CONTENTS.

NOTES OF THE WEEK...

PERSONAL. By Oliver Davies

Letter to the Editor from Wordsworth Donisthorpe, J. S.

Fighting in December or in January. The balance, however, of desirability is in favour of December, if for no other reason than that the sooner the election is over the better. For January there is this to be said: that the new register would be ready and the campaign might by that time result in a decisive and irrevocable verdict. Nobody would be able to say afterwards that the country had not had time to give the subject of discussion its second thoughts. On the other hand, it is probable that the country is as clear now as it is ever likely to be; the same issue was canvassed in 1906, again in January of this year, and has been vividly beheld on the background of the concluded Conference during the last nine months. Admittedly the Liberal project of modifying the Lords' Veto is in one sense a leap in the dark; but no more desperate than dozens of leaps the country has taken before in the direction of Democracy. And we believe the country is disposed to take the leap at once. Finally in favour of December is the consideration that two Electioneering Christmases in succession are too much of a good thing. Not only festivity, but a new register would be ready and the campaign might by that time result in a decisive and irrevocable verdict. Nobody would be able to say afterwards that the country had not had time to give the subject of discussion its second thoughts. On the other hand, it is probable that the country is as clear now as it is ever likely to be; the same issue was canvassed in 1906, again in January of this year, and has been vividly beheld on the background of the concluded Conference during the last nine months. Admittedly the Liberal project of modifying the Lords' Veto is in one sense a leap in the dark; but no more desperate than dozens of leaps the country has taken before in the direction of Democracy. And we believe the country is disposed to take the leap at once. Finally in favour of December is the consideration that two Electioneering Christmases in succession are too much of a good thing. Not only festivity, but...
but to state the case of their opponents fairly. We assure them that it will be counted to them for votes.

As examples of what should be avoided we turn to the current "Observer" and "Nation." Mr. Garvin, in his editorial notes, is so obviously at his wits' end to know what to say, that he finds it necessary to shout. And what does his shouting convey to us? Only the impression that Mr. Garvin believes the Unionists have a chance of winning if they abuse Mr. Redmond sufficiently for collecting money in America! We have once or twice expressed our estimate of Mr. Garvin as the least reliable politician in leading journalism; let us now add that by his present attitude he appears to us to be about to lead his party to their second débâcle. Of the "Nation" we are afraid we must say what was said of the Bourbons. Our readers will remember that the "Nation" distinguished itself in February last by pretending, in face of an almost universal opinion to the contrary, that the result of the January Election was decisive. It is true that a Liberal majority of 250 had been reduced to a few score, and that a party had been split into a coalition; it is true that every sensible person, including the late King, realised instantly that the country was sitting on the fence. Yet the "Nation" must needs choose that moment for protesting that not only was the country decided, but it was sufficiently decided to make the King's guarantees to Mr. Asquith a "foregone conclusion."

This blind fanaticism was somewhat reduced by the sequence of events which began by ignoring the "Nation's" opinion entirely and ended by completely falsifying it. In the course of subsequent months, indeed, the "Nation" admitted, if we remember rightly, that its estimate of the situation had been wrong. Otherwise, how can it have assented to the Conference, or even have tolerated a single week of Mr. Asquith's vacillations? If, in fact, the January decision was "a clear mandate," then all the Cabinet indecision of the last few months has been rank treachery. But such nonsense even the "Nation" could not write, and hence we were left to suppose that it had seen the error of its ways. What was our surprise and disgust, then, to read in its current issue these Bourbon words: "It ought to be considered possible that the Crown might accept Mr. Asquith's advice without imposing on the electorate a repetition of the clear mandate of last January." In comparison with this, Mr. Garvin is Socratically fair and Mr. Strachey clairvoyantly truthful. Unfortunately by such an attitude not only Bourbon crowns have been lost, but Democratic victories may be imperilled. Let us repeat our contentions of last spring: first, the election of January was indecisive both in numbers and in weight; secondly, the clarity of the "mandate," even if the numbers had been less ambiguous, was dubious on account of the admixture of the issue of the Budget; thirdly, a Constitutional King who ventured, under the circumstances, to put his sceptre into the scale would have been guilty not only of folly, but of unconstitutionalism; and, finally, a revolution so precariously wrought would be in danger of being unwrought within a few months or years. Now all these considerations have precisely the same weight to-day as in March last. Nothing has changed except the atmosphere. Consequently it is sheer bigotry to pretend that what proved so patently untrue several months ago is suddenly become true at this moment.

We will go further and frankly contend, in advance of the result, that if the coming General Election should prove no more decisive than the last, the case against the House of Lords must be regarded as unproved. Why not? It is, we submit, of the utmost importance that the Lords' question should be settled; in fact, it is a condition precedent of a score of political measures designed to lift England from the mud of poverty. But, after all, England cannot be lifted against her will; and no Democrat would desire to do so. Hence if the present campaign should fail to yield an unmistakable verdict, in weight, if not in numbers, our business will be not to force the event but to profit by the failure to succeed next time. And the direction of our efforts should be the education of public opinion by fair means and in the spirit of truth. Meanwhile, however, it remains a question to be settled within a month or two, whether in fact public opinion needs to be further enlightened. We do not think it does, but the issues, as we say, must be made clear and kept clear, if the proof is to be forthcoming.

The gravamen of our charge against the House of Lords is not, however, that it maims Liberal measures in particular. On that ground, no doubt, the Liberal wirepullers will endeavour to urge their cause; but it is no sufficient ground to those of us who recall with gratitude certain Liberal measures which were refused sanction by the Lords. Neither has there been a intention of comparing, still less of contrasting, the intellectual merits of the members of the respective Houses. The real grounds of offence are, first, that the House of Lords is not a nationally representative body, however it may desire to be so; but the House of Commons, secondly, that the House of Lords does definitely impose the veto of this class upon the will of the nation as articulately expressed in the Commons; thirdly, that in regard to the future alone the prospective and necessary measures of Social Reform are threatened with death at the hands of the Lords; and, fourthly, that the proof of this inability of the Lords to transcend the limits of their class vision was demonstrated in their rejection of Mr. Lloyd George's Budget. Due weight must be given to all these causes in the indictment, but in sum we trust that their effect will be to pose the issue not so much as Liberalism versus the Lords, as the Commons v. the Lords, or Democracy v. Oligarchy. Barren as these phrases may sound in the ear, they have a meaning infinitely surpassing in depth the superficial watchwords ordinarily employed.

To one serious misconception on the part of the Unionists we would draw attention on the threshold of the fight. It is that under the proposed plan of Mr. Asquith the Lords would lose everything. The "Saturday Review," we think, takes the most extreme view of the position that would result if the Premier's resolutions were carried. It makes very little difference whether the House of Lords remains in name or is ended." How short-sighted! If we were not certain to give the impression of disingenuousness we could easily demonstrate that the Lords have a great deal to gain in power by losing in prerogative. Even in respect of nominal power, it is obvious that the right to reject a Bill twice before accepting it will give the Lords a considerable weapon of delay, revision, and even of primary action, not often so favourable to Bills of any radical importance in the Commons that the same Bill can be carried there three times in two years. Again, it is contrary to fact to conceive the interests of the Lords as entirely dependent on the powers of their own Chamber. To our regret there are as good Lords in the House of Commons as in the Upper Chamber itself. The vision of Socialism immediately swamping the Lords when
their veto is modified is ridiculous. In all probability the Commons will become more conservative exactly in proportion as their responsibility increases. All these considerations make the loud bleating of the Lords' behalf seems excessively timid, not only timorous but stupid. It is not the immediate liberation of Radical measures that we anticipate from the declension of the Lords, but the opening up of vistas of hope. While the bare prospect of Democratic and Socialist legislation is batting the kings of the Lords' absolute veto, not only is little done, but little is attempted. We shall count the greatest gain from a victory over the Lords the enlargement of the popular horizon and the new impetus that it must give to hope and to will. * * *

On another ground, too, it may be urged that the effective strength of the Lords is open to a transformation all the more valuable for being spiritual rather than material. It is well known to advanced students of contemporary history that the Lords have brought disaster on themselves by neglect of brains and by their failure to realise their responsibilities. We may take it as an axiom that whether a cause be right or wrong, if it knows how to attract and to employ the best minds of the nation, New is it obvious that the English nobility have alienated the best minds of the English nation. Far from seeing them out as their forefathers did, they have for many years neglected and despised them. What, for example, do modern art, literature, science, the drama, music, architecture, and the crafts owe to the noble class? Is there a patron among them of any discernment? And not only have they neglected their duty of maintaining culture, but they have cynically and selfishly shielded their responsibilities in the matter of moral decadence. We say deliberately that no noble class is worth a moment's thought that has permitted England in its hands to become a morass of almost hopeless ugliness and poverty. To whom was the keeping of these islands given by fate and circumstance if not to the noble families, whose heads still sit in the Upper Chamber? And what account have they to render of it? No steward of Empire but would deserve instant punishment to introduce blacklegs there would be riots. Who, then the governing classes must be put to the trouble, to revolts. Even in these they suffer infinitely less than the poor devils whose very revolt is something of a relief.

Mr. Churchill's action as Home Secretary in sending police instead of soldiers to the strike district of South Wales has been severely criticised from opposite points of view. "Justice," as usual, takes the single line of damming at hazard everything in the way of "law and order" that anybody in power attempts. The "Satur- day Review," on the other hand, deplores what it calls the temper of the men was growing desperate. This could readily be foreseen by anybody who was acquainted with the labour world, knew of the break-down of collective bargaining and dissatisfaction it produced, and realised the moral reaction of the unions on discovering that their political action was doomed to fail. Under these conditions a statesman would instantly have been aware of the work of damage the authorities had time to become articulate, still less before they had become active. As everybody knows, however, both Mr. Churchill and the Cabinet generally allowed things to drift as usual until the North was in a state of general alarm. The bare prospect of Democratic and Socialist legislation is too hard for them. And not only will they occur again; and we hope they may. The conditions of labour, both in South Wales and in the North, are such that, as we repeatedly observe, it is the duty of men, being human, to refuse to serve under them. If the governing classes do nothing serious to remedy them, then the governing classes must be put to the trouble, and we hope they will be, of being periodically exposed to revolts. Even in these they suffer infinitely less than the poor devils whose very revolt is something of a relief.

In the matter of the South Wales dispute, for example, it is perfectly certain that not only are the men humanly and morally right, but the action of the owners in attempting to break the strike by means of blacklegs is contrary to public policy. To import blacklegs into the mines under the eyes of the men whose homes are being starved to enable them to fight is to overtax human endurance. We have no right to expect Welsh miners to be archangels of toleration; or to die quietly. Nobody, in fact, did expect it. Hence it was absolutely certain that not only was the strike over or that outbreaks would not occur again. On the contrary, they will occur again; and we hope they may. The conditions of labour, both in South Wales and in the North, are such that, as we repeatedly observe, it is the duty of men, being human, to refuse to serve under them. If the governing classes do nothing serious to remedy them, then the governing classes must be put to the trouble, and we hope they will be, of being periodically exposed to revolts. Even in these they suffer infinitely less than the poor devils whose very revolt is something of a relief.

To leave it at that, even if somebody was killed in the tumult, is plainly better than for a Government to have blood upon its hands. It will not be forgotten that Mr. Asquith lost a good deal of prestige by condoning the murder of the miners; and Mr. Churchill has probably taken that hint as well as the example of M. Briand in France. We at any rate are disposed to congratulate Mr. Churchill on his first encounter with the endless civil war of industry. So far as he has gone, we do not see that he could have done better.

* * *

But while admitting the right of Governments to maintain order—always, be it understood, with the minimum of force required for effective—deny that the duty of Government either begins there or ends there. As a matter of theory, a Government only requires to use force when it has neglected already its work of prevision. It is now some three months ago that we plainly warned the Cabinet that the "unrest" in the Labour movement was fast rising to a head, and that the temper of the men was growing desperate. This could readily be foreseen by anybody who was ac-

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Foreign Affairs.

By S. Verdad.

A lot of loose talk is circulating about Persia. Some of it was "spilled" in the "Manchester Guardian" of November 7. This Midland organ, which really does represent a section of Radical opinion, had a special article, and also a leader on the subject. By pointing out what is actually wrong in the information given by the "Manchester Guardian," and wherein its information differs from mine, we may, perhaps, be able to feel our way towards the truth.

The special article begins by explicitly contradicting the official statements conveyed to Messrs. Reuter on the subject of the loan. Reuter said that application had been made to the Imperial Bank of Persia. "We learn that, on the contrary," says the "Manchester Guardian," "the Persian Government has made no application to the Imperial Bank of Persia. The arrangements for a loan, entered into by the Persian Government, were with Messrs. Seligman, a firm of high standing in the City, and these arrangements would have been carried through but for the opposition of the British Government." The amount of the proposed loan is £1,200,000, and the interest 5 per cent.

Now, the information which has reached me from official English sources is that this statement is rather sweeping. The "Manchester Guardian" accentuates it in its leader by the words: "No one outside the Foreign Office has been aware that as long ago as early in October Persia had been offered and had accepted a loan for this purpose, i.e., to put down disorder from the British Government." The English Foreign Office maintains that it did not know the nature of the Persian negotiations with Messrs. Seligman, that it was kept in ignorance for several days regarding them, and that when it did ascertain their nature it took immediate steps to check them in its own diplomatic interests.

Indeed, the Seligman question is after all a trifle when compared with the view the "Manchester Guardian" takes with regard to the policy pursued by the British Government in Persia. As narrated in its mind as the rest of the Liberal Press, the "Manchester Guardian" is unable to understand that the policy we are pursuing is the only possible policy in the circumstances. The leader writer grumbles because Sir E. Grey has not protested against the presence of the Russian troops in the north. Why should the Russian troops not be in the north? Are the Russian men so unimaginative that they cannot foresee what would happen if the troops left? Why is no protest made against the presence of the Turkish troops? "Happily it is not yet too late for us to retract the course we have so wrongly undertaken," says the "Manchester Guardian." What course? The course of financial interference. The fact is that Persia, at the present day, must be closely watched and held in check, and the best check is the financial one. The writer in the "Manchester Guardian" does not say so in explicit terms, but he would apparently like us to lend Persian money, and watch her play ducks and drakes with it.

In this great paper we still find the old Liberal notion that the views on abstract subjects like security and justice are the same in Persia as in England; and the imposition of certain financial control is judged exactly as if the Persians were Englishmen. In reality, of course, the case is different. The Persians are afflicted in a great degree with the trickery and sharp dealing which we usually associate with Orientals. It is true that they want more money; but the hopelessly corrupt administration of the country does not augur well for its proper spending. Hence it is only natural that the two Powers most interested should exact certain guarantees.

In another part of its leader the "Manchester Guardian" speaks of the "melancholy history of our dealings with Persia." There is no excuse for the employment of such a phrase. The Liberal Press might as well make up its mind that it cannot write about subjects which it says it has no clue to. The writer I am criticising, however, gives himself away in one sentence, and perhaps disarms further criticism: "It is difficult for a plain man without a clue to the spider's web of diplomacy to understand why..." etc., etc. It is difficult for me to understand why a "plain man" should be writing leaders for the "Manchester Guardian," and, above all, why he should write about subjects which he says he has no clue to.

The results of the American elections are not such as to make me believe that Mr. Roosevelt's star has definitely set. The ex-President made a mistake no doubt in first of all severely criticising Mr. Taft's administration and afterwards bestowing his benediction upon it. It will have been observed, however, that Wall Street showed great anxiety to have the Democrats elected, and the Democrats as allies of the financiers is a new spectacle. It does not appear that the wages of the workman are going to be better, and with a Republican majority still in the Senate exceptional reductions in the tariffs are scarcely practicable. It may be that in another two years public opinion will have veered round to Mr. Roosevelt, who seems to have been well supported in the Middle West. In fact, I am inclined at the moment to think that this is very likely. "Father has nothing to say now, but you will hear from him later," said Comte Lafferre, conversing the paternal greeting to the crowd after the result of the Dix-Stimson part of the contest was known. Be on the look-out for father's message.

M. Briand also made a mistake when he took M. Lafferre into his Cabinet. He thought, apparently, that such a notable Freemason would have been of considerable influence in attracting lukewarm supporters; but the man has alienated as many as he has induced to vote for the new Ministry. M. Lafferre's connection with certain army intimations, "l'affaire fiches," as the punsters call it—has not been forgotten. A well-known Deputy has summed up the situation concisely by saying that, although M. Briand has talent enough for fifteen, he has not sufficient political morality for two. His vote of confidence this time was carried by a majority of 87, while his vote of confidence on the last occasion ran well into three figures.

I believe it is perfectly true to say that M. Briand has the country with him in the policy he is pursuing against the strikers; but it is questionable whether he has the voters with him. If every citizen of France who is entitled to vote could be induced to take sufficient interest in politics to record his view in the ballot box, the result would be staggering to those who pride themselves on the stability of the Republic. It would also make the Due d'Orléans and Prince Victor Napoleon take an even greater interest in France than they now do.
Bankrupt Turkey.

By Allen Upward

(Artist of "The East End of Europe: the Report of an Unofficial Mission").

II.—What is the Ottoman Nation?

Unfortunately for the ambition of the Young Turks to repeat the triumphs of the Japanese, the circumstances of the two empires have hardly anything in common. Japan, at the moment when it first entered on the task of emancipation from European tutelage, was a compact country, containing a homogeneous population approaching forty millions. One in race, in sentiment and in language, the Japanese had a national unity which the impatient young officers who, on the outbreak of war, in language which puts the blushing pretensions of the Bourbons and Habsburgs to time immemorial.

Superior in moral force to the strongest governments of Europe, Japan had no Poland or Ireland to hold down; and its internal peace was troubled neither by Legions nor civil discord. More important still was the resource which it possessed in the character of its people, at once brave and loyal, sober and hardy, industrious and intelligent.

With all these advantages in their favour, the patient toil of a group of great statesmen during a whole generation raised Japan to the level of a European Power. How many of these factors of success are at the command of the impatient young officers who, on the very morrow of the revolution, began to talk of reconquering Bosnia and Bulgaria, if not of advancing to the gates of Vienna?

The region over which the Crescent still floats extends from the Adriatic to the Indian Ocean, half of it desert, and densely populated by a number of inhabitants estimated at twenty-six millions. But these inhabitants are split up among nearly a dozen nationalities, each profoundly distrustful of all the others. Divided by blood, by language, and by religion, they are divided most of all by their common history, a history of over two thousand years; and the national unity was symbolised in the person of a sacred Emperor who was able, without vanity, to address his people on the outbreak of war, in language which puts the Bourbons and Habsburgs to time immemorial.

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Damocles over the Empire, and that he thought such an amicable entente could be secured by Home Rule."

Not unnecessarily for place, time and circumstances, in which this remarkable utterance was supposed to have taken place. These he was unable to give me, but instead said that it was such common knowledge that its truth might be assumed. It is not without signification that it is not without signification, for the very fact that it has been believed is evidence that it is characteristic, and to say that it is characteristic is second only to saying it is true.

The late King is probably the only Sovereign who has been sincerely regretted in Ireland since James II, but if his death is felt for one cause more than another, it is the loss of that world-famed tact of his, which made him a diplomatic genius and which, if occasion had offered, would probably have found some solution for the greatest of all Imperial problems, the loyalty of Ireland.

The new King is, so far, an unknown figure as a personality, but no Sovereign ever ascended the throne of England a stranger than Mr. George V. The time is rich in possibilities; ripe for new measures. Men are tired of the racial strife, the hundred years' war of English politics. Young men are abandoning the purely emotional patriotism which stood so well looked upon in England as such a danger, and the only really widespread enthusiasm is more economic and objective. There is thus a splendid opening for an entente cordiale led by a diplomatist sovereign.

Chief among those in the van of this movement is Mr. William O'Brien, whose change of attitude from rabid hostility to the utmost courtesy, forms one of the most significant developments in the study of Palmerism. And it seems a pity that upon the death of the late King, when the Dublin Corporation, and even so ardent a Nationalist as Archbishop Walsh, paid public tribute to his memory, Mr. Redmond and his party did not come forward gracefully with some official act of condolence. The act would have been untraditional no doubt, but it would have been diplomatic, and would have won the hearts of the English electors more potently than any political campaign. But there have not been wanting signs of a coming peace in his many utterances.

The great key to the Irish problem is the spirit in which it is approached, and never more so than at the present crisis was there need for a "New Spirit." What Mr. William O'Brien once said is a great press movement to inaugurate an entente and show by the mutual co-operation of Nationalist and Unionist, that Home Rule will bring in a reign of real peace, and not a political fight. But in addition to that journalistic attempt, which a few influential newspapers could turn into a reality, there is needed its personification in some royal initiative. More is wrought by politics than by force of arms, but much more by diplomacy. Hence the hopes placed in George V.

A great personal interest and love of Ireland has not been displayed in centuries by any English monarch; it was therefore impossible to reciprocate it; and strange to say, the word "Tory" which was synonymous with Markievicz, has now become a synonym for those who hate England most.

One who has seen the Empire, and knows the loyalty of the great Home Rule Parliaments of the great Commonwealth of the great Dominion, is the very man for the situation. The Irish are instinctively loyal, loyalty, like love, takes two. If, however, it could be said that George V merely that he had by his love of Ireland brought back its loyalty, it might be less grandiose than the title of "Peacemaker" conferred on his father, but it may be confidently stated that it would have devolved upon the man to the empire. At least it would be completing what, if the story of the greatest Home Ruler be true, was the father's greatest ambition.

How Holbein Bagman Played the Devil.

The Hospital being in debt to the tune of a couple of thousand pounds, notwithstanding the closing of a ward, and other curtailments of the services for which the Hospital is looked to everywhere, the number of twelve of the borough inhabitants—and this having gone on for an intolerably long time—small wonder at last that citizens collected together and determined to amend a bazaar. It should have been a Historical Bazaar, with stalls and stall-holders dressed in costume appropriate to a score of by-gone centuries. The Saxon period, the Norman period, the Angevin, the Elizabethan, the Stuart and other periods were quickly taken up, and Holbein Bagman, when he was asked what he would do, said that he would put on the costume of the Future, and appear in horns, claws, tail and hoofs as the symbol of the fashion to which the world was hastening in defect of Socialism. Since Holbein Bagman always jests when he is serious, everybody laughed, and nobody thought more of the matter. On the opening-day of the Bazaar, however, Holbein Bagman was as good as his name and costumed for the Divinity, and played, as events turned out, a part in keeping with it. To him had been allotted the function of seconding the vote of thanks to the Marquis, who was to perform the opening ceremony with due parade and dignity. The Marchioness was also invited to be present.

Behold us then, on our opening-day, arrayed on the platform of the Town Hall, the Marquis and the Marchioness in the centre of us, and below us on the floor the stalls set round the walls, with their merchantable charity, enclosing as in a frame a compactly wedged mass of the hats and the heads of everybody who was somebody, and anybody who was nobody, all assembled together for the delightful ceremony and the love of our time-honoured Nobility. Irrespective of that twin-starred cynosure, the objects that most attract admiration are the hennius of ladies who have donned the Gothic; and the horns, claws, tail and hoofs of Holbein Bagman, who presents a scarlet, diabolical and altogether mediaval apparition by the side of them.

The Chairman sets the ball rolling, as chairman do, and calls first upon the Treasurer to read the list of subscriptions. A clap of laughter greets the Treasurer as he unfolds the roll which reaches to his feet, and there are frequent outbursts of applause as the name of donor after donor is recited, the sitting member, the rival political candidate, the leading business firms, etc. The part he liked best of his subscription list, said the Treasurer, and here I doubt if he was quite sincere, was the account of the halfpennies contributed, in weekly collection boxes, by noble hearted British working people, eager to relieve the sufferings of their brothers and sisters. There were nearly a hundred thousand half-pence, but fortunately we heard about them in the lump, and not in the item, like the guineas.

The Treasurer having made his bow to the Marquis, whose rising was the signal for cheers and the presentation of a bouquet to the Marchioness, a clap of laughter greets the Treasurer as he was about to đóng on the costume of the Future. We heard about them in the lump, and not in the item, like the guineas.

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noble and inspiring words he had spoken. What would England be without its Marquises and its Marchionesses? He was about to tread, however, upon more noble and inspiring words he had spoken. What would the borough to throw the Hospital upon the rates? ever known to become a better man by paying a rate? England be without its Marquises and its Marchion- upon our dinner-table, and what were our words? It or not what we said when we saw the demand-note. having done worked for the stalls were nobler moral beings for the subscription-list were nobler moral beings for having done so. The subscribers who had given to the subscription-list were nobler moral beings for having done so. The working people who had contributed their half-pennies were better men and women for it, and the Marquis himself was a nobler man, if that were possible, for having come among us. No! to throw the Hospital upon the rates would be deplorable. Long let the Hospital be sustained upon the warmth and the sympathy of noble British hearts.

It was with more than purgatorial fires, more than a burning indignation, that Holbein Bagman listened to these clerical ineptitudes, and with almost a prayer, forgotful of his character of the Devil, he added the reminder of his sense of humour. For only a jest could gain him himself of the importance of clinging to what remained of his sense of humour. For only a jest could gain him a hearing. He seconded the vote of thanks to the Marquis, he said, as a regrettable necessity (some laughed, it being understood that Holbein Bagman is a funny fellow). What had we to thank the Marquis for? Ought not the Marquis rather to thank us, first of all for the bouquet which we had presented to his wife, and then for the compliments we had given him, and then, also, for a whole lifetime of bouquets and compliments which we had assured him, simply because he was a person of rank. (More laughter mixed with signs of misgiving.) What had the Marquis done for us compared with what we had done for him? Talk about rates, had we not paid him his rents with exemplary regularity (laughter) to spare him the pain of losing his tenants—never grumbled when we could not gain the tenantry or the removal of our leases upon terms that quite suited us (laughter)—always blessed the name of his agents who knew so well how to conceal the firm hand in the velvet glove, always felt that if we were forgetful of his character of the Devil, that he reminded us of his sense of humour. Naturally I cannot place myself in my true character. Naturally I cannot place myself in my true character.

A Symposium on the Representation of Shakespeare.

Conducted by Huntly Carter.

In view of the manner in which certain Shakespearean plays are presented to contemporary English audiences, and of the manner in which they might be presented, as suggested by the Shakespearean Exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, the following questions have been put to Shakespearean critics and scholars:—

1. Would you say that Shakespeare had any intention with regard to appropriate decoration for his plays? Did he write for an imaginative audience and not for scenic aids?

2. Do you think, therefore, Shakespeare ought to be played without scenery and unabridged?

3. Do you believe that the beauty of Shakespeare resides in the spoken word, and the utmost attention should be given to the delivery of Shakespearean verse?

4. Or do you agree that Shakespeare wrote for scenic aids? He was restricted by the capabilities of the Elizabethan Theatre, and if he had had the unimaginative audience of the present day to deal with, and the modern scenic aids at his command, he would have employed the latter in the production of his plays so as to obtain a proper balance of visualised scene and spoken word? But even admitting this, is the present tendency to overload Shakespeare with scenery and to make extensive ‘cuts’ in your opinion a departure from the spirit of Shakespeare’s work and therefore a diminution of its beauty?

5. Have you any criticisms or further suggestions?

Professor Edward Dowden, M.A., LL.D., D.C.L.

1. I know nothing as to Shakespeare’s intention with regard to appropriate decoration.

2. I do not think that Shakespeare ought to be played without scenery.

3. I think that appropriate scenery does not detract from the beauty of Shakespeare’s spoken word.

4. I have never felt beauty of scenery to be a departure from the spirit of Shakespearean work, nor a diminution of its beauty.

Dr. Sidney Lee

[Extracts taken by Dr. Lee from a volume of essays, "Shakespear and the Modern Stage"]

1. Shakespeare’s splendid prologue to the play of Henry vi. is a spiritual appeal to his audience not to waste regrets on defects of stage machinery, but to bring to the observation of his piece the highest powers of imagination, whereby alone can full justice be done to the beauty of his words. The central topic of the choric speech is the essential limitations of all scenic appliances. The dramatist reminds us that the
The fact that Shakespeare presented in his plays many scenes which lend themselves to a pursuit of scenic realism, as being antagonistic to the ultimate law of dramatic art. He favours Mr. Benson's principles: "Short Runs," "No Stars," "All-round Competence," "Unostentatious Setting," and "Shakespeare and the National Drama."

RT. HON. JUDGE MADDEN, P.C., LL.D.

The fact that Shakespeare presented in his plays many scenes which lend themselves to a pursuit of scenic realism, as being antagonistic to the ultimate law of dramatic art. He favours Mr. Benson's principles: "Short Runs," "No Stars," "All-round Competence," "Unostentatious Setting," and "Shakespeare and the National Drama."

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lateral presentation of life itself in all its movement and action lies outside the range of the stage, especially the movement and action which takes place in imagination. Obvious conditions of space do not allow "two mighty monarchies" literally to be confined within the walls of the "scaffold," nor can his plays have pretensions to the contention that modern upholstery and spectacular machinery render Shakespeare's play a justice which was denied to them in his lifetime. As reasonableness might have affirmative in every nation, it is now acknowledged the ordinary conditions of time and space; that a modern playhouse can, if the manager so will it, actually hold within its walls the "vast fields of France," or confine two mighty monarchies.

The fact that in Shakespeare's day boys or men took the part of women, that he addressed his playgoers to his imaginative faculty of adult Elizabethan playgoers, in whom the needful dramatic illusion was far more easily evoked than it is today. The costumes had no pretensions to fit the period or place of the action. They were the ordinary dresses of the various classes of the day, but very often of rich material, and in the height of the current fashion.

2. Plays which are wrought of purest imaginative texture call solely for a free hand.

3. Shakespeare has declared with emphasis that no amount of scenery can secure genuine success on the stage for a great work of the imagination. He is no less emphatic in the value he sets on competent acting. In "Hamlet," as every reader will remember, the dramatist points out the perennial defects of the actor, and shows how they may and must be corrected. He did all he could for the Elizabethan playgoer in the way of insisting that the art of acting should be that of "enchantment" and "conciseness," and that the dramatist's words must reach the ears of the audience clearly and intelligibly enunciated. (Hamlet's speech to the players is a perfect example of this.)

4. There is an unexhilarating endeavour that is sometimes made by advocates of the system of spectacle to prove that Shakespeare, on no objection being made, have anticipated developments of the scenic art—nay, more, that he himself has justified them. This line of argument serves to confirm the suggested defect of imagination in the present generation.

The well-known chorus before the first act of "Hamlet," as every reader will remember, the dramatist points out the perennial defects of the actor, and shows how they may and must be corrected. He did all he could for the Elizabethan playgoer in the way of insisting that the art of acting should be that of "enchantment" and "conciseness," and that the dramatist's words must reach the ears of the audience clearly and intelligibly enunciated. (Hamlet's speech to the players is a perfect example of this.)

Scenery, pageants, and decorations which seem to me to overlay "some necessary question of the play" may be no more than are necessary to constitute a counter attraction to the pantomime, and a crowd of people in a music-hall.

I certainly answer your third question in the affirmative. I hope that a National Theatre will be founded as a memorial to Shakespeare, in which his plays would be produced with appropriate scenery, and (so far as may be) unabridged, in which they were interested.

MRS. CHARLOTTE C. STOPEJS.

(Author of "Bacon-Shakespeare Question Answered")

1. It is perfectly certain that Shakespeare considered every condition under which his works would be produced before he finally completed them. On the public stage he knew that he would have an open platform, a curtained recess at the back, with a balcony, tapestry, and a few movable articles of furniture; that his light would be from above, as the text was meant only for the performance of a drama within manageable bonds. Ben Jonson was not afraid to say, in his blunt way, that Shakespeare might well have blotted one thousand of his lines. I have no doubt that Shakespeare would recognise the propriety of judicious cutting, for he was content to leave his immortal dramas to be altered by his fellows, Fanning and Condell, to be dealt with as they thought fit for the purposes of the theatre in which they were interested.

But adds on behalf of the theatrical manager—

"Pardon, gentle all,
The flat, unsatisfactory spirit that have dared On this unworthy scaffold to bring forth So great an object; can this cockpit hold The vasty fields of France? or may we cram Within this wooden O the very casques That did affect the air of Agincourt?"

The audience is thus appealed to—

"Piece not our imperfections with your thoughts."

Shakespeare, in the absence of scenic aids, was obliged to appeal to the imagination of his audience. I doubt that they were more imaginative than the playgoers of to-day, or that Shakespeare would have so regarded them. We know that the "groundlings" were "capable of nothing but explication" and were only "permitted" to see the scene which the poet imagines, and the cramped and narrow bounds which the stage renders practicable. That perfunctory interval can only be effectively bridged by scenic art, which is applied with an apt judgment and a light hand. Anything that aims at doing more than satisfy the condition essential to the effective suggestion of the imaginative environment of Shakespearean drama is, from the literary and logical points of view, "a wasteful and ridiculous excess."

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Scenery, pageants, and decorations which seem to me to overlay "some necessary question of the play" may be no more than are necessary to constitute a counter attraction to the pantomime, and a crowd of people in a music-hall.
The Theatre' and 'The Globe.' He also played, however, at Blackfriars, a private theatre, where the performances might be at night, by artificial light, and with richer decoration at Conduit Street by day and night. There is evidence that there was much more of the nature of scenery in these private performances, but it was of a kind much simpler than modern, scenes, and did not seem to be changed during the performance until the reign of James I., and then with but little delay.

2. If an actor be asked, he would probably answer, 'Yes.' Scenery forms a becoming background to his careful get-up and studied expressions. Besides it saves him trouble. He might be allowed to forget a word or even a line without notice, if the audience are held by the glancing light of a pretty picture. If, to make time, some of the parts must be cut, he would say that if they did not cut his part it need not matter much.

If, however, a scholar or a student of Shakespeare were asked he could only reply: If you wish to understand Shakespeare he must begin punctually, and end nearly punctually; the nature of scenery in these private performances, but it was of a kind much simpler than modern, scenes, and did not seem to be changed during the performance until the reign of James I., and then with but little delay. If an actor be asked, he would probably answer, 'Yes.' Scenery forms a becoming background to his careful get-up and studied expressions. Besides it saves him trouble. He might be allowed to forget a word or even a line without notice, if the audience are held by the glancing light of a pretty picture. If, to make time, some of the parts must be cut, he would say that if they did not cut his part it need not matter much.

3. Shakespeare's language is always intended to help towards the elucidation of the character which uses it. The greater part is taken in its development, to mark its rhythm and express the emphasis. It must be remembered that elocution was a more important factor in stage-success than it is now. There are frequent contemporary allusions to this fact. At the same time it was a rapid though clear pronunciation; it did not waste time, it did not allow the listener's attention to flag. But to realise the beauty of Shakespeare's verse, every word must be weighed, every pause balanced. It cannot be reduced to the level of everyday conversation, for though Shakespeare depicts real life it is life expressed in a poetic form, and on a higher plane than the common-place.

4. This has already been answered in the previous paragraph. We must not forget this point fully explained in an article on 'Elizabethan Stage Scenery' ('The Fortnightly,' June, 6, 1914), that the sixteenth century in this country did not allow the scenic pictures to be famous at all, and were generally made by foreigners. The forms under which the artistic aspirations of each period were expressed were architecture, music, and poetry. The modern drama was its own special creation. In our own time the relations of thought and feeling to art are changed; the public calls on the poet or the dramatist; we are weak in imaginative power; we do not have his plays given exactly as they were written, and without scenery, I cannot forget the enormous difference between an Elizabethan audience and an audience of the present day in regard to imaginative belief. There is all the difference in the world between an Elizabethan audience and an audience of our own time.

As I have said on a previous occasion, when discussing 'Cymbeline,' there is a closer and more intimate sympathy and complete imagination of the audience no aid was needed from scenery. Take, for instance, 'The Wisdom of Dr. Dodypoll,' a very pretty English comedy, and in some scenes a very beautiful one. Without the aid of scenery of any kind to keep the imagination alive, an Elizabethan spectator of this play was able to follow a jumble of unconnected incidents which the modern reader even at his leisure in his study, finds it almost impossible to follow. In fact, I never did understand this play with any scenic treatment, as the incidents were only brought into touch with literature by the acted drama.

Dr. A. W. Ward, Litt. D., Master of Peterhouse, Cambridge.
1. I cannot but suppose that Shakespeare intended the decoration for his plays to be as appropriate as it could be.
2. All experiments are interesting.
3. I believe that the beauty of a Shakespearean play largely lies in its diction and versification, and that therefore great attention should be given to the delivery of the verse or prose it contains.
4. Any tendency to "overload" must diminish the effect of that which is overloaded. As to "cuts," they were probably in use in Shakespeare's time, and no doubt were regretted by him either as necessary or as unnecessary evils. But an "extensive" cut is a phrase which requires definition.

Mr. Patrick Kirwan.

[Mr. Kirwan is dealing with the subject of Shakespeare and natural scenery.]

The chief difference between open-air playing and that within a theatre seems to me to lay in the abolition of the proscenium arch and the consequent absence of scenery.

This is particularly marked in the case of Shakespeare as coming more nearly to the conditions for which he wrote. The erection of a picture-frame was no doubt injurious to the free growth of the drama, for it added the restrictions of the painter's art to those absolutely necessary to dramatic production—that is to say, to the incarnation of a wave of thought and feeling which the audience are to follow with intelligent eagerness by these amazing Elizabethan actors. It should be mentioned that the late Dr. Furnivall suggested that the modern experiments were brought into touch with literature by the acted drama.

Aldis Wright, Vice-Master of Trinity College, Cambridge.

Scenic adornment may be, and, indeed, is, in our time, overdone in representations of Shakespearean plays. But as Shakespeare was, according to the poet, a joint owner of the building as well as poet, and knew that in dramatic art the primary quest is illusion, I think he would have seized upon most of the scenic aids to illusion in his own time, whenever ready. So much one has said (I think it was Coteridge), "A play is a third something between a poem and a picture," and Shakespeare, notwithstanding the restrictions of the Elizabethan stage, seems to have been always conscious of this.

Of course, I think that the beauty of Shakespeare resides in his words. But it is natural that the imagination should be given to the delivery of Shakespeare verse. But with all my respect for those enthusiastic students of Shakespeare—some of whom are pursuing my own line of study—who have his plays given exactly as they were written, and

Mr. Theodore Watts-Dunton.

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Aldis Wright, Vice-Master of Trinity College, Cambridge.
Benjamin Disraeli.

By Francis Grierson.

The nineteenth century may yet be called the most "daemonic" of all the centuries of the Christian era. At its beginning three men were living who, in the words of Goethe, "were controlled by the daemonic afflatus of their genius," namely, Byron, Bonaparte and Disraeli. Of these three Bonaparte and Disraeli attained the clairvoyance. A mistake has been made in alluding to the first half of Queen Victoria's reign as a period of sentimentality. As a matter of fact it was sentimental only in art; but the long necks in the pictures, more than matcheds the long heads in Parliament; the languorous eyes in Burns were more than rivalled by the Mephistophelean glances of willy Whigs and the Machiavellian winks of a Tory Demiurgus whose advent all the wiseacres failed to predict and all the fools failed to prevent. No; the novels, the manners, the fads, the fertile impudence, the dazzling folly of Disraelian wit more than counter-balanced the lotus-languors of the come-into-the-garden Maudies of the early Victorian period. Byron was a sentimental Don Juan who turned the hearts of women and the stomachs of men. Disraeli turned all heads, touched all fancies, wrought upon all hearts, opened all pocket-books, filled all imaginations, and brought to the festive wiles of British politics the spirit of a new life, a ragout unnamed in the political cook-books, unknown to the most fastidious faddists of the Parliamentarian palate, a dish of birds of a feather which had refused to flock together, but which, when caught, killed, and baked in a pie, rose when the pie was opened and sang in chorus "Rule Britannia," to the baton of Benjamin Disraeli, Prime Minister of England by the Grace of God, most of the landlords and all the publicans. Never before was such a thing seen with the naked eye, never was such a thing heard with the naked ear. People who were not stricken with wonder would be likely to remain unmoved at the sound of the last trump.

Bonaparte struck terror into all Europe, but he did so with sabre and bullet. People could see him at the work even if they failed to understand how his work was done. He seemed to his soldiers to be part of themselves. They regarded him as a descended God made one with the common spirit de corps, democratic as well as daemonic; they followed blindly where they could not see, and obeyed willingly what they could not understand. With all his colossal originality Napoleon the Grecoless Oriental was less daemonic, less Oriental than Disraeli. Bonaparte often blundered, and he came to his defeat in the battle of Rosscetti, and his enemy. As Disraeli rose step by step he was greeted with stronger and stronger epithets. The admiration of his enemies knew no bounds. They cried in a chorus, "Charlatan, mountebank, adventurer, impostor!" In the meantime he dressed himself in rags, buried his irony, he reserved his sarcasm and wore on his face the imperious mask of perpetual serenity, nature's hall-mark of daemonic genius. Nor did he walk alone in his dashing glory. He was surrounded by social meteors, sparks from the wheel of fashion and passing fads. Dynamic dandies, Count D'Orsay, Bulwer Lytton, Brummell, and others, who made Disraeli's sun appear all the brighter in comparison with the dandies who wanted but a whiff of creative afflatus to make their intellects shine like their clothes. Disraeli was a bard who preferred Oriental prose to verse, and the poetic license of Parliament to the practice of Byronic rhyme.

He was the first modern to turn the tables on the prophets by forestalling their predictions, the greatest practical pessimist since Moses, the clearest seer since Daniel. It required a serene eye, an un-ruffled brow, and a menacing top-knot to enter the lion's den at Westminster with nothing but words to allure and nothing but manners to fascinate. He was not long there when he began to twist their tails, pull their teeth, singe their manes, and clip their claws without using so much as a sniff of chloroform. He soon became the whip of the sickly, the banner of the strong, the nail to the tamer of lions, wild cats, fynenas, and the leopards who longed to change their spots as well as their seats.

Like all men of daemonic genius, he had his moods, his days, his seasons, when he thought, spoke, and did what he pleased. And yet one man understood the wit in the play, the clown in the circus, the dandy in the red waistcoat. Not these do people understand. People understand what the speaker without wit, the writer without humour, the politician without imagination, and the preacher without inspiration mean.

Beau Brummell died in 1840, and in that year another dandy found himself in a conspicuous place on the stage of London life. But what a difference between the two dandies, Brummell and Disraeli! The first was a fool, the second a genius who played at burlesque because he knew the fools would like it. Captivate them and you have won half the battle. The foolish are won through the sight, the weak through the sound, the vain and silly, the wicked by ambition, the cunning by promises, and the wise by knowledge and judgment. The new dandy made up his mind to give all a taste in turn. In the beginning he made himself as picturesque as it was possible to be without becoming a peacock or a bird of paradise, and he managed to surpass them in his strut and rival them in colour. He was a human chancellor. He began to crow as a chicken and fought in the Parliamentary cock-pit when his spurs were mere corns and his wide pin feathers. Why then the Puritans cry, Coxcomb! He lost no time. He stormed the barnyard first, the hen-house second, the House of Commons third, then the lordly House of the Turkey Cocks, with its cocky cry is, Rule Britannia, to the baton of Francis Grierson.
Aberglaube.
By Cecil Chesterton.

On a tranquil summer evening in the year A.D. 2240 two men were sitting outside the doorway of a remote country vicarage in Cumberland, smoking and sipping excellent ale (of State manufacture), while they chatted over old times.

Mordaunt Grayling was a distinguished public servant, who, from his office in London, exercised a general control over the educational system of England. Just now, however, he was taking a fortnight's holiday, and was spending it with his old college friend, Father Shard, the parish priest of the little Cumbrian village at the lights of which they were gazing as they talked.

"You must find yourself getting a bit rusty in these parts, Shard, said Grayling. "Don't you ever feel you want to come up to London and be in the centre of things again?"

"Well," answered the priest, "I do feel like that at times. But one gets used to it. And after all, a priest has always plenty to do. Upon my word, I get so much interested in my people here that I hardly think of anything else."

"You find them interesting?"

"Very. It's quite fascinating to watch their quaint primitive ideas on some subjects."

"I should have thought," remarked the Controller of Education, "that our system of universal instruction would have eradicated almost everything specially primitive."

"Oh, they all go to the public schools, of course," said Father Shard, "but all sorts of queer traditions are handed on from father to son all the same. They wouldn't talk about them to strangers, you know. They'd be afraid of being laughed at. But they believe them, or half-believe them, all the same."

"What sort of thing do you mean?"

"Well, for instance," the priest went on impressively, "I could point out a dozen men and women in this very parish who believe in Heredity."

"Heredity?" exclaimed the official. "What, that extraordinary nineteenth century fancy about people transmitting qualities to their children?"

"Yes," answered his host. "I could show you men and women, sane, level-headed men and women in other respects, who'll swear to noticing the qualities of parents reappearing in their children."

"And these people have been to our schools!" cried the educationist. "Upon my word, it's enough to make one despair of human progress!"

There was a long silence; it was the priest who finally broke it.

"I suppose you would think me quite mad," he said, "if I told you I thought there was something in it?"


"But, look here," said the clergyman, "we both believe in witchcraft."

"Of course," replied the other, a little contemptuously.

"Yes, of course," Father Shard went on. "You admit it. You teach it in your public schools. Every child is taught how to know a witch by putting iron under her chair and how to hold its fingers so as to avert the Evil Eye. And yet, after all, is the evidence in favour of witchcraft so very much stronger than the evidence in favour of heredity? On what evidence can any theory rest except a great mass of human testimony? And here is human testimony in abundance to the truth of the doctrine of heredity."

"Of course, you can use sophistry of that kind on any side of any question," was the sharp rejoinder, "but you know as well as I do that there is no possible comparison between the two cases. Witchcraft is a matter of perfectly well ascertained scientific truth. There may be differences of opinion between the daring young disciples of Professor Beatling and the orthodox school which adheres to the conclusions of Cough, but as to the facts there is no dispute. To attempt to put such carefully verified scientific discoveries on the same plane as the fancies of a few ignorant and credulous rustics—"

"Why do you call them credulous?" asked the priest.

"Because they believe in heredity!" retorted Grayling, somewhat irritably. "What better proof of credulity could you find?"

"But why does the idea of heredity seem to you so incredible?"

"Oh, don't be so silly. Of course it's incredible! Every modern man must feel it to be incredible! The question isn't arguable!"

"I see that it isn't," replied the priest quietly.

There was another interval of silence, and then Grayling said:—

"You'll be wanting to revive Darwinism next!"

"No! No!" laughed the clergyman. "I wouldn't go so far as that! All the same, I feel that these old theories would never have got such a hold on man's minds if there hadn't been some element of truth in them. Now, even Darwinism—"

"Oh, go to blazes!" exclaimed the other impatiently.

"Well, we'll leave Darwinism aside for the moment. But, while you're rebuking credulity, let me ask you whether you don't think we're getting a little credulous about witchcraft."

"Credulous! About witchcraft?"

"Well, of course, I don't for a moment doubt that witches do exist, but, after all, they are exceptional. Is it really necessary to have all these Home Office inspectors going round from place to place to smell out sorcery?"

"A most necessary precaution," replied the official sententiously. "The business is becoming a national danger, and its possible effects on the future of the race are appalling—perfectly appalling."

"But it's so easy to make mistakes," pleaded the clergyman, and, after all, the whole subject belongs to the realm of the doubtful and unknown."

"Doubtful and unknown! Rubbish! There's no scientific doctrine more thoroughly established. If you can't trust universal observation—"

But in this part universal observation is on the side of heredity."

Mordaunt Grayling became suddenly very serious.

"My dear Shard," he said, "no doubt it's very amusing to talk as you do, but do you realise what you may be doing? Haven't you read history? Don't you know to what frightful consequences this delusion of heredity led in the early part of the twentieth century? Haven't you heard of the evil madness which seized upon mankind and the sickening cruelties to which that madness led men otherwise humane and public spirited? Have you tried to conceive the horrible moral and physical torture inflicted on harmless persons in that age because some idiot thought that they might transmit some quality to their children? Surely you don't want to bring back those horrors! Surely even you would sicken at the thought of their ever darken-ing the earth again?"

"Oh, I admit that the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries went mad on heredity," replied Father Shard. "I don't defend them or the savage laws they passed under the influence of their panic. Only I think there must have been just a little fragment of truth for them to go mad about."

"Oh, you are incorrigible!" exclaimed Grayling, and carefully placing two nails cross-wise on the door-step, he followed his host into the house.
Books and Persons.

(AN OCCASIONAL CAUSERIE.)

By Jacob Tonson.

HERMANN SUDERMANN's latest novel, "The Song of Songs," has at length been published in England (John Lane, 6s.). We seem to have less curiosity now about foreign fiction than we had a dozen years ago. This present edition has been printed in America, and is no doubt part of the American edition with an English title-page. The book was issued in the United States some time ago, and has, I believe, aroused a certain interest there. Although the translation is obviously not complete—it is very far from being complete—it still runs to 640 pages, and English critics will probably employ half the space which they devote to it in pointing out that it is "leisurely" and "long-winded," and beyond the fashionable length. They will also assuredly mention Mr. de Morgan, for no reference to length in novels is nowadays complete without Mr. de Morgan's name. "The Song of Songs," however, is not long-winded, nor even leisurely. It is long merely because it describes a very large number of events: according to current English critical standards, it is the number of words—and not the number of words considered in relation to the number of events—which make a novel long-winded or the reverse. It does not seem to have occurred to any critics yet that though Sudermann and Thackeray wrote novels of similar length, Thackeray is long-winded while Fielding is rapid. Sudermann is rapid, very rapid—the narrative runs smoothly, and the 640 pages of it may be accomplished without any abnormal effort.

Having said that the book is long-winded, the critics will further say (with a certain condescension) that it deals with ordinary average people. But it does not. It merely deals with credible people. Whenever the average honest English critic encounters in a novel a group of characters that seem true to life, he at once sets them down as "average" folk. He has probably never exercised his imagination to an extent sufficient to enable him to realise what an "average" person actually is—even an average critic. And if any really capable novelist did set about to give a completely faithful portrait of an "average" man, the critic would certainly condemn it as pessimistic, sordid, cynical. Fortunately no really capable novelist is likely to commit such an artistic blunder as to offer a world as abominable as a hero to an individual quite inadequate to the situation. Still it is a pity that critics, even the more thoughtful ones, are so warped by the universal sentimentisation of our fiction that they cannot distinguish between that which is true and that which is ordinary.

"The Song of Songs" deals with the "demi-monde"—in the French sense of the term. That is to say, with that world which lies between the "monde" and what we in England call the "demi-monde." Its chief character is naturally a girl. It is a good book; not very good, but decidedly better than one has the right to expect from the author of such a piece of theatrical clap-trap as "Heimat,"—known to enthusiastic Anglo-Saxon audiences all over the world as "Maggia." Some of the more tender and some of the more sordid scenes are excellently done (in a somewhat messy German way), and from end to end the desire to be at once truthful and lyrical is steadily apparent. But the novel is streaked with sentimentality, because it is also streaked with cynicism—outside England the two qualities are seldom to be found apart from one another. In particular the use of the precious musical manuscript, "The Song of Songs," is painfully sentimental. On the whole, a novel which an adult-minded person may read without intellectual humiliation!

Mr. G. K. Chesterton's new book of "Daily News" essays is entitled "Alarms and Discussions" (Methuen's). It is something like the last collection, but perhaps rather more fragmentary and rather more higgledy-piggledy. And a few of the essays seem to touch the extreme of brevity. The worst part of the book is the introduction excusing it. Mr. Chesterton, after relating an allegorical dream, likens his essays to gargoyles. This row of shapeless and ungainly monsters which I now set before the reader. These monsters are meant for the gargoyles of a definite cathedral. I have to carve the gargoyles because I can carve nothing else. All which is important. But the priest of Mr. Chesterton's dream filled up all his gargoyles—all the ugly things of the universe"; and when he had done it the rich and influential went into a passion of applause and cried, "This is real art! This is Realism! This is things as they really are."

Mr. Chesterton quite differently expresses it on the very next page: "Realism means a lost donkey going nowhere." Mr. Chesterton makes "the high boast" that he is a mediævalist and not a modern. He may be, but we nevertheless regret that he cannot perceive the excessive crudity and strident feebleness—I hesitate to say the intellectual vulgarity—of this kind of writing. His essays, though "journalism," needed no apology. It is doubly a pity that he should have written for them an otiöse apology which, in the domain of philosophic ideas, can only be described as "yellow journalism."

A recent very interesting French book is "L'Ame des Anglais," by the lady who is certainly at the present time the most brilliant writer on the regular stuff of the "Figaro." She signs herself "Forminia." These essays originally appeared in the Literary Supplement to the "Figaro," and they attracted attention, including mine. Among sundry epigrammatic phrases, I remember: "Every Englishman is an island." The book (printed by Bernard Grasset) is very much subtler than anything written about the English by that quite other lady "Pierre de Coulévan." Also: "Marie-Claire," the novel by a working sempstress of mature years, Marguerite Audoux, which Octave Mirbeau has been magnificently booming for a year past, is now at length published. If it does not prove to be very wonderful indeed, Octave Mirbeau's prestige will assuredly suffer.

The latest half-crowns novel is "Natasha: The Story of a Russian Woman," by Anna Brodsky (J. M. Dent, Ltd.). It is a mild but faithful work, and deserves attention; and it has the extrinsic interest of having been written in English by a Russian.

PERSONAL.

MEANEST parson, proudest Pope,
You are fools to hug the hope
Of salvation, if you live
By the alms which poor men give.

Dear, fair lady, diamond-eyed,
Tell me, what avails your pride,
If it bring you to the Hell
Where the damned-for-ever dwell?

Light-limbed athlete, you whose strength
Mocks a season's strenuous length,
Wherefore is your prowess spent
On a death-devoured event?

Monarch holding in your hands
Hail the earth's wide and lands,
I should like to hear you say
What post-mortem realms you sway.

All is vain and flesh is grass;
Each applause were an alms,
Were significances seen
As the truth that fields are green.

Pulpits, empires, peoples pass,
Love alone rules race and class,
Love which wears, as poets know,
Purple, while the Kings wear woe.

OLIVER DAVIES.
The Maids’ Comedy.

CHAPTER III.

Exhibiting a partner in an old-established business pursuing her occupation.

As everybody knows, distance is deceptive when seen through very rarefied atmosphere. The purple hills which Dorothea expected to reach by noonday were, in fact, sixty miles away. Noon brought the damsels to a convention shady place beside a brook; and the sun having grown too intense for bearing, they decided to rest.

Dota Filjee off-saddled the palfreys, and then proceeded from one and another of her pockets a store of eatables which she had gotten from the liege lord’s castle. Sandwiches and buttered rolls, and cakes and dried fruits and a bottle of sherbet powder; and for Dotta’s self a tiny wedge of biltong, that famous sun-dried meat, which must be shredded between slices of bread, and never bitten. Besides these things Dota had brought away a drinking cup which folded into itself; and a knife.

Now, as they sat eating, a travelling cart, drawn by four splendid mules, came jingling along the road. The hood was up, and the damsels beheld an exceedingly plump and handsome dame seated with a maid, behind the driver. When the dame caught sight of the two girls, she called to the driver to pull up, and smiling with a great show of affability, she cried out: “Pretty ladies, may I beg the favour of lunching beneath your tree?” Dorothea replied, “If you please to do so, madame.” But Dota Filjee could not even stir for marvelling at the richness of the newcomer’s dress and equipage. As the dame was assisted out of the cart she exhibited boots of crimson kid and silk stockings, and her petticoats glittered like foam of the sea. Her top dress was of chintz of grandeur and importance which she had gotten from the liege lord’s castle. The purple hills which everybody knows, distance is deceptive when seen through very rarefied atmosphere. The purple hills which everybody knows, distance is deceptive when seen through very rarefied atmosphere.

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“Quelle chose?” Dorothea enquired, and Dota Georgette was able to criticise. “Ah! my pretty loves,” she said, turning at length to the damsels. “And what may you be doing so far from anywhere as this God-forsaken spot?” “Ah, la la!” she screamed. “Queelle chose!” and she laughed again fit to burst her laces. But Georgette came running and propped her up and whispered something in her ear, then she changed her manner and declared, with admiring smiles, that she was near killed with delight, for that now she had discovered the objects of her whole life’s search. “Oh, oh!” she cried, almost going off into fits again, but holding herself down by words. “Oh, my sweet young things, the whole world is pining for such as you! The world is dying, my dears, for lack of innocent Damsels in Distress. I wouldn’t have staked a cent on ever setting eyes upon such a thing again. You bring me new life, indeed you do! And now to luncheon, if you will honour me?”

Dorothea having already eaten as much as she desired, she excused herself and went away with some sugar for the ponies, which had strayed a distance in spite of their hobblings.

Meanwhile Dota Filjee was experiencing such feelings of grandeur and importance as made her tremble and fear it was all a dream. The banquet spread by Georgette, the prim handmaid, surpassed anything our young friend had ever imagined. The service of glittering silver and rich ivory, and fine-cut coloured glasses and wondrous china was set upon a damask cloth; and although Dota knew none of their names, the things themselves impressed her as having come out of some splendid palace. The plump dame leaned among her cushions and passed each moment with some pleasantry or an even more charming invitation to this and that viand. And with every dish, Georgette poured into the glasses a different coloured wine.

“‘Ma foi!’” exclaimed the dame, rolling her big black eyes upon Dota’s glowing face. “‘Ma foi, but how I do love country innocence and beauty. It’s worth its weight in gold if it only knew it, but, thank the Lord, it doesn’t! Daisy-fresh and violet-sweet it is, and hi-cockolorum popsy!’” It was a merry old dame in the way it chuckled and poked at Dota’s dimpled cheeks. “Can you sing, ducks?” she enquired, and Dota Filjee replying bashfully: “Yes! I know the Song of Altisidora to the Cruel Knight,” the dame begged for a verse, so Dota warbled the stanzas she remembered best:—

Like a ravenous kite
That takes its flight
Soon as’t has stolen
And leaves me here to sicken.

Three nightcaps, too,
And garters blue,
That did to legs belong,
Smooth to the sight,
As marble white,
And, faith, almost as strong.

Two thousand groans,
As many moans,
And sighs enough to fire
Old Priam’s town,
And burn it down,
Did it again aspire.

Since, fugitive knight, to no purpose I woo thee,
Barabbas’s fate still pursue and undo thee!

At this performance the dame professed herself struck with admiration, and she filled with her own fat, silky hands a deep glass of sparkling golden wine and requested the charming singer to pledge their mutual love! “Now, my dear,” she whispered coaxingly, while Georgette gathered up the cloth, “do tell me all about yourself. Where are you really bound, and who is that proud young damsel, your mistress?” “I thinks she be courly mannered,” rejoined the dame hastily. “I am heart-broken not to have seen more of her; but look you, could you not induce her to pay me a visit at my town house?” “That I might,” replied Dota, “if you would proffer your assistance in discovering a Courteous Knight.” “Scores of them,” declared the dame, pursuing her lips. “Scores—hundreds! They are perpetually besieging me to find them Damsels in Distress.
A Russian Beggar.

By Stephen Graham.

UNHAPPY Martha! I saw her to-day at the porch of a rich church. The church was full of people, and the priests in purple robes moved to and fro among the ikons, whilst little surprised boys, white as angels, swayed the censers. The rich images, deep set in jewels, exhaled strange influences about them. The famous wonder-working Virgin looked over her flowers at the grove of wasting candles around her. Voronof, the merchant, clad in furs, held a taper in his well-worn fingers and stood before the icon. Did Mary see him as he bent his votive light among those others? He bowed to the ground and crossed himself in deep devotion.

Martha, the beggar, stood outside in the porch among others who, like herself, were tattered and starved. She was there before the service began and she watched the people going in to pray—the rich Moscovites in heavy silks, the elegant young ladies who tripped daintily up the steps in their new goloshes, the young men in rich coats and slangs. The portly business men in deep overcoats. She saw these pass by and prayed them with unavail. Then in his carriage came Voronof the merchant; the fine black horses knew where they were going. And Martha, watching, did not know whether most to wonder at the twinkling of the crimson boots or to envy the white foam of the silken Petticoats. But almost immediately the driver whipped up, the mules dashed ahead, and the spangling, jingling caravan was away.

Poor Dota Filjee was overcome with the sight she had drunk; she had not even sense to put the packet in her bosom, so it fell among the grass, and she soon toppled back and went dead asleep.

Now, a small flat-headed serpent in a bush close by had been awaiting its chance to pick up the crumbs of that paltry offering, and it was terrified of approaching their haunts. But this flat-headed reptile was hungry, and, besides, there was nothing moving beneath the tree; so it glided along and picked up a few sticky fragments. At last it wriggled up over a tall mound and so nerveless and still was this mound that the little beast thought no evil, but lay prospecting from the eminence for further dainty bits. And there they were, Dota beneath the snake, when Martha was awaiting its chance to pick up the crumbs of that meal. She saw the mounds was the body of Dota Filjee. And, there they were, Dota beneath the snake, when Martha returned and saw them. The snake reared up his head and glared, but had made no sound, for Lady, scarcely thinking what she did, fixed her eyes upon him, two golden eyes like steady fire, and she spoke to the snake in a singing tone and moved backwards. And he followed her, circling like a race of bright rings across the grass, until he came beside the hole where he lived; then in he popped. Dorothea made a circuit back to the tree, "Dota, Dota!" she cried, half-fearing that her friend was dead, but Dota Filjee sat up, drowsily listening. She showed me a sealed packet.

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devils catch them, fiery devils burn them, grind them to powder, burn them, strike them down, catch them, burn them.

Voronof was kneeling at the altar. A priest consecrated and broke the holy Bread, and gave to the devils catch them, fiery devils burn them, grind them to powder, burn them, strike them down, catch them.--

"This is the Bread of Life and the Body of Christ, this the Wine and Blood. Whoso eateth of the Body of Christ entereth into His portion and taketh His cross; whoso drinketh the Wine drinketh of His cup." The choir sang the chorus of the Mass. Then someone half opened the church door.

There was a whirl of incense and a burst of music. Martha started. But it was long before the end of the service. She was cold. She would have stamped her feet and run about, but she was too angry--if she moved a muscle she would feel more hungry. The spots and the zigzags and the grey disc had vanished now, and Martha opened her eyes. A dreamy film was over her, and a soul looked into it and listened, again listening madly and frantically in breathless repetition. After a shorter, longer, shorter, Martha. 

Away in her mind was a little room and a table--quite a starved little song, and far away:

"Poor Martha, Unhappy Martha."

What then? Was she pitying herself? How had she come to sing that little song? Over and over again, hastily, and in thin notes, the little tune ran. Now it was full of excitement and then in a minute it was slow and melancholy again, first as if she were sobbing to herself, then as if she were singing a child to sleep, rocking it up and down. And she heard herself say madly and fractionally in breathless repetition. After a moment the excitement was over, and she was back again listening to someone gently crooning. She trembled, felt the door looked and opened, and then faster and faster sounded the song, and then shorter, so, "poor unhappy Martha, poor unhappy Martha." Suddenly the other beggars looked at her, for she broke into an excited shudder--eugh, heugh, heugh, heugh.

Then all was calm again. She saw a space cleared away in her mind; there was a little room and a table in it, and she kissed the table. It was a little empty herself, and the table had disappeared, and she saw piled baskets of white bread, baskets, baskets.

"And Jesus loved them, kill them, damn, grind, burn." "Be Ah Lord, oh, Lord God, a poor sinner, beggars. Beneath the love of God, bread for an old sinner?" And the wild zigzags still meant "Burn them, kill them, damn, grind, burn them, powder, grind them to powder, burn them." But she found sounds and words. "For Christ's sake, for Christ's sake spare me one farthing, one little copeck, a coppersmith, for Christ's sake, oh Lord, oh Lord God, a poor sinner, a poor old sinner. Bread for the love of God, bread for an old sinner?"

Then the grey disc again appeared and a lump of stale bread whirled about her, ran away, impishly. Martha was full of fretfulness and hope--what would it be, then, a piece of white bread at Smolin's, a piece of white bread, a long piece of white bread, or would it be only a lump of black bread. Lumps of white and black bread danced and jumped up and down, and it was only another minute they would be coming out. "Lord God, be merciful." 

So it happened; the priest pronounced benediction and raised the gold cross over the people. All bowed before the sign, and thereupon shuffled along the passages of exit. The church door opened and the worshippers issued forth, and to right and to left, according to custom, distributed farthings to God's poor collected there. But the crowd of beggars without had become almost as numerous as the worshippers within. Martha moved forward and stretched two skinny, yellow hands--two, that she may have two chances. Poor Martha, one, two, three passed her. She trembled, the zigzags played on the grey disc--"catch them, burn them, grind them to powder, burn them." But she found sounds and words. "For Christ's sake, for Christ's sake spare me one farthing, one little copeck, a coppersmith, for Christ's sake, oh Lord, oh Lord God, a poor sinner, beggars. Beneath the love of God, bread for an old sinner?"

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The beggar struck her in the mouth. The carriage hurried across to his carriage and in a few seconds was gone. Martha was left standing; she opened her hand and saw the coin--it was bright and silver. She had never seen the like before, a silver rouble, a large and wonderful coin. "Jesus!" she said, staringly at the delicately engraved portrait of Nicholas the Second. She put the coin to her lips, felt it all round with her fingers, looked at it, gloated over it, and there was joy which found no words, only she saw absurd pictures of tables with piles of flour upon them. But as the coin lay in her palm a red, hairy, hungry hand rushed in and snatched the coin.

"Rrr! Give me that money, devil, beast, give it back, give it back before I tear out your eyes, cross Anarchists, scabby beggars, you sordid beggar, you bare-faced devil!" Martha tried to get back her money from the grinning fellow who had stolen it, she threatened, pulled, scratched, agonised. ... Then suddenly in her heart the zigzags were gone, and she simply saw Vera and her mother, and she heard again the ghost of that unhappy song--poor Martha, unhappy Martha. Something had broken in her heart.

The beggar stuck in her mouth.

"It was silver money. Give it back," she sputtered.

"Now then, you diseases, you muggot beds," said the gendarme hurrying up. He pushed the thief into the roadway. The latter slunk away quietly, and Martha recognising the dreaded voice of the policeman also passed out unsteadily. The beggar took his pot and swiftly disappeared. Martha was left.

The afternoon passed fruitlessly. She left the tavern at dusk and moved unsteadily along the high road. That was the road along which Voronof's carriage rolled easily away. It led into the West End to the clean streets and the large white houses. The beggars are not allowed up there.

A handsome equipage came quickly round a corner into one of the fashionable squares, black horses, a line driver, and, sitting at his ease, an elderly gentleman. It might have been he. Martha reeled on the pavement and clutched at a lamp post. The carriage crossed the square and went on. An irate policeman strode over and asked what she was doing.

"Jesus," she whispered.

"You won't find Jesus here," said he with a grin, and turned her back.
An Englishman in America.

By Juvenal.

On my last visit to America I considered New York a city of foreigners, ruled by American citizens living under American laws. Now I find the foreign element still more accentuated. Yet typical Americans come here from every State in the Union to see the sights. They live for a few brief days or weeks in the cosmopolitan swim, and although many find the current against them, yet all find amusement and distraction, all manage to "shoot the shuter," without much trouble and without great expense. New York, the American Anti-Alexandria, is the man from Marseilles. But if the man in the moon were to take it into his head to visit the glimpses of mother earth in search of what Americans used to call "razzle-dazzle," he would turn his aeroplane towards the lights of Broadway some time about midnight.

Broadway is astounding. It is American only in the form and height of its buildings and the fact that it is on American soil. In everything else it is a tangle of foreign tastes and foreign emotions. It is what the old Palais Royal was to Paris, and I do not know of any street or boulevard in Europe with which to compare it. Broadway is unique in any world sense. It is not like a unique pearl or an antique cameo. I liken it to a big wart on the rapacious nose of a Yankee Shylock, or a flaming carbuncle on the neck of a bloated billionaire. I have an impression that the wart needs lancing One wonders how long the inflammation can keep on without killing the patient. But some people can endure a lot of impossible things and go a long way before dropping dead.

America is the country for sudden deaths. Heart disease and apoplexy take the place of the aristocratic and long-enduring gout of the Englishman. In America the quick death is the correct thing, especially with the rich merchant and the fast financier. The rich American has but little time for culture and no time to die. An Englishman begins to wane at forty, an American at twenty. Study the faces of the people you see on Broadway. The play used to be the thing, but now the thing is the face. The real American face is like nothing else in the civilised world of faces. You can, if you have taken your degree in the art of physiognomy, distinguish the American faces on Broadway from the horde of foreign faces to be seen on the incomparable paved. Here I am able to recognise all the old-world types in spite of their American clothes: Germans from Berlin, Scandinavians from Sweden and Denmark, New York Frenchmen and New York Italians, Russians from Petersburg and Odessa, Irishmen from Cork, Cockneys from London and Scotsmen from Glasgow, to say nothing of half-breeds from every country and clime in the world; but they cannot copy the American face.

The American face is matchless in its expression of ennui. These faces can laugh and smile, but somehow when they smile they make one think of a snow-flower peeping out at the sun while the roots are half frozen. But what is it they want? In what have they been so grievously disillusioned? What did they expect in the beginning? All these are questions for someone to answer.

This brings me to the curious psychological question: Why do Americans allude to European countries as played out and effete? Why, if they think Europe so effete, do so many thousands of them work like slaves to save money enough to go there for a few weeks or months, and, having gone there once, long to return? These are interesting questions, and I have been trying to solve them. But this is not all. Why do so many thousands of well-to-do and wealthy Americans take up their residence in Europe? These questions are bound up with that other question of racial ennui. Frankly, I believe Americans are not tired of their own country. For one reason the American abroad never loses the fixed expression of ennui and general lassitude. What ails Americans is universal disillusionment. They are tired of existence. This is the fate of the freak banquet, the phenomenal suppers, the impossible statements, the rage for show, the delirium for new and ephemeral sensations.

Broadway is the centre of quick and giddy sensations. It is like being in a sort of time-machine or lift which whirls the mind through space right from the beginning of Adam's paradise down to the bed-rock of civilised pandemonium where Pluto and his minions dance the canary in Offenbachian orgies. The American abroad never loses the vertigo of the new world.

I see plenty of people who look contented, but they are mostly Teutons and jovial Irish. New York is the most paradoxical city on the globe. All good Americans are supposed to look like New Yorkers, and yet the typical American face is not often seen on Broadway. The Americans are soon tired of any new sensation. A German will do the same things day after day and year after year, and remain contented. Give him good beer, good music, good eating, good company, and decent pay, and he is happy. With the Englishman it is much the same, except that he wants burton instead of plisher, beef instead of some form of pork, a pipe instead of music, an income without income-tax, death without death duties, and solitude to brood over the mysterious dispersion of the Twelve Tribes; give him these things, and you have as happy a man as you could find anywhere outside Colney Hatch or Wormwood Scrubs.

John Bull always seems more indifferent than he is; Brother Jonathan always tries to seem more contented than he is. It is difficult to find an American who is frankly pessimistic. No matter what they think or feel, Americans always seem full of hope. All have great expectations. All see billions of golden eagles hovering in the air. The Broadway atmosphere scintillates with electric lights. Walking here in the evening any time after nine o'clock the mind is fascinated and the eyes dazzled with a maze of electric lights, and when the dry north-west wind blows over the city the air becomes charged with an indescribable magnetic force, and with that magical air, the dazzling lights, the illusionary dreams of the hour, the temperament of the brilliant bars, restaurants, theatres, the freeing of the spirit from the thraldom of ennui for a brief space, the visitor to New York, whether an American or foreigner, is borne along on the tide of excitement with an astounding impetus.

I know all the famous streets of European capitals. The Nevski Prospect in Petersburg is not Oriental enough to be fascinating and not modern enough to be very interesting; the Friedrichstrasse of Berlin is without any special charm or novelty; the Grand Boulevard in Paris is the best of them all, but none of them have the snap of Broadway; symbolising the wealth, the romance, the rush, the originality, the vim and vortigo of the new world.

The theatres of Broadway are a study all to themselves. Even the "Dramatic Mirror" of New York admits that the Broadway theatres have got rid of the classical, have got rid of Shakespeare. What the Broadway world demands and gets is farce, melodrama, sentimental fustion, and a mixture of music-hall and circus, rag-time music, and cheap jokes. The Broadway patrons refuse either to think or weep.
Perhaps the wells of their hearts have run dry and they have no tears to weep; and as for thinking, no doubt they are tired thinking of dollars during the day and prefer to think of Dollies during the evening. But I am much more than half inclined to lay it all at the door of indifference and callousness. The typical Broadway crowd is blase. Let there be no mistake about that. And yet how excited they can get! All this sounds rather paradoxical, but remember we are not thinking of what city we are in, and what the street is. There is but one real Broadway, and the denizens of the place match the street.

The Broadway joke is a cross between a cockney cuss and an American cuspidor. The audiences here but one real Broadway, and the denizens doubt they are. They have no tears to weep. They suffer from anaemia of the brain brought on by a plethora and concentration of sensational emotions. The Broadway laugh is a gush of uncontrollable hysterics. Nowhere in the world are the signs of general neurasthenia more glaring and universal. I have never seen, even in a show like the Czar of Russia, so many of the spectators tense and with the utmost intensity of attention listening to the performance. They are anaemic, but they are not from want of good living; no, they eat so much rich food. They suffer from anaemia of the brain brought on by a plethora and concentration of sensational emotions. The Broadway laugh is a gush of uncontrollable hysterics. Nowhere in the world are the signs of general neurasthenia more glaring and universal.


In his very technical and really valuable handbook* Mr. H. Wilson devotes a chapter to "Silverwork and Jewellery." By H. Wilson. (Hogg. 5s. net.) covered it very frequently in the work of mere savages, whose design was often full of invention and wrought with the utmost delicacy of workmanship. It was work indeed exhibiting an original and just understanding of the nature of decorative beauty. Under Blake's guidance the designer is advised to study the result and learn how really interesting such commonplace things as fleas become when treated as ghosts. So might all commonplace things in life be transformed, by art, into beautiful ghosts. Perhaps it would be safer to send these to the cellar for ideas, if they can be trusted to dig up appropriate ones.

It is somewhat remarkable that Mr. Wilson, beyond the reference to Theophilus, has hardly touched upon the important question of inspired "paper" design. It would have been more to the purpose if he had neglected the first part of the old fellow's chattering and devoted the space to a consideration of accidental design upon which Mr. Lethaby has touched very briefly in his preface. As Mr. Wilson himself knows, the manipulation of the material is full of suggestion, and the moment the student sets about fingering it rightly, beautiful and unsuspected designs come leaping at him. If he has been trained to see and select he will have no difficulty in detecting and realising many of the beauties that lie hidden in the lungs of virgin gold and silver. But many imaginative designers need to have this pointed out, so that they may train themselves to the essential point of seeing and doing. If art and craft are going to bring beauty into life it cannot be sufficiently emphasised that the artist-craftsman should possess an instinctive Feeling for design, and decorative resources. If he is to do his work, Moulding life into sensuous forms, decorating it with the essence of artistic invention, such will then be his sole occupation.

Wilson's book is open to one other objection. It makes no reference to appropriate design. If the tools and how to make them are covered it very frequently in the work of mere savages, whose design was often full of invention and wrought with the utmost delicacy of workmanship. It was work indeed exhibiting an original and just understanding of the nature of decorative beauty. Under Blake's guidance the designer is advised to study the result and learn how really interesting such commonplace things as fleas become when treated as ghosts. So might all commonplace things in life be transformed, by art, into beautiful ghosts. Perhaps it would be safer to send these to the cellar for ideas, if they can be trusted to dig up appropriate ones.

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Modern Dramatists.

By Ashley Dukes.

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VIII.—Anton Tchekhov.

Tchekhov's plays are the most interesting that modern Russia has as yet produced. A certain questioning of life is all that they have in common with the work of Tolstoy and Gorky. Tchekhov sought the meaning of life among the peasantry, Gorky among the city slums and the lower bourgeois class, Tchekhov among "the intelligentsia." Russian society is divided into two classes: "the intelligentsia" and the rest. That "intelligencers" includes the entire educated community, and it represents as a whole the most advanced civilisation in Europe. It is largely freethinking and revolutionary, and its capacity for making political revolutions is limited, firstly, by military and police rule and, secondly, by the inertia of the mass of the people. It is perhaps embittered by national failure, but still full of life. Tolstoy and Gorky set to work, with their different views and temperaments, upon the dramatisation of the inertia; Tchekhov chose to deal with the driving force of modernity, politically impotent for the present, but individually all-powerful. That is why his plays must always be the more interesting. "Intelligencers" belong to an aristocracy of thought and, further (since intellect alone can be of little service to the dramatist) to an aristocracy of feeling. They possess the capacity for great drama because they are at once highly sensitive and highly differentiated among themselves. The capacity for great drama, be it noted; not necessarily its achievement. A play or a novel crammed with "intelligencers"—poets, playwrights, novelists, teachers, journalists, actors and Bohemians—is not necessarily a great play or a great novel on that account. The class or profession of the characters matters nothing; their potentiality as individuals is all-important. If the same degree of sensitiveness and differentiation can be created among other types, the same material for great drama will result. The achievement depends upon the author, his temperament and his skill as a craftsman. Personality remains the magical word which opens the dull mountain of the actual and shows us the real.

It must be said at once that Tchekhov can by no stretch of imagination be called a great dramatist. He cried "Open Sesame!" to actuality, but the reality behind was only vaguely outlined, and he died before he could perfect the new dramatic form which he attempted to create. His plays are a series of original experiments rather than a finished whole. I propose to deal here mainly with the four-act dramas "The Sea-gull," and "The Three Sisters," and "The Seagull," it may be noted, was given recently by the Scottish Repertory Theatre in Glasgow. This play is full of the atmosphere of the Russian "intelligencers." It depends altogether upon elusivist moods, and only by entering very fully into these moods can the spectator find its tragic depth in this remote credence. The weakness of Tchekhov's strikingly original technique is that his characterisation depends so much more upon what the characters say than upon what they do. They seem at first sight to be very real people that any dramatist could devise. They stroll casually upon the stage, talking about the weather, their supper, their ailments, their preferences, their views, their philosophy; and from the fluid mass of conversation there crystallizes very gradually the conception of each individual as a separate entity. The conversation is always extraordinarily good, and the individual conception which emerges, without having the rigidity of the theatrical "type," is always very clearly defined. Tchekhov retains the form of the four-act play, dealing throughout with the same group of persons. He is concerned with ideas only as the means of drama, and what he lacks is the technique of the theatrical and dramatic sense. As to the ideas themselves, he has clearly used the young poet Constantin as "The Seagull" as his mouthpiece. Constantin is the son of an actress, one Irene Treplewa. Irene has a liaison with Boris Trigorin, a novelist-playwright. These three, with Irene's brother Sorin, and a young girl named Nina, are lovers. The play passes at Sorin's country house, where Constantin has set up an open-air theatre, with a rough stage, a curtain and a background of lake and sky. He has devised a symbolist play of his own, with Nina as actress, and his mother and the remaining guests have been invited as spectators. Early in the first act Constantin explains his purpose to Sorin:

Constantine: . . . To me the Theatre of to-day is no more than an antiquated prejudice, a dull routine. When the curtain rises, and all these accomplished actors, these priests of a dead art, endeavours to please the audience, in a wretched, commonplace morality convenient for household use; when the same old story is dished up again and again in a thousand otherwise than fly as Maupassant fled from the Eiffel Tower, whose triviality threatened to shatter his soul! Sorin: But you said yourself that the Theatre is an important factor in civilisation. . . .

Constantine: New forms are what we need, new forms. Better have nothing at all than conventional drivel.

The new form is presently forthcoming. The guests arrive, and when they are seated the curtain rises, disclosing Nina seated upon a throne:

Nina: . . . Men and lions, eagles and partridges, antler-crowned stags, geese and spiders, silent inhabitants of the waters, starfish and infusoria invisible, at whose slightest touch a living being has completed their dismal course and are extinguished. For many thousands of years no living creature has found refuge upon the earth, and the poor moon above lights her candle to no purpose. No longer do the cranes awaken upon the meadow with their merry song, and among the forest limes no cockchafer is heard. It's cold, cold, cold! It's empty, empty, empty! I'm afraid, afraid, afraid! The bodies of the living have fallen into dust and the eternal Cause has changed them into stones, into water, into clouds. But their souls have been merged into a single soul. That world-soul am I! In me live the spirits of Alexander, of Caesar, of Napoleon, of Shakespeare, together with the soul of the meanest worm. The region of mankind and the instinct of the beasts are blended in me. I know all, all, all, and every life that is in me I live through afresh.

[Will-o'-the-wisps hover over her.] Irene: That smacks of decadence! Constantine (proachably): Mother! Nina: I am lonely. Once in every hundred years I open my lips to speak only voice so loneliness; no one hears me. Even the will-o'-the-wisps are deaf. Each evening they are born of the foul quagmire, and they flicker till the dawn without thought, without will, without life. From fear lest I should awaken life within them, the father of eternal chaos, Satan, composes each instant a change of their particles, as in the water and the stones; they change unceasingly. In the whole universe my soul alone remains constant and unalterable. Like a prisoner thrown into the depths of a well, I know not where I am nor what awaits me. Sirion: Yes.

One thing alone has been revealed to me—that in the grip wrestle with Satan, author of material powers, the victory will be mine; and that then soul and matter will be blended in noble harmony and the kingdom of the world-purpose will begin. But that can only be when, after a long dark roll of bright Sirius and the earth have crumbled into dust. Until then horror, horror.

[In the distance two red points of light are seen.] Nina: Satan, my enemy, approaches. I see his hideous eyes Irene: There's a smell of sulphur. Does that belong to the piece?

Constantine: Yes. Irene (laughing): An original effect! Constantine: Mother! [Dorn takes off his hat.] Nina: Since there are no longer any men—[Pauline (to Dorn): Put on your hat. You'll catch cold.]

* These passages have been rendered from the German, and they are intended only of the play. The translator of "The Sea-gull" for the Scottish Repertory Theatre is Mr. George Calderon.
Irene: The book comes off his hat to Satan, author of material powers.

Constantine (raving): The play is over! Down with the curtain!

Irene: Why lose your temper?

Constantine: Enough! Down with the curtain! (Stamping his foot.) Let it fall, I say!

[The curtain falls.]

Constantine: I ask your pardon. I had forgotten that only some few chosen pieces may be written and performed. I presumed too much. I--I--

[He goes off to the left.]

Constantine, always hyper-sensitive, becomes embittered by this failure. With his play he loses Nina. For Nina, it seems, has the soul of the player. She despises worshipers such as Trigorin, "the famous author, whose name is in all the papers, whose portrait is sold in every picture-shop, whose books are read throughout the world," becomes her hero. Constantine lays a dead seagull at her feet, and threatens suicide, but Nina is unmoved. The pose of symbolism is lost upon her, but she is fascinated by the pose of paradoxy and ennui which Trigorin affects:

[Trigorin enters, writing in his notebook.]

Nina: Good morning, Monsieur Trigorin.

Trigorin: Good morning, Nina. Have you any commands for me?

Nina: No, no. Don't come. I can find the way alone.

Trigorin: As long as I am writing, I am satisfied. Even proof-reading gives me pleasure; but the moment my work is published, I am loathsome to myself. I have one feeling only: it was not what I meant to write; it was a mistake which should never have been published at all. I wrangle with myself, (He reads.) "H'm--very kind of you, but not for a single instant does the thought leave me that upon my work is published it is loathsome to me. I have one work is published it is loathsome to me. I have one--I--I--"

Nina: Would change places willingly, Monsieur Trigorin.

Trigorin: Why?

Nina: Just to learn what a famous author feels and thinks.

Trigorin: "How happy you must be!"

Nina: Why, you think I have a pattern ready-made?

Trigorin: "Just as I thought."

Nina: "Father and Sons.'

Trigorin: "So does that not make you happy?"

Nina: "No, no. Some chemicals must have exploded on the shore. (She declaims): "Men and lions, eagles and partridges, antler-crowned stags, silent inhabitants of the wood, starfish and all creatures invisible to the eye--in a word, all living beings have completed their dismal course and are extinguished."

[She embraces him and bursts into tears.]

Constantine, alone, gathers all the manuscripts upon the writing-table, tears them up, throws the fragments into the fire and leaves the room.]

Irene, Trigorin, Dorn and the others return. In the midst of their conversation they are startled by a shout:

Irene: What was that?

Dorn: Oh, nothing. Some chemicals must have exploded in my medicine-chest. Don't trouble to move. (He goes into the room on the right, returning immediately.) Just as I thought. A bottle of ether--ha! ha! You would hardly believe what a couple of grammes of the stuff can generate.

Irene (seating herself at the card-table): What a start it gave me. It reminded me of the time when--

Dorn (turning over the leaves of a magazine): My dear...
Monsieur Trigorin! May I trouble you for one moment? Two months ago I read an article here in the American press about them. I wanted to ask you... (He takes Trigorin by the arm and leads him down stage). The cry of ‘Life is foul’ interests me greatly. (In a low tone) Make some pretext to get your friends away. Constantine has just shot himself in the next room.

There the play ends. Constantine leaves the world to its charlatanism and routine. His death will hardly cost Trigorin a sleepless night, and may even provide useful material for a new novel. But the three of them will remain in Moscow, and their ideal of life is a return to the country where both kinds of part-time play the double rôle of Man’s Equal and of ‘Poo Poo’. Only in the prison cell, clouding their minds until the spark of divinity within them is extinguished, and they grow up to be just such pitiable, trivial, commonplace corpses as their fathers and mothers were before them. Shame upon such a life!

If this play were unrelieved, it would be intolerable. It is as if the author said: ‘I wish I were like you. I’d grip you till you died, if I could reach you, self of mine, Insulter of my lofty soul, Blasphemer of my God!’

It is as if the author said: ‘I turn now to “The Three Sisters,” another tragedy of disillusionment.

It passes in a provincial town. The three sisters are Olga, Mascha, and Irene. Olga, the eldest, is an unmarried school teacher. Mascha is the wife of a country doctor. Literary Russia will not be greatly troubled by the loss of its youngest poet. A poet more or less; what does it matter? The routine continues. Andrei: We have hardly begun to live, when we grow tired and endowed with our own living. Mascha married at eighteen, and left them with the alternative of marrying or earning a living by betrothing herself to another officer, who is killed by a bullet in the line of duty. Irene seeks a way of escape by betrothing herself to another officer, who is killed in a senseless duel. The removal of the regiment deprives the family even of their acquaintances. Andrei falls in love with a married lieutenant whose regiment is transferred elsewhere. Irene seeks a way of escape by betrothing herself to another officer, who is killed in a senseless duel. The removal of the regiment deprives the family even of their acquaintances. Andrei sums up the situation in the last act:—

Andrei: We have hardly begun to live, when we grow tedious, dull, lazy, useless, wretched and indifferent. This town of ours has existed for two hundred years. It has a hundred thousand inhabitants, and there is not one among them unlike the rest. It has not given birth to a single hero in the whole course of its history; it has produced no thinker, no artist, no personality of the smallest importance, no one who could arouse a burning desire to emulate him. The people here do no more than eat, drink, sleep and die. Others are born, some hundreds of thousands, and they grow up to be just such pitiable, trivial, commonplace corpses as their fathers and mothers were before them. Shame upon such a life!

If this play were unrelieved, it would be intolerable. It is as if the author said: ‘I wish I were like you. I’d grip you till you died, if I could reach you, self of mine, Insulter of my lofty soul, Blasphemer of my God!’

It is as if the author said: ‘I turn now to “The Three Sisters,” another tragedy of disillusionment. Andrei Prosorow, a scholar who hopes for a professorship in the Moscow University, indeed, appeals to all of the distant paradise. Throughout four acts they talk of it, but in the end they all remain where they are. Andrei marries unwisely and falls into a groove as secretary to the local town council. Olga continues at her school. Mascha falls in love with a married lieutenant whose regiment is transferred elsewhere. Irene seeks a way of escape by betrothing herself to another officer, who is killed in a senseless duel. The removal of the regiment deprives the family even of their acquaintances. Andrei sums up the situation in the last act:—

Andrei: We have hardly begun to live, when we grow tedious, dull, lazy, useless, wretched and indifferent. This town of ours has existed for two hundred years. It has a hundred thousand inhabitants, and there is not one among them unlike the rest. It has not given birth to a single hero in the whole course of its history; it has produced no thinker, no artist, no personality of the smallest importance, no one who could arouse a burning desire to emulate him. The people here do no more than eat, drink, sleep and die. Others are born, some hundreds of thousands, and they grow up to be just such pitiable, trivial, commonplace corpses as their fathers and mothers were before them. Shame upon such a life!

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contingency before it happens: and so dispense with the services of the twelve liege buttermen. It is the duty of the State to enforce the fulfilment of contract, but not of vengeance on men in cases of breach of promise. You ask a man in the hunting-field whether he is willing to part with his horse and he says "Yes"; but there is no contract. You may find on better acquaintance that the horse clicks or is touched in the wind, and you cry off. Does he run weeping to the State for damages?

But if you ask a woman to marry and she accepts, a solemn contract, we are told, has been entered into, the breach of which entitles the disappointed party to heavy damages. All the salutary safeguards against precipitancy, misunderstanding, indefiniteness as to date of completion, insufficient evidence (usual in the case of agreements between men) are thrown to the winds where women are concerned. You cannot sell a cottage without a written document, but you can only call a woman a rosebud or a turtledove, and she seems to have a sort of lien upon you and upon all you possess. But there is nothing definite, nothing clear, no solemn stipulations. But the collected tittle-tattle of acquaintance, servants and gossips, and the inanities of lovers examined, are weighed over by a dozen buttermen who value the heart-wound in £'s d.'s according to their fancy. A gallant young captain dances attendance on a gouty but childless uncle for twenty years, only to find his own name unmentioned in the will. Hard luck! but no damages. The same gallant young captain encourages a lady to expect to become the mistress of his household and then disappoints her. Hard luck! again; but this time damages (say £3,000) in addition. It is cruel and therefore wrong, to raise expectations which are to be disappointed. In some cases possibly the deceived serves a horse-whipping; but there is no more reason for the State to take the case of men than of women.

Wherefore? If you've got the right fellow by the scruff of his neck, and he is frightful enough, but what words are there to describe him? Murder is frightful enough, but what words are there to describe a soldier's business? That he usually fights the wrong persons, and gets nothing out of it. For regular soul-destroying cruelty, the stock-farmer's business will beat the soldier's, any day. John Kirkby.

LONDON: November 19, 1910. THE NEW AGE.

SIR,—I have read with interest the article, "The Constitutional Issue" (November 3), but cannot quite gather what the writer is driving at. It would appear that his one desire is to rid law and order of incapables. He is making their own contracts, and taking care of themselves: well, they must be taken care of, like children and idiots. But if so, he is not putting them in a position to take care of me—in other words, to legislate for others. If Woman is willing to be Man's Legal Equal, good. If she prefers to remain in her good old place, let her speak out. She "shan't" be both. Most women have no definite opinions; some have opinions but lack the courage to express them.

Consider the difference in the treatment of men and women in cases of breach of promise. You ask a man in the hunting-field whether he is willing to part with his horse and he says "Yes"; but there is no contract. You may find on better acquaintance that the horse clicks or is touched in the wind, and you cry off. Does he run weeping to the State for damages?

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S. VERDAD, DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM.

Sir,—I do not quite follow the reasoning of Mr. S. Verdad in his Notes of last week. He appears to me to come into sharp collision not only with the writer of your "Notes of the Week," whom he designates as an "idolater," but with himself. Writing of M. Jaurès' advocacy of the General Strike, which your readers will remember you commended, you state that "the two classes are never united to reform by fear, a palpable error to anyone versed in English history, and an error even to Mr. Verdad himself; for in the very next paragraph you commend M. Jaurès' views on Democracy precisely because they 'alarm the upper classes.'"

Now, what are we to make of this? Will Mr. Verdad tell us plainly how the governing classes are to be persuaded to reforms if not by fear? I certainly find myself in an error for which Nietzsche would never forgive him; he confuses the tactics and morality of the governed with the tactics and morality of the governors. For instance, he condemns Jaurès, the agitator and spokesman of the governed for failing to realise the point of view of the governors; he asserts that Jaurès in place of Briand would do exactly what Crippen has done. Very likely he would, for the position and consequently the duty would be an entirely new one to him. But if a present-day expert for the defence may expect has been shown in the Crippen case. Part of the evidence (all purely circumstantial) against Broome was the discovery in his room of skin on the murdered victim, could every bit have been manufactured? At present expert evidence for the defence is at the mercy of the police. In the case of a man lately charged with murder, part of the evidence (all purely circumstantial) against Broome was the discovery in his room of skin on the murdered victim.

How loth legalists are to give up their clutch upon "criminals," from the recent establishment of criminal courts for the patronage of such individuals as prostitute children. No child ought to be prosecuted! A sentence of imprisonment for contempt is sentence to imprisonment. Have we not seen within the last few weeks a poor little Huckleberry Finn of Liverpool, who seized a boat, provisioned it with tobacco and chocolate, and sailed down the Mersey to rescue some playmates from the police? In the case of a man lately charged with murder, the police produced a waistcoat worn by the accused, which had a button missing. It needs an expert eye, however, to know the exact button: a man may expect has been shown in the Crippen case. Part of the evidence (all purely circumstantial) against Broome was the discovery in his room of skin on the murdered victim.

And we know that this judge is so little affected by his terror of the governed that in 1904—sentenced to death a youth of sixteen. That child must have served almost three years already. That is true, although it is true that magistrates can do exactly what Briand has done. Very likely he would, for the position and consequently the duty would be an entirely new one to him. But if a present-day expert for the defence may expect has been shown in the Crippen case. Part of the evidence (all purely circumstantial) against Broome was the discovery in his room of skin on the murdered victim.

Mr. Verdad was a "cloudy utopian," or that M. Jaurès is now. Of course, popular education looks like "cloudy utopianism" from the point of view of the "ordered" man which, said the police, matched those on the waistcoat. It needs an expert eye, however, to know the exact button: a man may expect has been shown in the Crippen case. Part of the evidence (all purely circumstantial) against Broome was the discovery in his room of skin on the murdered victim.

THE NEW AGE

BEATRICE HASTINGS.

November 17, 1910.

VERDAD, DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM.

Sir,—In his review of my book, "Maeterlinck's Symbolism: The Blue Bird," which appears in your issue of November 10, you state:—

"The author proudly dismisses the theory... that the Blue Bird means only the ideal in general, and substitutes his own guess that it is 'the symbol of celestial truth, the truth which is essential to Man's spiritual well-being."

Really, who'd have thought it? Maeterlinck himself says the Blue Bird stands for happiness, so there you are. To save ourselves further trouble we have tossed up for it, and Maeterlinck's guess has won."

May I—without asking how that which is stated after careful analysis and on a basis of evidence can rightly be called a "guess"—be permitted to point out that by adopting the method of partial quotation your critic gives an entirely false impression of the author's position? He ignores my comment on page 17: "When we realise this we see that when the play-bill tells us that the Blue Bird stands for happiness the statement needs to be amplified or qualified. Primarily it is the Blue Bird typifies happiness. But just as from bread we get sustenance, from celestial truth, which is what the Blue Bird typifies, happiness may be derived. Even on page 13, among your critic's quoted, page 14, the relation of the play to the ideal of happiness is recognised, for I say: "The purpose of the play is to represent the typification of happiness in the bluebird, or rather in the highest things of the spirit; the happiness which is more than once spoken of in the simple is the happiness which comes from right-seeking, and the reward of attainment."

If your critic will point to any single passage in the play in which happiness is thus typified, I am quite ready to agree that the two statements are perfectly consistent with these statements I shall have a much better opinion of his perspicacity than I am able to present at entertain. And, if he does point to such a
passage, perhaps he will at the same time explain, or, if he can, explain away, the occurrence in the play of the remark I refer to as indicative of the author's intention, viz., that in which Tyltyl inquires as to the quartern loaves which scramble out of the bread-pan and receives from the Fairy the reply, "They are merely the souls of the quartern loaves which the play offers of the author's meaning, I deal with the note above referred to as published on the head of "Reviews" in your columns? Of the less people, but it does not help even them. And certainly any sort is ever likely to be ushered in. Freedom, he has shown a tendency to fall into their error of the cause of unearned income. It is the existence of a mentally, in the economic sphere, it is destitution which is private impropriators of unearned income, somewhat inaccuracy called "the rich." On the other hand, the elimination of this class is conceivable without the disappearance of the destitute. It is but in an altogether secondary way that unearned income, once called into existence by the functions of the State that of insurance against destitution, and obtained the places sacred to their particular work. Studios for the express use of painters may be rented in every city. Certain there were the supply and space are furnished; but the fact remains that painters with money can get what they want. Literary artists cannot. I know several who live and work in these studios intended for painters but the great drawback of the art studios is the very moderate allowance of light to be obtained, north light being made the aim. Mrs. Hastings, who lived and worked in them, would be more than a boon to me. May I protest against Mr. Vance Palmer's remarks upon literary artists? His letter was apparently written for the delight of pin-pricking. S. F.

**RICHES AND POVERTY.**

Sirs.—I see in your "Notes of the Week" the statement that of the annual wealth produced in England, if the few take more than they need the many must have less than they need. This implied a view about the causal relation between "riches" and "poverty," or to speak more accurately, between unearned and earned income. The "poor" must necessarily be more poor, so that if the rich are the "rich," it is not by appealing to such as these that a new age of any sort is ever likely to be ushered in.

**HENRY ROSE.**

**MR. JACOB TONSON.**

Sirs.—Surely Mr. Jacob Tonson has overstepped the mark this time. We all admire him for his broad outlook upon the great questions of the day, but it is more than we can understand that he should be willing to entertain the idea that, as you put it, "poverty cannot be assuaged or abolished without reducing the income of the rich," and believe it is in the interest of society to dissipate wealth. You quote from Mrs. Elinor Glyn's "His Hour"—"a circumstance which is otherwise inexplicable." Is it not otherwise inexplicable, of course. Our correspondent is not the only reader who missed, on first reading, the consummate irony of Mr. Jacob Tonson. Will he and others give themselves the pleasure of reading Mr. Tonson's article again?—Ed. N. A.

**AN ENDOWMENT SCHEME.**

Sirs.—Mrs. Hastings has made it a temerarious matter to enter this field of discussion and cloak my vindication, therefore in proof that I have some claim to being a literary person. It seems to me that "Nemo" has misunderstood the purpose for which this endowed house for literary artists would exist. Surely one would only go to there to be sure of leisure for work, and surely no writer but would leap to such a place. Gather experience out in the hurly-burly of modern life; but to mould that experience into a lasting work of art a man gains by being detached from all other scenes and occupants. Of course painters have long since stated, demanded, and obtained the places sacred to their particular work. Novels for the express use of painters may be rented in every city. Certain there were the supply and space are furnished; but the fact remains that painters with money can get what they want. Literary artists cannot. I know several who live and work in these studios intended for painters but the great drawback of the art studios is the very moderate allowance of light to be obtained, north light being made the aim. Mrs. Hastings, who lived and worked in them, would be more than a boon to me. May I protest against Mr. Vance Palmer's remarks upon literary artists? His letter was apparently written for the delight of pin-pricking. S. F.

**MR. SHAW AND SHAKESPEARE.**

Sirs.—In an interview granted to the "Observer," Mr. Shaw is represented to have made the following remark: "If Shakespeare were alive he would simply gasp at Stratford, Barker's superior knowledge of dramatic construction." This is somewhat as if one should say: "If the builders of the Pyramids were alive they would simply gasp at the superior knowledge of the men who constructed the American sky-scraper." It is a question of genius and of machinery. If the builders of the Pyramids were alive today they could learn in three weeks how to make the sky-scraper, and then build more Pyramids. If Shakespeare were alive today he could see from the Pyramids what the modern city is, and then—write more Shakespeare. We have out-worn the joke of Shaw-and-Shakespeare. Apparently, now, Mr. Shaw is anxious to pass on his threadbare motley to his young disciple.

**R. FORD.**

**THE ODOR OF SACRANTY.**

Sirs.—It was the morning of a Friday toward the close of January, and they led the great Lutheran preacher through the corridors of the grim Gerangenhaus. Over the roofs of Leyden hung leaden clouds; but the roofs were covered with the unspotted mantle of winter. Fur-clad crowds gathered to watch a martyrdom: and many men as well as women were to see the corpses of his three disciples who had burned ere the Spaniards led him forth. He came starving: for to him in that moment of exaltation, soldier, who had no respect for the aristocratic repression, his nostrils fluttered. But the Spaniards beat their drums. Their captain noted the constancy of his three disciples who had burned ere the Spaniards led him forth. He came starving: for to him in that moment of exaltation, his nostrils fluttered. But the captain stared: his lips twirled: and a common soldier, who had no respect for the aristocratic repression, his nostrils fluttered.

"I pray you give me leave to speak?"

But the Spaniards beat their drums. Their captain noted the constancy of their priest-ridden worship. He came starving: for to him in that moment of exaltation, his nostrils fluttered. But the captain stared: his lips twirled: and a common soldier, who had no respect for the aristocratic repression, his nostrils fluttered.

"What wouldst say, old man?"

"I would preach peace to the citizens."

"They are cowed. What need?"

The preacher smiled scornfully.

"Have you a nose? Can you smell defiance in the air? The whole town roasts meat on your Friday fast."

But the captain stared: his lips twirled: and a common soldier, who had no respect for the aristocratic repression, his nostrils fluttered.

"That, old man? Why that is the odor of sanctity."
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