the parable in question (if parable it be) must surely be pronounced a very feeble one. (3) I now come to my main charge against the picture of the Christ figure given in the Gospels—that of real self-assertion draped in an ostentatious garb of "humility." Nor can anyone deny that the whole alleged teaching and preaching of Jesus revolve round the personal ego. It is "I, myself, I" all through. "I am the way, the truth and the life," "Come unto *Me*." "if I, then, your lord and master," etc., and so on throughout. Now I submit that to describe anyone who declaims thus as being "humble" is simply to stultify language. He may possess every other virtue under heaven, but certainly not that of humility. I miss in Jesus any such self-abnegation as is contained in that wonderful outburst of Danton, "Soit mon nom flétrie, soit le France libre." Even the utterances of the Paul of the Epistles show more humility and self-forgetfulness than the Christ of the Gospels. I admit there may be quite estimable persons devoid of humility; G. B. S., for example, is not humble, but, then, I don't think he would describe himself as being "meek and lowly of heart." It is the combination of aggressive self-assertion with ostentatious proclamations of humility that I find unpleasing in the central figure of the Gospels. That multitudes have, on the contrary, found perfection therein proves nothing. If the masses of mankind are only taught long enough, and with sufficient authority, to see or believe something, they will see or believe it. This is even true nowadays, and how much more so in earlier ages. The votaries of other faiths have seen the same perfection in other and quite different teachers, e.g., Mohammed or Gautama.

(4) My statement that the Christian morality was not original is objected to by Mr. Dunkley, though his objection gets no further than bald assertion. I adhere to my original contention. If there is anything new in the morality of the Gospels it is invariably in the direction of spoiling a good precept. For instance, in the Gospel teaching the generally excellent maxim to return good for evil is travestied into turning "the other cheek to the smiter," which would not be returning good for evil, but simply encouraging evil—quite a different thing.

(5) Christians were persecuted before they began to persecute, says Mr. Dunkley. Of course they were. It was a true instinct which led the masses in the cities of the Roman Empire to detest the Christians as "enemies of the human race," and a shrewd political insight on the part of the authorities which suspected them of aiming at a rival power. No other religion was persecuted at that time. All theories were tolerated, from materialism to theosophic mysticism. The whole syncretistic system of the then prevailing Paganism, with its manifold cults and doctrines, was one of tolerance and harmony. If the Christians had been content to form part of this system—in other words, if they had been content to tolerate, they also would have been tolerated. But they were not content. They had taken over the legacy of a hard, intolerant, and aggressive, monotheism from the Jewish faith, out of which their own had sprung, a monotheism which in its turn originated in the political exigencies of centuries before, from the Jahveh-symbol of the welding of the loosely knit Hebrew tribes into a unified people and a centralised State. It was on the basis of this harsh and brutal monotheism as opposed to the mild and quasi-philosophic Henotheism of the Paganism of the time—represented, e.g., by the gentle and lovable figure of a Plutarch —that, once the Christian Church had obtained power, the reign of religious persecution began. The noble words of the Pagan Symmachus to Theodosius, when the organised persecution of non-Christians and heretics was first showing itself, are not behind those of the most advanced modern religious thinkers. No, as I said in my original article, Christianity necessarily embodies much that was common to the general religious and ethical consciousness of the first three centuries, and which was therefore bound to make itself effective in universal history; but it also contains special features of its own, among them, religious intolerance, which there is no reason to think might not have been spared humanity, had (say) the imperial authorities displayed more continuous and systematic energy in stamping out the first beginnings of the Christian Church. At the time of Diocletian it was too late. Yet with all its detestable bigotry the Christian Church had to steal wholesale both special doctrines and special ceremonies from the various despised Pagan cults around it.

As to Mr. Dunkley's final suggestion, it is what one is accustomed to from controversialists who have a weak case. It is, in fact, only a polite variant of the old instructions, under such circumstances—"abuse the plaintiff's attorney"! Mr. Dunkley thinks I must have a personal grudge against Christianity. On the same principle, anyone attacking the capitalist system must be suspect of being an economic failure therein; anyone criticising modern feminist theories must have obviously been crossed in love; anyone advocating greater freedom of divorce must have just been quarrelling with his wife; anyone condemning an imperialist policy must have at some time or other been refused a solicited colonial post by the Government of his country—and so on, and so on. There is no limit, in fact, to the application of Mr. Dunkley's suggestion to anyone holding strong convictions on any subject whatever. Mr. Dunkley finds that "only too often our opinions are influenced by private considerations." Let him speak for himself and his friends! I don't lay claim to be an exceptional man, yet I say most unhesitatingly mine are not!

E. Belfort Bax.

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MALAYAN RUBBER.

To the Editor of "The New Age."

The notes on Foreign Affairs in the last issue of The New Age to reach this country (that of February 17), contains an extraordinary reference to "exploitation of tropical natives of an abominable kind." (The Tamil, by the way, though unattractive, is not abominable.) Your contributor continues: "In Peru, in the Congo, in the Malay States, and in Mexico, there is the same tale of awful cruelties in connection with the commercial development of rubber estates. . . The English companies are worse than the Belgian companies."

Now this is stark nonsense. It is also slander, and a stumbling-block to the unconverted. It is the kind of thing which causes the ungodly to scoff. Actual ill-treatment does occur, but it is rare. Living accommodation and provision for the sick are unsatisfactory on a good many estates, but on others they are excellent, and the Immigration Department largely succeeds in checking serious abuses of the kind. In these States nothing exists which corresponds to the slums and other horrors of Britain, which provide the really conclusive argument against sending Orientals to be educated at home, since one must be miserably ashamed to let them see one's country. Wages are fixed by supply and demand, and, as labour is scarce, and becoming scarcer (as the planted area expands and tapping is added to weeding), they are much above the subsistence level and moving farther from it. Of the shilling a day which the coolie gets in the district where I live, he often sends half to his relatives in India. The indenture system is disappearing.

There is need for stricter supervision, and any force tending to produce that must be welcomed by Socialists everywhere. But if the movement which has started in London bases itself on such misinformed nonsense as I have quoted, it can only end in fiasco.

A Subscriber in Perak.

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HUNTLY CARTER AND THE NATIONAL GALLERY.

To the Editor of "The New Age."

During the last three weeks a combination of circumstances has prevented me answering correspondence on the subject of the National Gallery. I will do so now, beginning with Mr. Frank Betts' letter of the 17th ult.

Mr. Betts refused to regard the National Gallery except as the depository of fine and perfect pictures of former ages. Some are rightly and some wrongly attributed. This is the only distinction he will allow. Herein is implied Mr. Betts' judgment. Is that judgment sound? I hae me doots, as a Scotchman would say. Mr. Betts says that amongst the falsely attributed pictures is "The Madonna of the Rocks," attributed to Lionardo, which might be called Ambrogio da Predis, although it is good enough to be a Lionardo. It may interest Mr. Betts to know that this "masterpiece" is but a school-piece, the original of which is certainly in the Louvre. Mr. Betts must show better judgment than this before I can accept his choice of pictures at his own valuation.

The next letter on my list is Mr. Blaker's of the 24th ult. Mr. Blaker has added nothing to his first letter, and his plan of attack on behalf of the National Gallery is still so feeble that I do not propose to continue the discussion

till he finds something new to advance. I will give a taste of his peculiar method, then take my leave of him. In my first letter I said that Ruskin, or some equally important person, stigmatised the National Gallery as the laughing-stock of Europe. I purposely made the statement lacking in precision knowing that Mr. Blaker with his love of direct denial would instantly deny that Ruskin said so. Mr. Blaker took the bait nicely. He denied that Ruskin said anything of the kind. Here are Mr. Blaker's very words. "Ruskin did not stigmatise the National Gallery as the laughing stock of Europe. He described it as the most precious collection of pictures in the World." There is not the slightest mention of the equally important person. After this there was only one course for me, to quote Ruskin's very words, which accordingly I did in a subsequent issue. I notice that Mr. Blaker has pursued this peculiar method of argument in his last letter. And I do not think it highly ingenious of him.

Mr. John Witcombe still renders it extremely difficult for me to deal with his arguments. He states a theory of art with one breath and destroys it with the next. He is conscious there is "only one art," and art is an "act of creation," and he maintains that art has "degrees of excellence." That is, he apprehends, not very clearly, that art is an abstraction, and then he proceeds to give this abstraction concrete qualities. This is equal to saying there is only Beauty, but there are good, bad, and indifferent beauties. I am sure Mr. Witcombe can see the absurdity of his position, and, therefore, I will not pursue the matter further. Mr. Witcombe raises some interesting points which I shall be glad to deal with when I know he is quite clear as to the distinction between Art and Science. That he is not so at present is abundantly proved by what he has to say about Turner. Art is an abstraction, and we can no more develop, teach, or acquire it, than we can eat it.

In its further note on my proposition, the "Art Chronicle" also makes the common error of confusing Art with Science. The one is the visionary conception, as Blaker terms it, fully expressed; the other the machinery that gives it full expression. If the conception is not fully expressed the result is ugly and not art. Truth is Beauty, says Keats, and he might have added Beauty is Art, Art is Beauty, that is all we know, and all we need to know—about art.

Huntly Carter.

* * *

A REAL LETTER.

To the Editor of "The New Age."

The following is a copy of a letter sent by a brother to a sister. X.

Any Brother to any Sister.

"Leave thou thy sister where she prays."

Easter Day, 1910.

My Dear ,—I really do not know if it is fair to say nothing in answer to your letter. Of course, you may be hurt if I tell you what I think myself. To do good is the main thing. Conduct and character are three-quarters of life. If you, as an act of faith, believe that "all good comes from Christ, and wish Him to be 'your Master,'" there is nothing more to be said. But as history and philosophy it will not do. No one knows exactly what Jesus thought or said. None of the books were written as we have them now for at least sixty or seventy years after He died. There is a great deal of Paul, a great deal of Essene and Gnostic doctrine in them as they stand, and each succeeding age has read into them what it thought and wanted. Jesus has only been known at present in any aspect of him to a very small portion of the whole human race existing before or since his time. The rest have believed with quite as little or as much reason that all good comes from somewhere else. Where evil comes from they do not say, or, if they do, it is quite an inadequate explanation.

If someone told you that he had seen a unicorn trotting down Piccadilly, you would not believe him. If he said that someone writing 1,800 years ago had heard someone else say that he had seen it seventy years before that, you would laugh. Well, that is how I look at the history of all miracles in whatever religious books they are recorded. Besides, I don't think very highly of Jesus as a man or a teacher, nor of the Christian ideal as an ideal. You cannot carry on government, or, indeed, anything else, not even a convent, on the principles of the Sermon on the Mount.

But the whole thing is not so important to me as it was. I know I can't change it, and I don't suppose anyone can change any religion much. They will all go on for ages yet, and we who don't believe any of them have just got to make the best of them as they are.

The worst of it all is that it is no use telling people what one thinks. It only divides one from them instead of uniting one to them. They never take it in, and five minutes or five months afterwards they are inclined to believe that in one's heart of hearts one really believes as they do.

Your life is quite consistent it seems to me. There are lots of worse things and worse theories than making Christ your Master. There are also, in my view, lots of better things in life than that. But each must choose for himself, and if he is wise modify his choice by reading and experience.

I hope I have not hurt you very much, but in any case believe that I am, yours affectionately,

* * *

THE SUFFRAGE.

To the Editor of "The New Age."

I have been informed that D. Triformis is an active worker for Women's Suffrage. May I ask her to give us her reasons for being so, and the arguments she is in the habit of using as a means of convincing the unregenerate? She eschews the emotional appeal of Mrs. Lawrence, and the practical illustrations of Miss Robins; she has attacked one after the other, the motives and methods of the ordinary Suffragist—no doubt she has some new and original ones of her own which may prove useful if made public. I doubt, however, if she can better Mrs. Pankhurst's "Importance of the Vote," in which the vote is comprehensively described as a Symbol, an Instrument, and a Protection. But we will, as Mr. Asquith says, "Wait and see."

D. Triformis seems to forget that there must be, of necessity, many forces combining to make a movement like ours; she seems to complain of each that it is not all-embracing and complete. The Northern factory-girl and the rich woman of Portland Place, the college-girl and the artisan's wife and the business woman—each must have their separate reasons for needing or desiring Women's Suffrage. There is one common inspiring impulse, more or less conscious and spontaneous, towards human freedom, dignity and development; but we are human, and therefore variable. Why, therefore, should we be blamed for appealing in turn to the varying characters, experiences, and temperaments of those we wish to convert? Also, causes and effects have a way of getting curiously mixed, a habit D. Triformis tries to ignore. She seems to expect the women who are "in it" to spend their time denouncing the others as narrow, selfish, pusillanimous and conventional. If there are some women (and men) who are all that, then they must find it out for themselves; and a Suffrage propaganda which avoids being priggish and Pharisaical will perhaps help them as well as anything else. We know that the finest and most desired result of our movement is to inspire women with a wish for expansion and improvement, but the movement itself would have been impossible without the industrial and educational developments which began our emancipation. Of course, none of us would need the vote if we were all perfect. Why on earth do Mrs. Fawcett and Miss Davies and Mrs. Despard and Mrs. Pankhurst and all those others who have already done so much for women, educationally and economically, *now* devote their lives to getting the vote for them?

Will D. Triformis kindly explain the exact meaning of "natural culture," and the difference between it and "mere education"?

I am under the impression that the militants pride themselves on having brought about various prison reforms.

Will D. Triformis also kindly answer a previous question of mine, viz.:—What has brought the Suffrage question out of the drawing-room, and multiplied the membership of all the societies, their meetings, and their listeners, to such a vast extent during the last four years? What, too, has given us the "Englishwoman," edited by women, the only magazine which has courage enough to print such an article as Mr. Shaw's, as Mr. Shaw is the only man with courage enough to write it?

In conclusion, I really think that although the militants are at large for the present, they are too busy extending their sphere of peaceable influence to interfere with D. Triformis or anyone else who may feel inclined to exercise their reason on the complex subject of "Votes for Women."

Eleanor Jacobs.

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"ALTHEA."

To the Editor of "The New Age."

Your clever review of Vernon Lee's "Althea" in this week's issue is very interesting, but a librarian has two faults to find with it. Although it takes advantage of the wisdom of the "Daily Telegraph," it does not tell us what the book is all about, and secondly, it omits to mention that the book reviewed is simply a reprint of a work that appeared in 1894. I presume that a firm of the standing of "The Bodley Head" is not attempting to palm off old lamps for new. Librarian.

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"THE MADRAS HOUSE."

To the Editor of "The New Age."

It is, perhaps, a pity to disturb the complacency with which Mr. Rubinstein has "just stepped in and put things right" with regard to Mr. Barker's comedy, but I must point out that his conjectures are wide of the mark. The sugges-

tion that I did not wait for the last act of the play makes it quite clear that Mr. Rubinstein did not read the latter half of my criticism, which I commend to his notice before he carries this controversy any further. I am also quite aware of Mr. Barker's activities as a suffragist, and would only suggest that an ounce of practice is worth a ton of theory, and (in drama) an ounce of example worth a ton of precept. One free and independent woman able to face Constantine Madras or his son Philip on terms of equality would be worth all the suffragist speeches Mr. Barker has ever delivered. Exposure of "the female non-suffragist's appalling outlook on life," of the vices, follies, and stupidities of her class, may be legitimate for purposes of dramatic contrast, but by itself it is about as constructive as a post-mortem examination of a coroner's inquest. I pointed out that the newer English drama, rich as it is in ideas, is giving us no great women, and that it is idle to expect very much from a play which, though written about women, gives adequate expression only to the views of men. We are living, Mr. Rubinstein says, in an intermediate stage between woman's complete subjection and her future complete emancipation. Very well. It will also be admitted that there are plenty of women to-day fully able to be their own apologists, and to state their demands. Why not give them a chance?

And while we are arguing this question of feminism, may I protest against the stupid habit of generalisation that lumps together the most varied types, the highest with the lowest, under the common designation of "woman"? Mr. Rubinstein's own letter is a glaring instance of what I mean. Such phrases as "the consequent contempt for women fostered in the minds of thinking men," "he despises women, but does not despair of them," "the suffrage movement . . . . raising woman to her rightful position at the side of man," merely treat the question de haut en bas. Are all women slaves? And what about the unemancipated man?

However, I am not primarily concerned with Mr. Rubinstein's form of feminism, but with his interpretation of "The Madras House." He seems to quarrel with my contention that while the men of the play are a tolerably representative group of types, the women are nothing of the kind. He finds two "supermen" in Constantine and Philip Madras. (Neo-supermen these, I fancy—but let that pass.) Two whole supermen in one play! But where are the superwomen? Jessica, possibly? Or Miss Yates?

Let us refer this issue for a moment to the test of actual fact. Of Piccadilly Circus, for instance. At any hour of the day you will find all Mr. Barker's women there; Mr. Huxtable's daughters gazing into the windows of Swan and Edgar's, reflecting upon the shortness of their allowance; Miss Yates going quietly about her business in a jolly, independent sort of way; the mannequins practising their immemorial trade; and Jessica Madras lifting her skirts delicately to avoid contact with an ugly world. But Philip Madras and his father Constantine pass by less frequently. They are exceptional men; types of a rarer cast. That is all. It is the part of the dramatic artist to create exceptional men; heroic figures, if you please. But he must give us exceptional women, too.

ASHLEY DUKES.

* * *

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

I find myself in agreement with much of the criticism given to Mr. Granville Barker's play by writers in THE NEW AGE. I write to point out a defect which has been overlooked. It is this: That to have presented a truly Eastern conception of the whole relation of men and women, and to have contrasted this with the fundamental immorality of standpoint of modern industrial civilisation in relation to the position of women, would have been a striking achievement, and would have provided food for thought. The protagonist of Eastern thought might quite well, (if desired though not necessarily), have defended polygamy; it would have been easy to show how much more moral polygamy might be than, for example, cheap millinery, the living-in system, or artificial sterililty usually are. But the Eastern need not have been a puppet, as easy to knock down as to set up. Why not, indeed, have introduced an Oriental in character? As it was, the Muhammadan, obviously a convert for selfish reasons, was nothing more than the conventional Bluebeard of a nursery story. This inartistic detail was only equalled by the sickly sentimentality of the closing scene.

A. K. COOMARASWAMY.

* * *

THE RESEARCH DEFENCE SOCIETY.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

As you have published a letter from Mr. Stephen Paget mentioning various publications in support of vivisection, will you do me a similar courtesy, for which I shall be very grateful?

(1) "A Bird's Eye View of Vivisection."
(2) "Vivisection: Is it Justifiable," by the late Dr. Charles Bell Taylor
(3) "Medical Research," by Dr. George Black.
(4) "Vivisection Judged by Divine Teaching," by Sir William Blunden, M.B.
(5) "The Lord Bishop of Durham on Vivisection."
(6) "The Fallacy and Cruelty of Vivisection."
(7) "For Pity's Sake," by Dr. Charles Bell Taylor.
(8) "Cancer Cures and Vivisection," by Dr. Herbert Snow, late senior surgeon of the Cancer Hospital.

If any of your readers will send me a post-card I shall be happy to send them one or more of these pamphlets.

SIDNEY TRIST, secretary.

The London and Provincial Anti-Vivisection Society, 22, Regent Street, London, S.W.

* * *

"SOCIALISM AND SUPERIOR BRAINS."

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Eighteenth century economics should have no place in THE NEW AGE. Your reviewer says: "Authors, artists, and professional men may be able, but they do not produce wealth in the economic sense of the word." In the first place, this is not true. Wealth consists in the satisfaction of wants. The typical English economist of to-day, Professor Marshall, states roundly, "All wealth consists of things that satisfy wants, directly or indirectly." This includes the author, artist, and professional man, and also the Attorney-General, and the Government and municipal officers who, a few lines lower in the same review, are swept into the unproductive classes, i.e., counted among those who, like the landlord (cited), do not produce wealth. Is a doctor productive of wealth when he rolls a pill, and not when he prescribes effective treatment of disease?

In the second place, there is no purely and exclusively economic definition of wealth. The economic definition is the literary definition. Wealth is a state of being well-off —having things that satisfy wants, directly or indirectly.

Further, your reviewer says that Mr. Shaw "does not prove that the Civil Service has added to the wealth of the nation." Part of the wealth of the nation consists in high roads and public buildings. The Civil Service is part of the machinery for providing these things: it is a wealth-producer. But it was not Mr. Shaw's business to explain this.

Again, "All inequalities of education will be removed [i.e., under Socialism], and any man will be fit for any position of authority." He will not. All the Eton and Baliol men are not equally fit for positions of authority, or for anything else.

Finally, Mr. Shaw has, indeed, written and spoken in vain if, after all, he is to be accused of denying the reality of superior brains—and persons.

ROBERT JONES.

* * *

MR. RANDALL INDICTED.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE NEW AGE."

Your contributor, Alfred E. Randall, has made the subjoined indictment not only possible, but inevitable:—

To slay a rhymer with a rapier-word:
That was the sport of Dryden 'tis averred.
Another way—and used by Poet Pope—
Bludgeons and scorpions in a couplet's scope.
But these are futile: here's a man can stand all—
The vitriolic, enterprising Randall.
When Randall came to set the Thames on fire
With fervid music from a pawnshop lyre
The few were sceptical, nor troubled long
About his youthful escapades in song;
Until that Study in Benevolence,
Ford Madox Hueffer, showered him a few pence,
And, somewhat doubting, printed him a few
Unlovely sonnets in a big Review.
Our poet capered with delight at this,
And thought the top slope of the Mount was his,
Not knowing, foolish bard, that Fame ne'er shines
On sonneteers who end in weak last lines.
He capered wih delight, I said—nay, more:
He ridiculed his brother-bardlets' store
Of hoity-toity rhythms, and was prone
To think Parnassian eloquence his own.
Having damned Flint, and cracked that poet's stars
With a loud series of poetic jars,
He turned his cockney Pegasus on Coleridge,
And cantered long and gaily o'er the whole ridge
Of his deceptive fancy until he
Had left a broken track of mimicry.
Then, turning to the world, he bade it notice
That this, his latest exercise, was not his.
O Randall, Randall, soothly I would say:
Return again some later, crazier day
When Hampstead Garden ladies have produced
The race to which Greek "culture" has conduced;
When, in a homely vegetarian fashion,
Men's heads are turnips, and their only passion
Is satisfied with silly incivilities
In little strings of awkward puerilities.

W. K. SEYMOUR.

Articles of the Week.

AFLALO, F. G., "About Animals: Table Manners under Water," Morning Leader, Ap. 4; "Men of the Sea," Morning Post, Ap. 6; "Turk and Arab," Pall Mall Gazette, Ap. 4.

ARCHER, WM., "A Glimpse of Russia," Morning Leader, Ap. 9; "Shakespeare in Germany," Nation, Ap. 9.

BARNES, GEO. N., M.P., "The Labour Party and Tariff Reform," Times, Ap. 8; "The Labour Party and its Critics," Labour Leader, Ap. 8.

BELLOC, H., M.P., "The Mercy of Allah," Morning Post, Ap. 9.

BENNETT, ARNOLD, "Mountains and Politics," Daily Chronicle, Ap. 4.

BONNER, Mrs. BRADLAUGH, "The Promised Land: A Word to Intending Emigrants," Morning Leader, Ap. 5.

BOOTH, "Gen." WILLIAM, "Milestones of Life," Daily Telegraph, Ap. 9.

BURGESS, JOSEPH, "Reminiscences of a Socialist Agitator: I. Keir Hardie as Pioneer," Christian Commonwealth, Ap. 6.

CHESTERTON, G. K., "The Renunciations of an Optimist," Daily News, Ap. 9.

COX, HAROLD, "The Lords and the Country," Daily Mail, Ap. 4.

DARK, SIDNEY, "Justice and Injustice: A Plea for Commonsense in British Prisons," Daily Express, Ap. 4.

DELL, ROBT., "The Battle of the Schools in France," Nation, Ap. 9.

DIAMOND, C., "Lest We Forget: The Irish in Great Britain and the Budget," Daily Chronicle, Ap. 7.

DOUGLAS, JAS., "Mr. Sichel's 'Sterne,'" Star, Ap. 9.

DOYLE, Sir A. CONAN, "Cavalry Training," Pall Mall Gazette, Ap. 6.

EDGAR, GEO., "Spring and the Greengrocer," Morning Leader, Ap. 5.

FYFE, H. HAMILTON, "A City of Contrasts: A Second Impression of Cairo," Daily Mail, Ap. 5.

GAUNT, MARY, "A Nation in the Making," Morning Post, Ap. 9.

GIBBS, PHILIP, "The Autobiography of a German Sausage," Graphic, Ap. 9.

GRAYSON, VICTOR, "The Co-partnery Dodge: It Fails Again," Clarion, Ap. 8.

GREEN, F. E., "The Small Holding in April," Daily News, Ap. 4.

GREIG, JAS., "The Rokeby Velasquez," Morning Post, Ap. 5.

HARTSHORN, VERNON, "The Mid-Glamorgan Fight: The Cause of Failure," Labour Leader, Ap. 8.

HUBERT, "England's Blood-letting: The Constant and Increasing Stream of Emigration and the Reasons for It," Sunday Chronicle, Ap. 10.

HUGHES, S. L., M.P., "New and Young Members," Tatler, Ap. 9.

HYATT-WOLFF, ELIZABETH, "Wall Papers and Hygiene," Daily Express, Ap. 7.

LANG, ANDREW, "Shakespeare, Byron, and Fly-fishing," Illustrated London News, Ap. 9; "The Supercheries of Sir Walter," Morning Post, Ap. 8.

JOHNSTON, Sir HARRY, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., "The Recent Troubles in the Negro Republic of Liberia," Illustrated London News, Ap. 9.

LEE, VERNON, "At the Sign of the Pythian Apollo," Westminster Gazette, Ap. 9.

LOWE, A. MAURICE, "The United States: Mr. Cannon's Defeat," Morning Post, Ap. 6.

LUCY, Sir HY., "A New Fourth Party," Observer, Ap. 10.

MACDONALD, JOHN F., "Practical Jokes: An 'April Fish,'" Morning Leader, Ap. 6.

MARRIOTT, J. A., "The Story of the Lords: I. Great Men to Advise the King," Daily Mail, Ap. 6; "II. The First Financial Quarrels," Daily Mail, Ap. 7; "III. Their House in Order," Daily Mail, April 8.

MAXWELL, WM., "Poor Men's Hotels," Daily Mail, Ap. 9.

MONEY, L. G. CHIOZZA, "The Sad Death of British Inventions," Morning Leader, Ap. 7.

O'CONNOR, T. P., "What May Happen: The Government's Possible Course with Regard to Guarantees," Reynolds's, Ap. 10.

O'DONNELL, FRANK HUGH, "The Protection of England: Germany's Naval Quadrilateral in the North Sea," Pall Mall Gazette, Ap. 8.

PHILLIPS, CLAUDE, "The Venus of Velasquez," Daily Telegraph, Ap. 8.

PRESTON, W. T. R., "British Interests in Japan," Daily Express, Ap. 6.

PURVIS, WILLIAM, "Famous Blue-stockings: Some Women of Mind and Charm," Sunday Chronicle, Ap. 10.

ROBINSON, ANNOT E., "The Women's Charter of the Rights and Liberties," Labour Leader, Ap. 8.

ROOK, CLARENCE, "The Art of Eating," Vanity Fair, Ap. 7.

RUNCIMAN, JOHN F., "The Music of a Pageant," Saturday Review, Ap. 9.

SMEDLEY, CONSTANCE, "The Working Partner: Reasons why the Wife should Receive Fixed Remuneration," Daily Chronicle, Ap. 9.

SPIELMANN, M. H., "The Art of Child-painting," Graphic, Ap. 9.

STEAD, W. T., "Good News, Good Brother!" Westminster Gazette, Ap. 6; "Mr. Redmond as Guy Fawkes," Daily Chronicle, Ap. 5.

STOKES, CHAS., "Springtime at Haarlem," Daily News, Ap. 6.

THOMAS, Rev. J. M. LLOYD, "G. K. C. and Liberal Christianity," Inquirer, Ap. 9.

THOMPSON, A. M., "Westward Ho! Hong Kong," Clarion, Ap. 8.

THORNE, WM., M.P., "Educational Endowments: An Appeal to Co-operators," Justice, Ap. 9.

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TITTERTON, W. R., "The Passing of a Mood," Vanity Fair, Ap. 7.

TOMLINSON, H. M., "The Rubber Trade: I. The Tree of Life and Death," Morning Leader, Ap. 8; "II. Tapping the Trees," Morning Leader, Ap. 9.

WOLFF, H. W., "Liberals and Small Holdings: IV. Agricultural Education," Daily Chronicle, Ap. 6.

YOUNG, FILSON, "A Tropical Island: III. The People of the Island," Saturday Review, Ap. 9.

ZANGWILL, I., "The Future of the Jew: Zionism and Territorialism," Daily News, Ap. 7.

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