Containing a Literary Supplement.

THE NEW AGE

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All communications intended for the Editor should be addressed to THE NEW AGE, 38, *Cursitor Street, E.C.*

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL used to be very impatient during the recesses of Parliament, and if he could have had his way would have had no recesses at all. We can understand the more eager politicians on the Coalition side feeling Lord John's impatience at this moment. Four weeks still lie between them and the ringing up of the curtain on the fifth act of the great drama. Nevertheless, the interval is worth enduring, since an opportunity is being given to both sides to assimilate the lessons of the late election and to ripen their plans for the New Year. On the Unionist side we are glad to observe signs of returning common sense in the admissions that we half feared might never be made. Less vehement denial is heard of the increase in the morale of the Government from its second return to power. A total and frank admission that the Government has quadrupled its prestige as a consequence of simply maintaining its previous majority is not to be expected; but the admission is implied in the offers now being made to co-operate in the tasks of reforming the House of Lords and establishing Irish Home Rule. These offers are no longer made in the spirit which dispatched an olive branch from a catapult. On the contrary, if the "Nation" and the "Manchester Guardian" still fail to recognise the change, we at least are prepared both to recognise and to express our gratitude for the change that has come over the tone of the discussion in papers like the "Spectator," the "Times," and even the "Observer." It is a change from the partisan to the statesman, from the views of a desperate minority prepared to ruin everything if it cannot have its way to the views of a minority patriotically bent on making the best of a recognised defeat. In this enlightened mood it will be possible and it ought to be certain without any sacrifice of principle to complete the transformation of our existing oligarchy into at least the form of a democracy with a minimum of friction and the maximum of mutual consent.

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One fact which has probably contributed more than any other to bring about the welcome change of tone is the discovery that the Royal "guarantees" not only will not, if they are indispensable, be withheld, but constitutionally and practically they cannot be withheld. Both the "Spectator" and the "Observer" have explicitly made this admission. Constitutionally, of course, there was never any doubt about it. All our recognised authorities on the subject were clear, at any rate before the present issue swam into their ken, that in the event of a deadlock between the two Houses the Royal prerogative was at the disposal of the King's Ministers. And its constitutional decision is clinched by the practical certainty that by no other means can the King's government be carried on. If the King should venture to refuse the "guarantees," not merely Mr. Asquith's Government must come to an end, but no other conceivable government can be formed that would command a majority in the House of Commons; nor, if the recent elections are any guide whatever, would a new election solve the problem. Consequently there is nothing for it but to face the fact that the guarantees will be forthcoming if they are called for. The question for Unionists, then, is this: In what eventualities will they force the guarantees to be employed?

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It must, we think, be fairly admitted by Liberals that they have no particular desire to use the guarantees if their use can be avoided. We would ourselves, if we could, dispense entirely with them. Not much in our opinion is to be feared in the way of reaction from the creation of even five hundred new peers. Public opinion, which by the time the peers were created would have beheld the continued obstinacy and contumacy of the Unionist leaders, would, we imagine, be rather more than less inflamed against the House of Lords and inclined to regard the wholesale dilution of the peerage as a justifiable and even humorous piece of strategy. On the other hand, from our point of view, the plan would have one serious drawback: it would necessitate the almost immediate reconstitution of the House of Lords and its transformation into a Second Chamber. Willing as we shall be when the time is ripe to consider the question, we deny that this particular problem is ripe for solution yet. We do not at all know that the present House of Lords without its absolute veto may not prove the very thing the Constitution needs. There is, as we have frequently urged, a great and a beneficent future for the Lords as they will be left after the Parliament Bill if they choose to accept it and to work for it. The common-sense course seems to be to give them the opportunity of doing so.

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Not, however, that we are by any means convinced

that under any circumstances the Unionist leaders will be able to persuade the peers to reject the Parliament Bill, even if it should reach their House without the alteration of a comma. Several Unionist journalists, doubtlessly following the lead given by Mr. Balfour, appear to be confident that the peers will turn up in great numbers to throw out the Bill unless it is more or less radically altered to suit their taste. But will they, even if no great alteration is made in the Bill? We think we could convince the peers, certainly the peerage, that they would only incur a further loss by any such apparently bold action. For reasons we have already given it is probable that the nation would witness the creation of new peers with equanimity. Certainly it would not seriously imperil the Parliament Bill. Consequently for the Peers to attempt to save their veto by sacrificing their order would be like throwing good money after bad. Unionist journalists, of course, are quite prepared to stake what is not theirs upon their own game; but the peers, who have already had one experience of pulling the chestnuts out of the fire, may be expected at least to hesitate before doing it a second time. What, we ask, have the peers gained by rejecting the Budget? Not only were they compelled eventually to swallow the Budget but the Parliament Bill was instantly prepared for them. That is what has come of hearkening to the voice of the Unionist party-charmers damning the consequences. Still worse consequences will inevitably follow the rejection of the Parliament Bill. Are the Lords prepared to make still further sacrifice for these still worse consequences? We do not say they are not, but we do say they ought not to be. A thousand Mr. Garvins would not persuade us, if we were peers, to force the King to double our numbers in order to halve our powers. No appeal to our hereditary pluck and all the other claptrap would convince us that we had anything except to lose.

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Disposed, however, or not disposed to become the victims of the Unionist threats, the Lords will have to make up their minds to one thing or the other. While there is a chance, however remote, of influencing the final form of the Parliament Bill, perhaps the attitude of threat is good tactics. At the same time we must point out that the hollowness of the threat has been perceived. In other words, it does not take us in. What is more, we could if we liked defend à outrance a refusal by the Government to have the Bill amended by a single clause. There are not wanting Radicals who even advocate this, and we should not be surprised, to such a pass has the traditional English love of a lord come, if they proved to be the numerical majority of the nation when all was over. Certainly it is not for the reasons offered by most of the Unionists that we would urge the Government to open the Bill for a free and full discussion in both Houses. On the contrary, it is for reasons connected not with the welfare either of the Unionist or of the Liberal parties in particular, but with the welfare of the State as a whole. We do not think it good public policy for a party, however strong, to give the appearance of riding roughshod over its opponents. Indeed, the stronger the party, the more unmistakable its mandate, the more in our opinion must it consider in the interests of the State at large the opinions and the feelings of the minority. The popular Chamber as well as the nobility has its obligations.

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It being now generally conceded that the Coalition can if it pleases insist on the Parliament Bill verbatim et literatim we may point out what plausible excuses the Coalition has for doing so. If, in fact, affairs should come to this, we should not fear to be able to convince the mind of the country that such an insistence is reasonable. Nobody apparently on the Unionist side has yet quite realised the enormity involved in rejecting the Budget. A more provocative challenge to the elected Chamber to fight to a finish could scarcely be conceived. In its way it was as deliberate an act of war as President Kruger's infatuate occupation of British territory in 1899. Then it was Lord Milner who profited by the error; but when the Budget was rejected it was Lord Milner himself who blundered into war. For that offence alone against the unbroken tradition of years of constitutional order, the democracy of England would be entitled, if the course were also wise, to break for ever the power of the Lords. Not at once, however, was that course peremptorily resolved upon. To give the Lords time to reflect on what they had done, and even to give them the opportunity to repair their error with as little damage to themselves as possible, a Conference was arranged. Everybody knows now that the Conference failed; everybody knows now why the Conference failed. The Conference failed because the Lords were not yet convinced that they were beaten.

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It was suggested at the close of the Conference that the procedure might be renewed; and doubtless we should be seeing now efforts to renew it if commonsense did not declare that the conditions are entirely changed. There is, sad to say, no longer any popular belief in government by conference. The method having failed under the best conceivable auspices (the vivid sense of national solidarity and mutual goodwill resulting from the death of a great and popular King), how is it possible that the method should succeed under less favourable circumstances? Again, the manifestly intensified disunion and weakness of the Unionist Party must be taken into account. We do not share the dissatisfaction of certain sections of the Unionists with their leader, Mr. Balfour. On the contrary, we look in vain not only on the Conservative benches but in the whole of Parliament for a better man. Mr. Balfour has the great and rare gifts of personality and charm which alone entitle him, despite a thousand political blunders, to the supreme respect of his opponents no less than of his followers. Nevertheless, we do not conceal from ourselves the fact that Mr. Balfour, to their irreparable loss, is losing, if he has not already lost, his hold on the warring sections of his party. They taunt the Coalition with the admitted fact that the Coalition is a coalition; but they have done their worst to make of their own party a coalition with all the vices and none of the virtues of a coalition. And this deplorable disintegration is plainly a new factor in the political situation.

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It is more. It is a factor that has the marvellous property of creating still further factors; and one of these is the temporary, and it may be the lasting, depression of the rank and file of the Unionist Party. Nothing like the present dejection among Unionists has been seen in British politics for years. Despite their comparatively reassuring numbers the Unionists are in the condition of a fleeing rabble. What they have thrown away in their flight cannot be computed, principles, programmes and, almost, the one personage they had. The sight positively distresses us who, being no Liberals, see a great loss threatened to the State in the demoralisation of the Conservative Party. What faults there have been in Mr. Balfour we can plainly see, but they are as nothing to the disastrous consequences which will flow from what Gladstone called the "giddy prominence of inferior persons." It is that that depresses the rank and file, that and the implied and involved absence during their reign of any consistent body of principle or any defined policy. Deplore it as we may, however, the fact remains that not only is the Government stronger than it was a year ago, but the Opposition in Parliament and in the country is weaker. Under all these circumstances, an impeccable case could be, we maintain, made out for the Coalition if it decided to give the Radicals their head and to rush the Parliament Bill through without altering a phrase.

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We hope, however, that the Coalition will pause before doing so. If political warfare were what military warfare is, there would be no question either of expediency or right. But in the end and so long as

the intention, however badly translated in practice, of both parties is presumed to be the good of the State, each party in turn when it becomes dominant must consider the minority, and, if not yielding in any principle to it, at least endeavour to carry a good part of its mind. Minorities in opposition are not to be expected actually to vote in favour of proposals they were returned to oppose; but we can imagine cases, and, in fact, cases have not infrequently arisen, when everything is conceded by a minority except its vote. That, indeed, is the nearest approach we can ever hope to make while the party system lasts to government by consent. And this result may be obtained by a Government that, on the one hand, avoids giving its opponents unnecessary offence, and, on the other hand, spares no pains to minimise and rationalise even the necessary offence. Can it be doubted, for example, that the path both of the Government itself and of the Opposition would at this moment be smoother if Mr. Lloyd George had bridled his tongue, or if the Irish and Labour Parties had refrained from frazzling the nerves of public and Opposition alike with their nagging, and if the exposition of the Coalition policy had followed the lead and tone of the public speeches of Mr. Asquith, Sir Edward Grey, Mr. Burns and Lord Morley?

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We may be uttering counsels of perfection, but they appear to us remarkably like commonsense. After all, why should politicians behave towards each other with less courtesy or honesty than the majority and minority of a big Board of Directors? Our plea for an improvement in political manners is all the more necessary in England, where politics shares with sport and crime an almost exclusive public platform. Not much popular education in manners is to be looked for from either of the partners of politics; and consequently the responsibility of politicians in this respect is doubled or trebled. In this matter of the Parliament Bill, for example, it is obvious that real principles are at stake. How profoundly important in our opinion are the principles of the Parliament Bill will be gathered from our hint that this Bill really completes, and therewith at the same time inaugurates, the Saxon Restoration which was begun with infinite resolution and continued with indomitable courage from the Norman Conquest to this moment. In one sense it is true that we are fighting for Democracy. But what gives our present constitutional struggle a significance which by the nature of the case belongs to no other constitutional struggle elsewhere is the fact that not only Democracy is in sight, but a restored and richly experienced Saxon Democracy. Even with this at stake, and dimly felt as we believe it to be by the nation at large, we nevertheless urge on parties the need for mutual fairplay.

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We have put it on the ground of public manners, but the case is quite as strong on the lower levels of expediency. We are plainly informed by Mr. Balfour, and at least as plainly by Mr. Garvin in his latest "Observer," that the Lords will only accept the Parliament Bill on condition that it is fairly, fully and freely discussed in both Houses. Well, why should that privilege not be conceded to them? True, it is not necessary to make any concession at all. If we like to produce the maximum of disturbance instead of the minimum in the belief that this is real progress we have, as we have shown, the power to do so. Resistance, however exacerbated and enlarged, can still be crushed, but is it worth while to multiply our troubles? But it may be said that a fair, full and free discussion of the Parliament Bill in both Houses, and particularly in the Upper House, is dangerous. Mr. Balfour himself has been unwise enough to claim that he will be able by this means to postpone the Bill until its impulse is exhausted. We do not believe it. The public, and not Parliament, is the final arbiter of what is fair discussion. So soon as it appears that mere obstinacy alone delays the passage of the Bill, so soon will it be possible for the Government to closure discussion with the tacit if not the expressed approval of the reasonable mind of the nation. Parliament, we imagine, during the discussions of the Bill will be in the position of debaters at a public meeting; and the public may safely be left to decide when one of the parties becomes frivolous or obstructive; and that will be the moment to closure the Bill.

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We will not go so far as to say that the Parliament Bill as it stands will emerge from fair discussion completely unscathed; but if Unionists have no better amendments to suggest than they have so far put forward, the change in it will be small. It is no amendment of a Bill to Regulate the Relations between the two Houses to put forward a scheme for reconstructing a Second Chamber, even if incidentally the relations between the two Houses are satisfactorily defined. We ask for no more than is demonstrably necessary, namely, the ultimate supremacy of the Commons. Without it government falls to the ground. What kind of remedy is it to offer the Commons a King Stork for a King Log, a vastly strengthened House of Lords for a weak House? For we deny that, in fact, satisfactory relations (that is, satisfactory to the Commons) can be defined as between an inferior House of Commons and a superior House of Peers, however constituted. If the Upper Chamber is elected from the same franchise as the Lower House, it will be no better, and it will be no worse; it will be identical with the Lower Chamber. If, on the other hand, the Upper Chamber is constituted by conglomeration of selected, nominated and elected members, or even if its area of franchise is limited in relation to the Commons franchise, democrats will never cease to agitate until the newly-created forms of aristocratic or plutocratic privilege (for that is what they would really be) had been swept away. In short, such a Chamber would prove unstable, and the more so for being offensively brand new. But beyond this futility we know of no suggestion made by Unionists that would amend the Parliament Bill in the desired direction, in the direction desired by the nation. If that is all there is to be said, the discussion of the Bill may safely be left as open as the day.

Portugal.

By V. de Braganza Cunha.

Portugal has been much in the public eye of late. This land, once foremost in all things which make nations great and that can point to her many triumphs in the vast field of civilisation, is to-day on the verge of a vital crisis in her affairs, and the Portuguese cannot blind themselves to the fact that the country has seen a writing on the wall that is not hard to decipher.

Upon the story of the revolution it is not necessary to dwell here. Distinguished English journalists have written admirable articles on it. Their comments upon the Portuguese political events showed in most cases good sense and a considerable degree of knowledge. But however well acquainted the English critic may be with the facts of Portuguese history, he cannot possibly be intimate with its emotions. However acute his power of observation he cannot probe into the depths and analyse the character of a people that is no worse than the English, that may possibly be no better, but a people that is and will remain fundamentally different.

The surprise which sudden upheavals and uprooting of traditions in Portugal at not too infrequent intervals occasion here in England may therefore be explained by the want of appreciation of the inner working of the Portuguese mind. The Portuguese is in truth a man of contradiction. Born in a climate where nature shoots forth into magnificence, and brought up in a climate which inflames the power of imagination, he is the prey of his emotions, which are as a rule the motive power of his mind. Herein lies the reason why

the Portuguese does not know how to avoid one extreme without running into another.

This may be verified and confirmed by an inquiry into all the important periods of the Portuguese national life. What scenes of religious fervour, what revolutions, what paroxysms of rage and resentment are not involved in the details of this life!

Greater Portugal furnishes perhaps the most remarkable illustration of this spirit of contradiction that runs through the history of Portugal. In little more than a century Portugal became a conquering and all-subduing Power. Her supremacy extended along the coast of Africa from Ceuta to the shores of the Red Sea, and her flag waved over the fortresses of Sofala, Mozambique, Quiota, Pemba and Melindi. Her Asiatic dominions spread from Ormuz, in the Persian Gulf, to India, Ceylon, a great part of the Malay coast and the Molucca Islands, and she commanded the commerce of the Arabian and Persian Gulfs and the Sea of China. In South America, Brazil was included in her dominions beyond the seas. But all at once this ephemeral greatness vanished. It is not, I think, difficult to suggest a reason why the generation of the Portuguese that followed the days of Prince Henry, Vasco da Gama and Albuquerque were unable to realise with adequate intensity the grandeur and sanctity of ideals that lay behind that series of events that gave a forcible impulse to commerce, navigation and the foundation of colonies. It was not the quest of Cathay, the earthly paradise which through the Middle Ages was sought in the East, the main theme of the daring expeditions of the fifteenth century. The movement was in its inception spiritual, the Portuguese were at first desirous not of material rights but of ideal rights. But the religious enthusiasm which was the most potent influence on the political and social action of the Portuguese who laid the foundation of Greater Portugal, only lasted in Portugal while its leaders were alive. Once the Portuguese markets were filled with rich spices from the Molucca Islands, tapestries from Persia, diamonds from India, pearls from Manaar and ivory from Guinea, the nation immersed itself in material facts. The accumulation of the wealth of the East Indies debased the national character. The inspiring poetry of religion was destroyed, and the peaceful message of Christ was turned into a blood-stained law of persecution.

Again, in the days of King Sebastian, the political and national feeling rallied to the Christian cause. But a movement without collective coherence or efficiency was bound to prove disastrous to the country; and the date of the battle of Alcacer-Kebir will always remain a day of mourning for Portugal.

Animated at first by an instinctive repulsion from a Castillian Monarch, the Portuguese had gone mad when the young King Sebastian was born. Yet no sooner the young King was slaughtered on the plains of Alcazer, their leaders were purchased with imperial gold to bring about the submission of the nation to the Castillian Monarch, who was to reduce her colonies and for the time exhaust her naval resources.

Here alone there is strong evidence of how inconsistent a people can be. Yet this is but half of the tale of contradiction.

When Junot crossed the Portuguese frontier in 1807, proclaiming the sole object of his invasion to be "the emancipation of her government from the yoke of England, and to enable it to assume the attitude of an independent power," the Portuguese, when they saw themselves handed from the Braganzas to the Bonapartes, could not grasp the fact that the invasion was to Napoleon only a means to secure the spoils of a plundered nation. They saw in their oppressors the heroes of Marengo, Austerlitz and Jena, and they offered no resistance to the invading army. This enthusiasm for the French was such that at Santarem a deputation of the Freemasons of Portugal, in their democratic enthusiasm, welcomed Junot, and the three estates of the Realm were to be assembled to proclaim the French king.

Another striking instance of this spirit of contradiction may be found in the period of those great struggles to implant constitutionalism in Portugal.

A people who in 1820 was for constitutional liberty; in 1828 ignoring the possibility of being confronted with the worst, drove the party of peace and liberty from power, and found a ruler in Dom Miguel de Braganza, whose treasonable usurpation was signalised by an outburst of lawlessness and violence.

The country, soon after, underwent a great revolution. Passions ran high, private resentment and family feuds mingled with political principles, and the Constitutional Charter was established. But Constitutionalism only came to confuse and embitter the Portuguese political development with factious contentiousness. The ruthless logic of events, notably the era of *pronunciamentos*, turned to derision the arguments in favour of a highly developed constitutional system that was thrust upon a people unready to receive it. As history repeats itself so does the course of politics. What Ampère said of the Greek may justly be applied to the Portuguese: "He has now the same qualities, the same defects as of old." The politics of the past is therefore not without a direct bearing on the present-day problems of Portugal.

It is therefore a matter of grave and growing anxiety to all reflecting men whether a people as we have shown the people of Portugal to be can pass at once to the comprehension of Locke and Rousseau. And the anxiety is greater notwithstanding the fact that the Cortes of Lamego proclaimed the right of the nation in a spirit not inferior to that of Magna Charta, which came into existence seventy years later. But if the history of the ancient " Cortes " acknowledges in the most unequivocal manner the sovereignty of the Portuguese people, it also shows that this institution has grown out of the healthy action of a community and developed along with the state of society.

The Republican leaders to-day in power have spoken to the world of the prospects of the country and its institutions under Republican auspices, as if they had already found the secret of rolling away the old ills of a nationality. That attitude was very human when adopted by those who are responsible for the sudden changes in the institutions of a country; but whatever else Democracy may be, it means in our modern age government by public opinion. We have therefore to consider seriously whether in Portugal, where the public has no opinion of its own but merrily echoes opinion, the times are disposed for the advancement of a Republican ideal. The Republic decrees the responsibility of the people. A Republic based on a population 75 per cent. of which is illiterate, and a Republic that must not conceal from itself the probability of being faced with difficulties arising from the encouragement it gave first to turbulent elements in the country, cannot possibly be a success; besides, the shocking and shameless facility with which the so-called monarchists, whose volatility of character required every sedative that could be applied to it, transferred their allegiance to the new régime, was an affront to morality, be it republican or monarchical.

There is yet another ground of uneasiness which must needs have confronted those who have taken upon themselves the task of reconstructing the political institutions of the country. The men who to-day stand out from the ranks of the Republican party in pre-eminence, and are in power, belong to the moderate party; but they, notwithstanding the warnings of the "Lucta" (the Republican daily paper), have shown themselves liable to be swept forward by the pressure brought to bear upon them on every side by the extremist newspapers that are increasing every day. Their hysterics make the onlooker despair of a sane future for a people who have so little sense of proportion. These papers have their importance, of course, as straws that show how the wind is blowing.

It is therefore as impossible for such a mass of incoherent units to reconstitute a stable state as for the dust or mud of Lisbon to form itself into Jeronymos, that historical monument that calls up the soul of Portugal to those who now behold only its corpse.

Foreign Affairs.

By S. Verdad.

THE foreign political question of greatest importance with which we are confronted at the opening of the New Year is the slightly improved state of the relations between Russia and Austria. I call this a "question," because there are one or two notes of interrogation in connection with it. What, for instance, is the view taken in Germany, and what is the position of Count Lexa von Aehrenthal, the Austrian Foreign Minister?

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It is, indeed, the anomalous position of the Austrian Foreign Minister which is giving rise to much speculation. It has already been reported that a hunting-party has been arranged by several members of the Russian Imperial family, and to this many well-known Austrians have been invited, including the Heir-Presumptive, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand. The hunt is looked upon as a pretext for the discussion of a rapprochement between Austria and Russia; but the main point is, Will Count von Aehrenthal join the party?

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Let us remember the circumstances. In 1908 it was Count von Aehrenthal who was chiefly instrumental in tearing up the treaty of Berlin, and, with the assistance of Germany, annexing Bosnia and Herzegovina. This was followed by his campaign of intimidation against Servia, which lasted six months, and ended in the humiliation of Russia as well as of Servia, as the former empire had endeavoured to protect the smaller Slav people. It was Count von Aehrenthal's persuasive eloquence, too, that recently drew Turkey nearer to the Triple Alliance, thus effectively checking for some time to come Russia's plans for taking over Constantinople as a southern seaport. (By the way, this reminds me of a remark addressed to me by the late Lord Salisbury in the presence of two or three other semi-official diplomatists: "It would be better for us in the long run to let Russia take Constantinople; for Austria and Germany would have their hands full for the next century or so trying to get her out." Admirably indicative of Lord Salisbury's insight).

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Now, it naturally follows that Count von Aehrenthal is a thorn in the side of Russia, and it has more than once been hinted in official circles that the first step towards a better understanding between Russia and Austria would be the resignation of the Austrian Foreign Minister. Such is the Russian point of view, but in Austria different opinions are naturally held. The 1908 coup was carried through against the wishes and without the knowledge of Italy, but with the assistance and knowledge of Germany—in other words, two branches of the Triplice worked against the interests of the third. It was Count von Aehrenthal who guided his own country and the Triple Alliance through stormy months of crisis, and he is highly thought of accordingly. His retirement would mean the disappearance of a unique figure from the stage of European diplomacy: a figure unique in will, energy, determination, and initiative.

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Count von Aehrenthal, as I think I have previously remarked in these columns, is the intellectual descendant of Bismarck; and as such we can study him in two ways. If we are merely parochial Britons we shall be glad to see his downfall, if it comes about; but if we are intellectuals of a high order—and I think the readers of THE NEW AGE are—then we shall watch future events with much interest and even amusement. We may recall the fact that Count von Aehrenthal is of Jewish ancestry and was educated and trained by the Jesuits—a unique intellectual combination. It is usually said that he is not so clever as Bismarck; but I should prefer to express this by saying that he has not yet shown himself publicly to be so clever as Bismarck. He has not yet shown his hand. We do not yet know the limits of his craft and cunning—and this man is opposed by mediocrities like M. Pichon, M. Sasonoff, and Sir Edward Grey, and backed up, too, by a jovial bachelor, Herr von Kiderlen-Wächter, who sweeps away all obstacles with a rough and ready South German enthusiasm, and is far from being troubled by Puritanism or a conscience.

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Thus at the beginning of the New Year we have Great Britain, France, and Russia in a presumed entente, and this entente must have a policy, despite the assertions of the Liberal Press in this country to the contrary. This group is faced by the Triple Alliance, Germany, Austria, and Italy. The fact that certain "arrangements" have been entered into between Russia and Germany and between Russia and Austria, and that Italy and Austria are deadly enemies, need not count in high politics. Germany, as has often been said, exacts high prices for any assistance she is called upon to render, and in any conflict which may arise within the next twelve months or so the two groups I have mentioned will be solidly opposed. I do not necessarily mean by this that the Triple Entente is still in existence; for it is not. For all practical and immediate political purposes it may be considered as completely broken up. How, why and when are points which I hope to find room to discuss next week.

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Apropos of this matter, I notice that M. André Mévil, with whose views I do not necessarily agree in all cases, has quite a good comment on the hunting party in the "Echo de Paris" of December 29. The hunt is to take place at Skiernewice, in Russian Poland, and M. Mévil says: "Even the name of Skiernewice is symbolical. It was here, in September, 1884, that Bismarck scored a great victory over Russian diplomacy, a victory which set the coping-stone on the political work of the celebrated Chancellor. After the famous Skiernewice interview, where the three Emperors met, Russia was annihilated and France completely isolated in a world which her enemy had succeeded in bending to his will." M. Mévil goes on to point out how France and Russia only extricated themselves from this mess by forming an alliance, and this, I may add, was not officially carried into effect until seven years had elapsed.

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Of course, the retirement of Count von Aerenthal from the field would leave the whole diplomatic power of the Triplice in the hands of Germany, and this is just where Russia may be taken in. It is at the suggestion of the Wilhelmstrasse that the St. Petersburg authorities are pressing for the removal of the Austrian Foreign Minister as the first step to a rapprochement, though the ultimate consequences of such a step may be as disastrous to Russia as they now seem favourable.

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A word on Portugal and the Persian gun-running. I have already stated that the Portuguese "Republic" was unstable, and this is seen even in the telegrams published in the newspapers. But Dom Manoel is not particularly anxious to go back just yet. As for Persia, it was stated last week that France could exercise certain commercial rights over Muscat to put a stop to a great part of the gun-running traffic, and that in return for this England would cede Gambia to her. The fact is, England wanted Chandernagore and Pondicherry as well as the stoppage of the gun-running, and the negotiations fell through. Gambia, though not very large, is conveniently located, and has a good harbour. It is worth twenty Chandernagores or Pondicherrys, and a strong Government could easily stop the gun-running.

The Path to Democracy.

By Cecil Chesterton.

I.—The Problem.

To secure to the mass of the people the enjoyment of the riches which their labour produces but which are now absorbed by a small and wealthy class must be the principal task of statesmanship in this age.

But closely connected with this problem is another, second only to it in importance—the problem of how to render Democracy effective, of how to make government a true instrument of the popular will.

The solution of this problem is a necessary preliminary to the solution of the other. For the transfer of wealth from the rich to the poor can only be effected by the action of the State ; and only a democratic State can or will effect such a transfer.

Socialism involves confiscation. So, indeed, does any scheme which has for its object the more equitable distribution. Those who are fascinated by Mr. Belloc's vision of a nation in which the means of production are widely distributed need not think that they can escape from the conclusion which forces itself on the Socialist. The process of confiscation may be slow ; its consequences may be mitigated by humane provision for individuals. These are questions of detail and method. But, when the process is complete, the dilemma remains. Either the rich are as rich as they were before or they are not. If they are as rich as they were before, then it is obvious that the object of the process has not been achieved. If they are not, then by the act of the State some of their property has been confiscated.

Now it is obviously unlikely that such confiscation will be carried out by the rich themselves. On this point a great deal of confusion of thought has arisen, and not a little has, as it seems to me, shown itself in the correspondence columns of THE NEW AGE. Undoubtedly, if the rich wish to save their souls, they will do well to give up their riches. To tell them that they ought to do so is a very proper function of priests and prophets. But to base political calculations upon the probability that they will do so is folly too wild for a three-act farce. If confiscation is to be effected, it can, in all human probability, only be by the action of those who would practically profit by it.

Now I have already written a series of articles in THE NEW AGE to show how complete a monopoly of the government of this country the rich have secured. While that monopoly lasts there may be all sorts of measures for mitigating the extreme wretchedness of the poor, but there will be no serious attempt to give them economic security or to transfer to them any of the wealth now in the hands of their rulers.

So much is clear ; but it does not constitute the whole of the problem. The failure of representative institutions in this country to secure anything like a true representation of the people is mainly due to the absolute control which a small rich group exercises over the political machine. Mainly, but not wholly. There is another element in the case that requires analysis—the failure of men sprung from the people, returned by organisations essentially democratic, and, theoretically at least, independent of the two plutocratic parties, to represent the people truly or to rally the mass of the people to their support.

In the case of the Labour Party this failure is partly to be attributed to the indirect effects of the party system, to the timidity of new men introduced into an assembly dominated by the traditions of another class. To a credulity bred of ignorance as to the honesty of the section of the governing class which calls itself Liberal, and in the case of some of the cleverer men—I say it with a full sense of responsibility—to a desire to participate in the spoils which the party system so liberally allows to its supporters. But something must also be attributed to another cause—the lack of touch between the Labour members and the mass of the people.

When men are selected by their fellows to fight the battle of the poor against the rich, they will in the nature of things generally be men who feel especially enthusiastic about that battle. But the workman who feels most strongly on the subject will generally be the workman who thinks and reads, and his thinking and reading will in most cases have been along the lines described approximately by the vague word "advanced." He will have theories, sometimes wise, sometimes foolish, about other problems besides the problem of poverty. Often he will be a teetotaler, and not infrequently a belief that drink drugs his fellows into submission will make him a rampant prohibitionist. Again a consciousness that the patriotism of the people is often exploited by the rich for their own ends will sometimes lead him to a crude anti-nationalism. Thus along with the single aim which he shares with his fellow-workers—the support of the poor against the rich—he develops other aims in which they have no part and which are often repugnant to their sentiments.

Let me take a few instances. Nobody in his senses can pretend that one of the questions upon which the working classes of this country are eagerly excited is the admission of middle-class and upper-class women to the franchise. At best their attitude towards this proposal is one of indifference ; in many cases it is one of hostility. Yet Labour members, who cannot be induced to make an effective protest against the cynical neglect by the Government of the problem of the unemployed, will really show some spirit and even oppose their Liberal allies in defence of the well-to-do ladies who are agitating for the vote.

If any sentiment can safely be predicated of the ordinary English workman it is a dislike of interference with his personal liberty or with his traditional habits and amusements. So strong is this feeling that even our electoral machinery, carefully designed to prevent the popular will from expressing itself freely, cannot help recording it. "Temperance reform" always spells disaster for the party that attempts it. The sensational series of disastrous by-elections which occurred while the Licensing Bill was being forced through the House of Commons prove this, as does the part which Local Veto admittedly played in the Liberal débacle of 1895. Yet the Labourites, so far from giving expression to the popular resentment, generally devote themselves to urging on the Liberals to further and bolder outrages on liberty and Democracy.

Again, it is quite certain that the overwhelming majority of the British working classes are patriots if not Jingoes, and that they are ready and even eager to place the nation in a good posture of defence. Yet, when the I.L.P. wishes to popularise itself by getting up a national agitation, what object of attack does it select? Unemployment, you would think, perhaps? Or the starvation of children in the schools? Or private property in land? Or at any rate the Osborne judgment? Not at all. The leaders of the I.L.P. are of opinion that the real cry on which to rally the Democracy is an attack upon the expenditure on armaments! Divorce from the real instincts of the people could go no further.

It may be said that these questions are of minor importance when compared with the great question of the redistribution of wealth. Let this be granted. But they have a very real bearing upon that question, for the division between the tribune and those whom he seeks to champion is just the rich politician's opportunity. It is only necessary, as things stand, to raise the question of drink, or of war, or of national defence in order to rout the Socialists by the votes of the workers themselves.

The remedy is clearly to bring the leaders of the Democracy into closer touch with those whose cause they are pleading, and to enable the people to control them. And the thing that controls them must be not this or that caucus or trade union or Socialist society, but the mass of men of all sorts, the normal human herd. The directing voice must be that voice seldom heard in England to-day, that voice which men have called, not so foolishly as modern prigs suppose, the voice of God.

Rural Notes.

After three years the small holdings policy of the Government has at last matured. It is a poor mean thing and based on consideration of immediate political expediency alone.

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In parts of Somerset, and perhaps also in Norfolk, small holdings are being created faster than is wise, since rural co-operation, so essential for the success of the statutory small holder, is neglected. The multiplication of statutory small holdings in the West Country is confined to certain County Council and Parliamentary constituencies and has been effected by local magnates or party politicians with the cynical intent of making party capital; cynical because those who satisfy this unintelligent demand are well aware that under present conditions the ignorance and isolation of the small farmer must lead to bad cultivation, to a demand for the lowering of rents, of Gladstonian legislation in Ireland, and to the total failure of the present policy. On the other hand, in the Home Counties the Small Holdings Act is set at naught by the county authorities with the tacit acquiescence of the Board of Agriculture. A glaring instance of this is shown in the treatment of W.S. King, of Beddington, near Croydon, already a successful smallholder, who grows perennials on an area of 1¼ acres. This man, and not a large farmer, has been selected to give up ⅝ of an acre to new allotment holders. Meanwhile Earl Carrington, at large farmers' dinners, expatiates on the advantages of co-operation, and the success of his small holdings policy in raising rents. Since this type of farmer is mostly an able business man who occupies much land at less than its economic rent, and who already co-operates so far as this is necessary for his own purposes, he therefore dreads the multiplication of intelligent competitors co-operatively organised into a strong business position. Could the fatuity of our statesmen further go? The Tories' land reform policy is far more honest than the Liberals'; and if their schemes of peasant proprietorship prove not merely a political dodge to enable landlords to sell outlying farms and estates at inflated prices paid by the general taxpayer, it will be far more successful. Witness Sir H. Plunkett's diagnosis of the case and his remedies set forth in his "Rural Problem in America," a book in which every Liberal land reformer should pass a strict examination, above all those who, with suburban and city housing experience only, are always founding new societies which are doomed to futility from their birth.

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The Government alleges the opposition of the private trader for its wilful neglect of encouraging co-operation. Its scheme is to shuffle off its responsibilities on to the County Councils, where the trading instinct being strongly represented it can be sure that the money to be spent on travelling instructors will be mostly wasted. All these projected schemes are so much political window-dressing. Fortunately it is likely that Earl Carrington will soon relinquish his office, so great has been his failure. It is to be hoped that his successor will not be elevated to the peerage as one of the new batch of Liberal peers, since the only hope of an improved administration of the Board of Agriculture under the present Government is that its head should be in the Commons. However, in spite of probable waste of money on foolish grants to incompetent or unwilling councils, it is to be hoped that the excellent work of the Agricultural Organisation Society will be recognised by an increased grant. The question is a national one, and cannot be solved on a local administration basis alone.

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The Development Bill is another example of political window dressing. The proposed grant for forestry has been cut down from £90,000 to £50,000, to provide the bulk of the £50,000 to be controlled by Viscount Helmsley and his friends. If intelligent public opinion is not swiftly directed to the proceedings of this Commission, the money will be wasted on an ill-considered scheme of horse-breeding. If there is one line in which the British and Irish farmer is preeminent it is the upkeep of pedigree flocks and herds, and the breeding of stock. The War Office can get all the remounts it wants of any particular type simply by advertising its requirements and paying the market price. The record of our titled and territorial magnates in matters of horse-dealing and supplying the Government is a bad one, though the lessons of the Boer War seem to have been utterly forgotten.

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Money is required from the Development Fund for afforestation and improvement of "waste" land, and the promotion of rural co-operation on lines which under a Tory Government proved so successful in Ireland. Their objects will be starved and the money wasted on foolish horse-breeding schemes and the like which will only provide snug jobs for the fools of territorial magnates' families. If the Government wishes to spend the money wisely, it will make it worth while for the more intelligent land agents to instruct them. At present the Development Commission, with the exception, perhaps, of the co-operators, has been singularly bad at obtaining first-hand evidence. The sad fact that the only Socialist member of the board is probably the weakest, clearly shows the obscurantism into which intellectual socialism has been falling of late years. It is partial, incomplete, and has no menage to the rural revival which is progressing chiefly under the influence of Tory ideas aided by a very few intelligent Liberals, amongst whom directors of garden cities and publishers of books on Belgium are not to be numbered. The I.L.P. is perhaps the most intelligent driving force.

Avalon.

The New Laocoon.

Edited by G. F. Abbott.

"I find in the multifarious production of the artists of Europe a restlessness and uncertainty of aim which makes for futility."

I thought I knew the voice and the vocabulary. I looked round, and surely enough, there behind me, squeezed in the fashionable crowd that surged out of the Gallery, was Mrs. De Bore-Smith, the fascinating and highly cultured Hottentot widow whom not to know is to proclaim oneself unknown. She was good enough to remember me, and she graciously introduced me to her companion. He turned out to be no less a person than M. Stephan Snobowitch, the celebrated Professor of Fine Arts in the University of Cettinje.

"I quite agree, Madam," remarked the Professor, as we three walked away together. "This exhibition has proved it most painfully," and, pushing his spectacles up, he rubbed his eyes as though to wipe off them the impressions which had caused him so much pain. "Western artists seem to have lost their way in the jungle. They either wander into side issues or else they deliberately waste their power over realism and insignificance. It is quite otherwise with us at Cettinje. We——"

A clumsy motor driver at this point forced us to flee to opposite sides of the road, and the Professor's interesting revelations concerning Montenegrin art were postponed indefinitely. When we reunited the conversation took a more general turn. He lamented what he termed the aberrations of civilisation, and Mrs. De Bore-Smith deplored the barbarism of the British capital. I did all that a patriotic Briton and zealous seeker after knowledge could to bring the discussion to its original channel, not without success.

"So you don't perceive any progress in European art?" I ventured, tactfully.

"Oh, yes, there is plenty of progress—too much of it," he said with a laugh that made the passers-by start.

"That is just where the mischief lies," added the Hottentot Widow, joining her silvery ripple to the Montenegrin torrent of hilarity.

"I don't understand," I said, frankly bewildered.

"I will explain," said the Professor indulgently. "You know, of course, that progress means movement? Good. But you must also know that there are many kinds of movement. For example, move-

ment may be forwards, backwards, or backwards and forwards, in no definite direction. Mere alteration of position is not necessarily advance. Now, I maintain that the misfortune of European art is that for centuries it has been moving forwards—until it reached the limit of the field allotted to art by Providence, missed it, and tumbled over the brink into chaos—just as that stupid chauffeur would do if he had a chance. Hence," concluded the Professor, "all those restless searchings, blind gropings, and wasteful wanderings which we have been inspecting this afternoon."

"That is precisely what I have always affirmed," said Mrs. De Bore-Smith. "Europe is living in a chaos of artistic pseudo-culture. She needs a creator to turn that chaos into cosmos."

"She needs rather," said the Professor, "an experienced chauffeur—a lawgiver to do for the twentieth century what Lessing did for the eighteenth—to review the accepted rules of æsthetic right and wrong, to revise them by the light of the latest experience, to reject the obsolete, to recast the permanent, and to codify the whole into a fresh Canon of the Beautiful."

By this time we had reached Hyde Park Corner, where our ways parted. As I continued my walk alone I felt like a man walking in a dream—all my preconceived notions seemed to be scattered around me in hopeless confusion. By degrees, however, in the ruins I began to see the promise of a new edifice. What I had heard had sunk deeply into my consciousness, and little by little it emerged. . . . The Hottentot widow's criticism and the Montenegrin Professor's suggestion came back to me, fraught with significance. I recognised that they had but given clear utterance to a feeling I had myself cherished, though vaguely, for some time past—a feeling that we live in an age of turbulent transition—an age when our artists are feverishly searching for the means to meet the needs brought into being by new conceptions of life, and failing lamentably in their quest for want of guidance. . . .

I brooded over these matters for five days and suddenly, on the morning of the sixth, it was borne in upon me that it was my special duty to bring confusion to an end by reclaiming art to the paths of Truth, Light and Safety. The more I thought about it, the more clearly I realised that I was the chauffeur of whom the Professor had spoken—the expected Lawgiver who was to interpret the age to itself and to supply it with a code for its guidance. . .. "Why not?" I reflected. "I certainly possess special qualifications for the part. Not being myself an artist, I am in the advantageous position of the detached and disinterested onlooker. So my opinions are less likely to be tinged with prejudice. Further, in me the erudition of the scholar is choicely blended with the sagacity of the critic, and both these gifts are exalted and ennobled by the lofty impartiality of the philosopher. "Yes," I decided, "I am obviously the man pointed out by Destiny to produce a new Grammar of Æsthetics."

I hesitated no more. I set to work calmly, soberly, systematically—without any disturbing ardour or enthusiasm whatsoever—and in the course of three weeks (Sundays excluded) I constructed a Theory of Art which, I cannot but think, will readily commend itself to all serious and unbiassed students. I am, of course, aware that I have not confined myself entirely to a codification of old experience—that I have evolved completely new ideas on more points than one. My only justification for the liberty is a firm and implicit faith in the soundness of those ideas. Besides, my ideas have already been a source of immense benefit to me, and I ought to share that benefit with my fellow-beings. I ask for no reward from the recipients of my bounty. I shall consider myself amply rewarded if what I have to give will help to improve the mind—I will not say increase the happiness or the income—of even a single thoughtful reader.

Art is not what indolent and uninformed sciolists often maintain—the spontaneous offspring of intuition. It is the nursling of Intelligence.

The artist may be born: art is made.

As this truth is the fundamental law upon which the whole of my teaching rests, I will try to place it beyond the danger of misconception. I hold that, though the artistic feeling may be inherent and intransmissible, artistic expression can be taught as every other form of human expression. And not only it can, but it must be taught. The babblings of an infant are, no doubt, spontaneous, and they certainly have a meaning; but they are not intelligible except to itself, until their spontaneity has been trained and restrained into articulate language, according to certain well-defined and widely accepted rules of grammatical convention.

To expound those rules is the task I have set to myself, fully convinced that a thorough comprehension of them and a courageous adherence to them can only bring about the regeneration of European art. But precept unaccompanied by example is both tedious and unenlightening. I will, therefore, do what Lessing did before me, but a little better.

Lessing took for his model a creation of the Hellenic genius and of world-wide renown. I take for mine a creation of an older genius and one which, though at present known only to myself, I have no doubt, if intrinsic merit and eloquent pleading count for anything, is destined to become not less famous. It is a china cat of, I believe, Mongolian extraction—yellow, with bright blue spots scattered in picturesque profusion over its back, even as the stars are scattered over the firmament of the east on a cloudless and moonless summer night. Her name is Dolly.

Let me essay a portrait of Dolly.

At this moment she is seated, in her habitual attitude, opposite me—close to the fender—her long, smooth tail tucked neatly under her; her long, slender neck turned gracefully in my direction; her large, lustrous, green eyes fixed upon my face; her lips set in that bland, inscrutable, almost ironical, smile which they invariably wear. I have never attempted to interpret that smile. Why should I? It spoils a dream to worry about its meaning; nay, I have a suspicion that Providence itself would become insolvent the moment it ceased to be inscrutable. The charm of Dolly's smile, like the charm of the Egyptian hieroglyphs and of women, lies in its mystery.

To proceed with my portrait—Dolly's nose. How can I ever convey an adequate idea of that nose? The task is entirely beyond my powers—if I only had the pen of Mr. Laurence Binyon! Alas! I have not. Suffice it, therefore, to state that Dolly's nose alone might supply material for a whole volume of essays in that gifted writer's best "Saturday Review" style. Her tail—but why dwell on details? Aristotle was right—ἡ ἀκριβολογία μικροπρεπές. One might as well try to interpret the charm of a rose by picking its constituent petals, or to convey an idea of the grandeur of the Parthenon by counting its stones. The truth is that, like all real masterpieces, Dolly defies dissection. She represents a perfect artistic unity. She is one and indivisible, a poem in china: a solemn, complete, and harmonious image of a single cat: a marvel of beauty and eternal youth.

The difficulties which attend a description of Dolly's appearance, however, are light when compared with those which confront the critic who would attempt an interpretation of her soul. Her rare and distinguished spirit does not lend itself to critical analysis. There is about that spirit a subtle, strange and elusive quality—an intangible je ne sais quoi—which hardly admits of being confined within the terms of pedantic definition. The symbolism which underlies this masterpiece of the Oriental creature is so significant, so evanescent, so full of a mystic and fragrant fascination, that to materialise it in words would be to do violence to its sacred suggestiveness.

All that I can do is to state that in her originality of complexion, Asiatic—I might almost say divine—immobility and imperturbable serenity, Dolly realises the Artist's dream of feline perfection. Indeed, I am inclined to believe that it is in that serenity that the

key to the secret of Dolly's soul may be found. For, as Winkelman shrewdly observed long ago, the principal characteristic of æsthetic excellence is a quiet and noble repose both in attitude and in expression. The depths of the ocean always remain at rest, let the surface rage as it will. Even so do the attitude and expression of Dolly show, through all hypothetical inner emotions, an immutable calm.

Briefly, in Dolly, I, for one, find the most adequate embodiment of what Plato would have called the idea of a cat.

"But," the unenlightened might object, "she does not look a bit like a real cat—she is so abnormal and so unnatural: yellow, with bright blue spots and an incredible neck!"

My answer to this is conclusive:

If you want a real, normal, natural cat, gentle sir, you may buy one in the market. It is the essence of Art to be unlike Nature—it is her mission to improve Nature: by idealising the real to realise the ideal.

* * *

The ancients understood the great principle so pithily enunciated here for the first time, and therefore in both Greek and Roman literature the terms "Art" and "Nature" are always used antithetically. Our mediæval forefathers also understood it, as is abundantly shown by a glance at any Anglo-Saxon illuminated manuscript. Modern Europe's misfortune is that she has forgotten this principle, and that she has consequently lost all correct sense of the beautiful. Realism has played Mephistopheles with European Art. We constantly aim at the natural and usually achieve the hideous.

Realism, forsooth! A verminous cur basking on a dung-hill, or a dirty street arab sprawling in a gutter and gnawing at a decayed apple, are realistic subjects enough. But what man of culture and delicate feeling would give sixpence for the most faultless pictorial imitation of them? I would not—not even with a golden sunset thrown in. No greater calumny has ever been levelled at the class to which I, and most of my readers, I suppose, belong, than the dictum that the pleasure which successful imitation conveys causes men to contemplate gladly the minutely faithful representation even of such repulsive objects as diseased animals and corpses. The person who penned this outrageous libel obviously was a Philistine very distantly acquainted with people of culture. The love for fidelity to Nature, the passion for naturalistic presentment, is a vulgar prejudice which, I regret to admit, may be still held by the uninitiated, but which will be utterly discarded by everyone as soon as the world recognises that likeness to natural appearances can no longer be used as a sound criterion of value. To promote this recognition is precisely the object of my teaching.

The muddle and decline of European Art, since the time of Giotto, can, I declare it with all the emphasis that is in me, be traced to this reckless and persistent effort to present things as they are. The result has been a cold facility in imitation which has fatally usurped the place once held by fiery inspiration. This is what the ignorant call progress. It is nothing but a movement forwards along a narrow path which leads to final catastrophe. If European Art is to be saved the movement must be reversed. The only progress worth the name is a movement backwards. The future of Europe's Art lies in a return to the past.

It will be urged that the past is dead, and that its secrets lie buried with it.

Fortunately that is true only in a sense. The past is dead in Europe, but, thank Heaven, it still lives in Asia. Therefore, if we wish to recover the faith we have lost, all we have to do is to go for instruction to the countries that have never been touched by the modern heresies of light and shade, of perspective, or by any of the other uninspired and uninspiring puerilities which mar even the most brilliant European renderings of artistic truth. We must go to the nations which have retained, in all its pristine purity, the sound doctrine that Art's mission is to improve Nature—nations like the Indians who draw human beings with a plurality of heads and a corresponding multitude of limbs—nations like the Japanese who paint human figures in perpendicular columns massed one on the top of the other, or floating, bird-like, in the air—nations like the Nepaulese who shave their natural eyebrows and paint artificial ones over them.

Unless we undertake the pilgrimage here suggested, it is useless to hope that the principles of unity, completeness, and unreality shall ever be relearnt. The West must once more go to the East for light. The artists of Asia are the only artists now living who have shown a single-minded attachment to those essential principles, and it is because of their tenacity that Mongolian Art—to say nothing of Indian Art—has never been drawn into the wild paths which have led European Art to the abyss of naturalness.

How loyally and undeviatingly those Mongolian masters have preserved the great heritage of the past, and how completely our European amateurs have lost it was demonstrated some time ago by an ingenious Japanese critic who was taken by an English friend to an exhibition of illuminated manuscripts at the Burlington Fine Arts Club. Before a miniature by Simon Benink and other barbarous life-like monstrosities the distinguished visitor stood aghast, too shocked, too amazed and too polite to express an opinion, save that he failed to see any artistic idea behind those faithful imitations of Nature. But he understood with great delight and no difficulty the meaning of an Anglo-Saxon drawing and of everything that was innocent of perspective or resemblance to life.

To sum up, I have no hesitation in declaring that, if our artists were to study the ancient conventions of Asia, our Art might be once again resuscitated from the tomb of reality, verisimilitude, and servitude to Nature. By throwing over all the modern machinery of light and shade, perspective, and the rest of that prosaic lumber, and by thus purifying pictorial presentment, Western artists would be merely returning to their own long-forgotten traditions. A pilgrimage to Asia, therefore, need imply no humiliation to Europe. It is but a pilgrimage to long-forgotten shrines of our own. But the only road to those shrines, I repeat, now lies through Asia; for it is there only that the essential truths which we have lost are still upheld with a constancy beside which even Roman conservatism becomes a type of wild revolutionism. In Europe we have long lost verity in our thirst for verisimilitude.

But why go to Asia? All the qualities of perfect Mongolian Art are embodied in my china Dolly as they never could have been embodied in any cat of European origin. Although her pedigree is unknown to me, yet it is obvious at a glance that Dolly is the outcome of the soul of a race which has created, with masterpiece after masterpiece, a sublime tradition unequalled for antiquity and tenacity. Personally, I have no doubt whatever that she is of Mongolian extraction. Only upon that hypothesis can her peculiar characteristics be accounted for. In her attitude there is, as I have already stated, something serene, secret, and aloof from the busy and noisy banalities which make up an ordinary European cat's life. In her expression there are nuances fraught with the strangest and most mystical intimation of a spiritual existence totally absent from Western cats. Of course, these are beauties which can only appeal to the sensitive spectator whose æsthetic soul has not been corrupted by the false teaching of modern Western artists, with their superstitious attachment to natural representation, their morbid passion for freedom, and the rest of their pernicious aberrations from the valuable conventions and venerable traditions of antiquity. Yet I am so sanguine as to hope that even spectators so perverted may, if they gaze at Dolly long enough, end by accepting her as a thing of beauty. Their conversion would be easier still if they brought to the contemplation of my china cat minds already impregnated with the doctrines of Post-Impressionism.

An Englishman in America.

By Juvenal.

PEOPLE have the Government they deserve, the religion they want, the art that flatters them, and the music that mimics their emotion. New York is in the throes of rag-time music. It is not new, but the mania has taken a new turn. Rag-time music now belongs to the white race. It has entered into plays, comedies, songs, and dances, and a little more and some up-to-date revivalist would make it the leading feature of religious revivals. We may soon hear it in Italian opera. New York is ready for anything. The "tone" of the place is that of rag-time, and the psychologist may begin at that and work up, or work down, as he pleases. This is the key-note of the popular feeling. It gives the emotional pulse of the town. From this note New Yorkers manage to get through life with a variety of cadences and a surprising number of capriccio movements which go well with the mood of the moment; they can waltz up Fifth Avenue, or polka down Broadway, or gallop on Riverside, or trip through the Tenderloin, or bowl through the Bowery, without a thought for the tomahawks of Tammany or Roosevelt's amazing ambitions, or any particular person or party. Rag-time music evades and defies everybody and everything. It suits, as a man said, a people who have ceased to think, but whose nerves cry out for something to make them dance to the follies of the present, while anticipating a razzle-dazzle future.

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Rag-time represents a melodious cynicism; it is a sort of oil that smothers the vinegar of a heaving ocean of soured ambitions; it helps to reconcile the gudgeons with the sharks, the minnows with the millionaires, and the grass widows with the pigs in clover, to say nothing of the pigs in perdition. It mixes everything, conciliates everything, unites everything, excuses everything, throws a veil over people and incidents.

* * *

New York, en masse, does the least thinking of any place of its size that ever existed. This rag-time element is only an audible expression of the rag-tag and bob-tail element of which it is so largely composed. The motto of New York ought to be, "Live by the day, eat when you can, dance when you please, and die when you must."

* * *

One would naturally think that when Greek meets Greek then comes the tug-of-war. But when arriving in New York Harbour the only thing the Greeks meet is the steam-tug. This fills them with infinite assurance. But they soon discover the truth. The real Greeks of New York are the Yankees; but this does not much matter since all recognise a common stamping-ground for Turk, Greek, Jew, Jap, and Chinaman. Time passes pleasantly enough in making and saving money, until one fine day the optimistic foreigner, having amassed what he considers a nice little fortune, makes an attempt to rise above his surroundings and begins to speculate, just like "Melliky man." What happens? He has played his cards, shown his hand, and finds he is "euchred" by the millionaires. What happens then? He, or they—the Turks, the Greeks, the Poles, the Bohemians, the Swabians, the Shavians, and the confounded Fabians—return to the flesh-pots of modern Egypt, with twenty modern Pharaohs over them, happy enough to make gold bricks for the trusts, while they keep what little straw they possess to sleep on.

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All these people, to say nothing of the humble Americans, having a certain sense of the rhythm of life, accept the rag-time as typical of their condition, and the most fitting to express the live-by-the-day state of their souls. The majority, having enough, are willing to go on in the same old style. They join with the others in the Bacchanalian sports of the new Babylon, quite content to make gold bricks for others while they chaff each other with lemonade straws and the husks of monkey-nuts.

Puccini's American opera, "The Girl of the Golden West," has been given with all the éclat such an occasion ought to call forth. While the artistes on the stage were singing their best the occupants of the big boxes were talking their best. I could not be rude and cry "hush" to my charming hostess, and I made up my mind to listen to Caruso with my left ear, while I attuned my right to the clatter going on in the box. I thought this combination would unite the cadences of heaven with the candour of earth; but it was not easy. I was obliged to make some kind of response to what was being said, and this attitude kept me, if not in hot-water, at least in a tepid stew, not at all likely to extract the pure bovril of my wit, to say nothing of the mild beef-tea of my musical sentiments. The talk rose and fell with the voices on the stage, and every time the prima donna attacked high C, the drones in the boxes buzzed on middle C, while some of the men with chin-whiskers attached to copper-plate faces relaxed on low C, and talked of copper and the coming Democratic Conference; and, as two C's in the musical scale are equal to two *dos*, the *Dodos* triumphed. Emerson advises us to "hitch our wagon to a star;" I tried to hitch one ear to two operatic stars, but without success.

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In this opera Signor Puccini's music, instead of suggesting the atmosphere and musical characteristics of the Far West, suggests the atmosphere and the musical sentiments of Italy. The opera is only American in its characters and its setting. It is like composing English music for Highland clans in Scotland, or German songs to express Italian emotions.

* * *

A book might be written on New York presumption, while another might be written on London assurance. The difference is considerable. While London assurance is not the pompous thing it was twenty or thirty years ago, New York presumption is hard to describe and impossible to beat. London assurance was based on the British Empire; New York presumption is based on American bullion. The weakness of New York is displayed by the universal penchant for bigness. If things are big they are all right, if little all wrong. Only a few people here can discriminate between a big coarse thing and a small delicate thing. Books are judged according to their sales, pictures according to the price, mansions according to their size, buildings according to their height, dinners according to the sums spent on flowers and favours.

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There are very few people in New York Society who have any clear notion of the meaning of art. But the bold and ever apparent presumption is that they know all that is worth knowing about painting, sculpture, music, singing, literature, and the drama. New York Society, as a whole, takes no interest whatever in any art or any literature. And as for music, it is considered an excellent means of creating a conversational atmosphere. African Hottentots would listen to a fine musical performance with more admiration and respect. When a prima donna emits a high note, opera glasses are used to discover whether her teeth are real or false, and for the same reason glasses are levelled at the tenor.

In operas like "La Traviata" it is the jewels worn by the leading artiste that arouses the interest of the boxes.

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Up-to-date New Yorkers are eagerly looking forward to the orgy of New Year's eve and the following morning, for this is the "big thing" of the whole year. Needless to say I am looking forward to this festival of Bacchanalian licence, and for a very good reason. I am curious to see how far New York has progressed on the down grade since I was last here. I am told that a few years have made a world of difference. At the fashionable restaurants seats have to be engaged in advance, in some instances several weeks in advance. We have, myself and three friends, secured a corner table where I can see all and hear much. Securing such a table would have been very difficult were it not that two of our number possess good sound British titles; but even this would not suffice if we were not prepared

to meet the expense with courageous smiles; for the bills on such occasions in New York are made to mount up in imitation of the skyscrapers.

Letters to an Unborn Child.—I.

MY DEAR CHILD,—I do not apologise for addressing you before your nativity. The first step that, in Bishop Blougram's phrase, we are masters not to take, you have taken; and if you cannot be induced to change your perverse mind, in due course you will arrive. Nor do I apologise for treating you as my equal, and appealing to your reason. Until you are born, you are at least as old as I, and should be much more wise. Your will is unconditioned by material limitations, your vision is not yet perplexed by the strabismus consequent on too strained an observation of isolated facts. It might be thought that you are therefore capable of a better choice than I. But your plunge into existence is so precipitate that I doubt your premeditation of it. You cannot, of course, give me your reasons, nor can I examine the facts which, to you, may give them validity. But my acquaintance with this world is rather more recent than your own, and if, as I believe, you have not well considered your action, you should be obliged to me for consulting with you before it is too late. If parental authority were potent before the natal day, I should command you to obey me. But as I cannot enforce my will by the customary means, imprecation and fustigation, I am compelled to use my reason in the hope that you will reconsider your decision.

Let us first settle the question of the responsibility for your existence. I repudiate it, as does your mother. We were, and are, too much in love with each other to desire a visible pledge of our love, as the sentimentalists will call you. The name of "love-child" has been much misused, but it never denoted an infant accurately. There are children of desire, of hate, despair, disillusion; but there never was a child of love. A sublime love is not progenitive. What need of a "visible pledge," a fastening, to secure two people who are the complement of each other? If that instinctive need, that certitude of sympathy, solace, and satisfaction, which alone is love, cannot bind two people together, the visible pledge can only gall their souls as the chain chafes the ankles of a slave. Whatever will created you, it was not ours; and we can only resent the tyranny of circumstance of which you will be the symbol.

But if circumstance be chance, I doubt its volition. Creation is an act of the will, and chance must be hypostatised into destiny before we can believe it capable of creation. And this is simply to attribute the existence of an Undesirable to the Unknown. (How the "hypostatised adjectives" do throng!) The limitations of the human mind force us to find a proximate cause for everything, and as we did not will your existence, you must accept responsibility for it. The coincidence of your coming with our first quarrel is significant. We had discussed "the fictile vase found at Albano" many times before, and never exchanged an angry word. We had argued about the probable distribution of brachycephalous invaders and dolichocephalous inhabitants of Britain in the late Neolithic period, and found no occasion for quarrel in the serious difference of opinion that was manifested. What triviality was the subject of our quarrel, I forget; but that you prompted its discussion, I cannot doubt. In a momentary assertion of individuality, the one flesh became twain: the twin souls shivered asunder, and you thrust yourself into the hiatus to keep us evermore apart. I cannot congratulate you on your entry into existence. It looks too much like an unwarrantable intrusion, as though you had taken a mean advantage of a momentary weakness; and if you persist in your wilful way, you will discover that you have chosen your parents badly.

You have come to us, but why? There are plenty of people who, like the queen bees, have pulpy brains and over-developed pudenda, to whom parturition is a habit, and perhaps a pleasure. They are prolific by nature, and training has made them skilful in nurture. They will tend you with care, and rejoice in your well-being. Lavish of admiration, they will hail you as a mathematician when you count your toes; they will talk of your musical talent when you try to howl symphonically, and whatever you do or do not do, they will regard you as a paragon of cleverness and wisdom. To them you will be an everlasting wonder and delight. You may learn not to despise them, for, after all, they are God's creatures; but if a well-nourished body, and a well-flattered vanity, will make your childhood easy, will give you joy in life and pride in yourself, you must be grateful to them. They relish tribulation, for they are adept in ministering to it. Even the cutting of your teeth will employ them profitably. And in their old age, they will gather their brood around them, call you their Benjamin, and commend you to the care of your brethren. To them, you should fly.

But we have neither taste, talent, nor time for the office. We are parents of children of the mind, and I regret to say that, so far, our children have been still-born. In despair of creating a living thing, we have emulated the example of Capel-Lofft, and turned our attention to introductions. As you may have forgotten Capel-Lofft, I quote you Byron's description of him. "Capel-Lofft, Esq., the Mæcenas of Shoemakers, and preface-writer-general to distressed versemen; a sort of gratis accoucheur to those who wish to be delivered of rhyme, but do not know how to bring forth." Such is our office. "We be minions of the" muse, or, more correctly, midwives of the mind; and how can we, who love ballads, be bothered with babies? How could we admire your little feet when we know words that are sesquipedalian? But I will not bother you with questions which you cannot answer. It must be obvious to you that here are no parents for you.

There is, too, the important question of physical constitution to be considered. We have in these days a number of men called scientists, who earn their living by inventing diseases that cannot be cured. One of these diseases is called degeneracy. It is almost an axiom of this science that only a degenerate man can be a poet. A ricketty diathesis conduces to rhyme, or rhyme produces a ricketty diathesis. I forget which is cause and which is effect; but there is some obscure connection, and whenever a child is seen with bandy legs, there we may safely predict the use of hyperbole in speech. The poets have adopted the hypothesis with limitations. They admit degeneracy, but deny that it is characteristic of themselves. A degenerate poet, they say with a show of justice, can only write criticisms and prefaces. The child of parents doubly damned with degeneracy as we are, could, I suppose, write only primers of prosody. Think of what it means! You will probably have all the symptoms of decadence, the most virulent form of this disease. Asymmetry of the head and face, muscular inco-ordination, mental incoherence, stammering, stumbling through life; and all to write primers of prosody! You will be fitter for a museum than for the muse.

I implore you not to be born! Apart from the impertinence of your intrusion, there is so much rashness in your decision that you are not fit to be trusted with the care of even so poor a body as we can provide. You would probably, at the first opportunity, throw it over Waterloo Bridge, or plug it with bullets; and that is a criminal offence. The cowardice of your entry will be equalled by the ignominy of your exit. We, who will have to bear the burden of your coming, who will have to endure the boredom of your existence, will have to suffer the shame of your inglorious departure. I cannot say, in the usual quotation, that you will bring our grey hairs in sorrow to the grave; for by that time, bald will be Balder, and beyond the gates of Hela. But since, like all undiscovered poets, we shall be prized by posterity, let us be prized for what we are, not for what you might have been. I will write again, if you need further dissuasion. Meanwhile I sign myself,

YOUR RELUCTANT FATHER.

Unedited Opinions.

VII. The Education of Public Opinion.

You care little, it appears, for public opinion.

Little certainly on many matters and in its present condition of culture. But on some matters now and on more matters later it may be the mark of folly to despise public opinion.

On what subjects now is public opinion already wise?

In matters relating to the preservation of the race, for example, public opinion is profoundly wise. How should it not be, since the race has by its means survived through millions of years, during which time incredible dangers have been overcome. On matters concerning mere survival, therefore, everybody is wiser than anybody; public opinion is wiser than private opinion. It is, however, in matters relating to the progress of the race, its improvement and particularly its final supersession that the race is naturally foolish and uninstructed. But let us not talk of such high matters. Saviours from humanity will always be crucified by humanity. The public opinion that we are now concerned with relates to government mainly.

You refer to the place of public opinion in democratic government, I presume.

I do. And I would have you note that while we are always talking of the need for changing and bettering two of the three parts of our governing triplice, nobody seems to think of changing in the sense of bettering the third. Cabinets come and go, are censured or praised. Parliaments come and go, and are likewise censured or praised. But public opinion, on which both in the end rest, remains the same, and nobody seems to think that it requires also to be changed and bettered. Yet the means are to hand, and, strangely enough, are in constant employment, though only in an apprentice fashion, which sometimes does more harm than good.

What means, for example?

Well, I conceive the most powerful instrument of popular education (by which I mean, of course, the education of public opinion) is the manners and conduct generally of public men. To take only recent examples. You know that the manners of Mr. Balfour in the House of Commons have really maintained the tone of that assembly much above the level to which it would without him have risen. The example he has set of fairmindedness, courtesy, intelligence and good humour has happily been followed very largely with infinite advantage to the dignity as well as the efficiency of the House of Commons. I consider Mr. Balfour quite the equal of a whole university of Parliamentary politics. He has been the finishing master for scores of politicians who entered Parliament with the manners (and therefore with the views) of priggish and impertinent debaters.

But the House of Commons is not public opinion.

No, and I am disposed to think that except for his indirect influence, Mr. Balfour's impress on public opinion has not been so good. In Parliament Mr. Balfour is studiously courteous and fair, even when he is most partisan. On the public platform he is disingenuous, sometimes dishonest, and nearly always merely partisan. This is a public misfortune. Mr. Asquith, on the other hand, has never in recent years made a partisan speech at all. I mean a speech which did not fairly entertain and fairly answer the best objections of his opponents.

You think Mr. Asquith a more admirable man than Mr. Balfour?

In this respect certainly, since none of his followers would, I think, speak publicly in his presence with the same insolence with which Mr. Balfour's lieutenants speak in his.

But in Mr. Asquith's absence?

There, I agree; and it is unfortunate. Neither Mr. Lloyd George nor Mr. Churchill appears yet to have realised how eminently more public-spirited their leader is than themselves, judged on style alone. . . . But I am merely illustrating my thesis that public opinion is educable. Mr. Lloyd George merely proves that public opinion is impressionable. So it is, both for good and evil. Impressing it for good is education; the contrary is corruption.

What other means have public men than the example of their own manners?

Plenty, I should say. Do you remember Gladstone's famous postcards that made an author popular in a day? That is a measure of the influence of a public man. And it was all the better for the postcard invariably referring to a living writer. Dozens of our public men are literate, and avow their taste in the books of the dead; but none of them recently, with the exception of Gladstone, has had the courage to name a contemporary author until he has no need of their praise. Yet their position really enables them if they choose to direct public reading; and not only public reading but public drama and art. There is a new duty for our public men.

I should shudder at the prospect, I fear.

By no means should you. If their taste is bad, it can be corrected. . . . But I do not think it would be bad. Anyhow, we literary people would have the more occasion for sticking to our trade of creation and criticism.

How so?

Why, I conceive that the greatest wrong that is now done literary artists is their exclusion from public discussion. The man in the street never hears of us. We have nobody to speak for us, and no visible public recognition of our services. Only in burlesque is contemporary art ever displayed in public.

Well. I see that you intend your public men to guide the taste of public opinion in the matter of reading as well as in that of manners. What next?

Then they must certainly endow newspapers and journals if they desire public opinion to be well informed.

But the number of papers is now almost endless.

True, but they are almost all bad. Necessarily so, since none of them (save one, Horatio), but depends upon advertisements for its life; and that, to my mind, is no more than writing for the delectation of your tradesmen. No literary artist would consent, except under pressure of starvation, to give currency to a collection of advertisements. Yet that is what our modern journalists do with pride.

Sandwichmen.

Exactly. And the worst of it is that the public is thereby positively misinstructed and taught ignorance. Facts, emphatically are not put before it; or, if they are, they are selected and distorted facts on which no judgment ought to be based.

What journals or newspapers deserve to be endowed?

We will not say deserve, we will say need. Let me ask you what education children would receive if they were catered for by tradespeople? Very well, such papers must be endowed (since they cannot live in any other way) that aim at elevating the public taste and at compelling the public to judge only after a survey of all the facts and all the best opinions; papers, in fact, that *argue* the matter under discussion, pro and con, and leave the public to decide.

A non-party paper in short.

Certainly that, for though such papers are indispensable they never pay, any more than blue-books pay.

Well. I gather that you would have public men set the fashion by example, by precept and by endowment; is there anything else?

They should, at least once in their lives, vigorously oppose public opinion, openly, earnestly, fearlessly and even perilously. That would do them good, but it would do public opinion even more good.

Why, in reason's name?

Let me tell you a story told me by a Cabinet Minister. Driving one day in Dublin, he asked his Jehu, an old Fenian, who was the best Lord-Lieutenant Ireland ever had. "Lord Aberdeen," said he. "And why?" asked the Minister. "*He treated us all like dirt!*" Do you know, public opinion likes sometimes to be treated as if it were dirt.

["*The Maids' Comedy*" *will be continued next week.*]

* * *

The Reverend Dolittle.

By Baron G. von Taube.

My friend Dolittle was a very peculiar character, and his entering the ministry puzzled me for a long time. He was a well-to-do man of considerable landed property, which had been in his family for several generations. Judging from his robust physique, well trained muscles and gay humour, he was the last man to find things terrestrial all askew and to yearn only for the heavenly.

Dolittle interested me the more as he represented a magnificent subject on which to study the adaptive faculty of the old Yankee breed. Undeniably at different times there had been a number of Yankee preachers who had filled their places in an honest way—with real benefit to society, who had, so to say, facilitated the work of the police and personified the regular tradition of conservative power in the community; people who held their office in a respectable, dignified, correct and generally approved manner—and who were not prevented by their Sunday duties from attending to their family and personal interests during the week.

But I had never before met with a minister like Dolittle. In spite of all tradition to the contrary, he remained perfectly indifferent to the credit and debtor accounts so important to one's existence. Yet he seemed to pursue his avocation with all the enthusiasm possible.

Therefore, on the occasion of the minister's weekly call I devoted special attention to him.

We were wont to spend a couple of hours rowing on the East River; or, in bad weather, to indulge in a quiet chat in front of my fire, our briars filled with good Virginia.

This was the case to-day. It rained in torrents and a strong north-wester was blowing. My reverend friend divested himself of his rubber coat and, seated in his favourite arm-chair, proceeded pedantically to rake the embers together.

"Well, Doctor," I began, pushing my little smoking table towards him. "This is a new brand of tobacco. I find it very good. An American, Virginian article, which, after being sent to England and put up there, comes back here to be sold for double the money. It has the London trade mark and is known as English bird's-eye."

"It is not the trade mark, nor the putting up alone that does it, Professor," answered Dolittle; "the fellows over there know how to handle a rough article—tobacco or men—as we do not."

"Why, Doctor, what is the matter with your liver to-day? Wherefore this pessimistic strain?"

"You can afford to take better care of your liver than I, Professor. Here you are, comfortably seated in your den, enjoying the intellectual inheritance of our past. But, if you were in my place, sir, brought face to face with the other side of the picture, our various shortcomings and often even our wickedness, I am sure, Professor, even your disposition would suffer. It is nothing but genuine misery, I tell you."

"Well, Doctor, pardon my indiscretion, but how did you happen to undertake your work in the vineyard of our Lord?"

"Yes, yes, I know you can spare me the balance. I have had the same question addressed to me many a time before by men of your calibre. Here is where the trouble lies with you professional gentlemen. You are fully equipped to supply one at a moment's notice with the most correct and minute details, say, about the dress, the colloquial or official mode of speech, even the nature of verses in fashion at the time of the epoch of Nero or the great Theodosius. It is no difficulty to you to give us the ethical or æsthetical shadings prevailing among the historical men of any period. But the everlasting cement which unites the human biped into one large human aggregate you ignore altogether. Still, Professor, I assure you it is worth study."

"Do not, Doctor, I beg of you, proceed with such a general onslaught. Let us 'stick to facts,' sir, and no be wafted by mere fancies. It is exactly the human which is supposed to be the special pasture grounds o our intellectual herd, the very subject of their endles speculations. It is thrashed into us in our study of th *humanities*, sir. Though in this, I grant you, we ar certainly very apt to take more interest in the abstrac than in the practical application of it."

"That is exactly what I meant, Professor. Th abstract form is so attractive to you, it so completel absorbs your interest, that the very object of study, th true purpose of your mental exertions, is put aside almost left out of consideration. This kind of work sir, learned and classical as it may appear, does no satisfy me. It makes me actually impatient; probabl on account of some practical strain in my blood fror my ancestors—who, with hoe, axe and fishing tackle built up our homestead on the coasts of Maine. Lif is too realistic a thing, Professor, to begin one's pilgrimage without being clear with one's self to what specia shrine of worship we intend to wander. How to gras the purpose of life so as to obtain a clear notion of ou aim in life and at once busy ourselves with proper practical and generally useful means of life—there lie th problem, Professor, and the method to be pursued."

"That is plain, Doctor. An earnest study of th subject, then mastery of the direction selected. Onl after this a trial, in practically applying the previousl learned general principles. Something like this yo have to plod through when doing preparatory work i your theological seminary?"

"Not exactly," answered Dolittle. "I followed u my college studies only because I needed them to obtain my official calfskin. So much is certain, I neve could have passed my finals without the horrid proces of cramming for them. The thing was but a secondar consideration for me, the principal thing which drove m to the ministry being the thought that, when engage in my professional work, I should be nearer my rea purpose, namely, my long dreamt of search for th human soul. To this I longed to sacrifice my existence."

Astounded, I looked at my friend. There he sat leaning back in his arm-chair, eyes half closed, staring dreamily in front of him, apparently at a geologica map affixed to the wall above the mantelpiece.

"You mean the study of the chief predicates of that atom belonging to the creative force, which, enclosed within the human shell, brings forth an individual consciousness of existence within the living human being. Is that it, Doctor? Well, it is exactly that shell which calls for honest study and investigation. Because, as the spark of creative power remains itself, it is the shell and its development which are at the bottom of the very marked differences amongst us mortals."

"Very possibly, Professor; but, after all, what does it amount to, except rhetoric? Our old habit of substituting for X, the unknown, another Y, equally unknown. Why, what is our exact knowledge, and the whole scientific fabric based on? Is it not the a priori assumption of the two chief factors, very familiar to us, as to their properties, but utterly unknown as to their rational substance? Force and matter sound great and impressive, but they still remain a mystery to man."

"Yes, the inability of the being, limited to time and space, fully to grasp the limitless and the eternal. But, my dear Doctor, the more the necessity to avoid the frequent separation (confusing and unwarranted) of these unknown sources of knowledge into two entirely different notions, the more the necessity to hold fast to the Spencerian classification of the *knowable* and the *unknowable* in our research work."

"I do not say no, Professor, it would certainly be a healthier and safer direction—otherwise mankind is not only exposed to a great waste of mental effort, but we could not expect good solid work from individuals who through unnatural processes have killed within them the very vestige of a healthy intellect, and destroyed also the faculty of sound reasoning. However, these issues are but secondary to me, Professor.

"They represent the improvement of the picture by a more successful varnishing process, not the true sub-

ject of the picture of our lives. Because, Professor, really to 'live' means the advantageous development and use of all the faculties and possibilities with which providence has gifted us. It means their employment for the greatest good of yourself and others as well; the fulfilment of our duty towards the growing generation, our offspring, so that they may be enabled to live a higher, broader life than our own. And, without an honest attempt from us to fulfil these duties, we are unable, sir, to get a true picture of life. Our sketches are bound to be a failure, which no varnishing can change into the genuine article."

"I did not suspect you, Doctor, of such a deep interest in pictures even if they were kodaks of our real existence. So much I can tell you. The study of the chief forces operating within the human aggregate seems to me more promising than your gallery of kodaks of detached cases. At least, we should have then the chief factors of human dynamics, social dynamics, something tangible and correlated."

"Yes, yes, Professor, that melody also is familiar to me. The famous Aristocracy of Brains, and then old Rabelais flock of sheep; 'les moutons de Panurge,' which is to be properly guided and attended to by you students of sociology; the historical epoch studied and understood by examining the peculiarities of a small minority supposed to represent its time—as against the other theory, the study of the psychology of the masses and the historical working out of that. This is an old controversy."

"All right, Doctor, but what necessity is there to split the issue into two opposite notions? Why should the man of the minority—whom we consider typical of his time and group—not be as well taken as the expounder of all that was ripe within the masses in his time. Let both therefore figure equally, as the landmark of cultural direction during his epoch."

"I have no objection, Professor. On the contrary, it is exactly my own idea. However, if so, the understanding—and therefore the study of the undercurrents of feeling and notions within the bulk of the population —become much more important. A great deal more so than that of your exponents who, according to Bagehot, use the most extraordinary means to defend the most ordinary and popular demands of their time. Is that not so?"

"Well, yes, I suppose this is a sound basis for statesmanship, though in the realms of pure abstract speculation, every step calls for thorough and special knowledge of the inductive material used. However, Doctor, so long as you seem to be not too hopeful of the minority of the intellectuals and, as a born Yankee, will probably be the last man to side with our modern 'credo quia est absurdum' vice, which estimates the correctness of a notion by simply counting noses, then, Doctor, it is a riddle to discover your actual leaning, or form any idea about the Occult Power which will help us with the problem of the general weal."

"That is exactly it, Professor. Absolutely the position that faced me when I started on my errand after the Human in Man—otherwise his soul. I perceived at once the necessity for an elimination process. Thus, the intellectual minority living separate from the masses in a special world of their own creation, did not suit me. Further, as a body of men under the strain of the merely abstract they had become so many mechanical automata grinding out their formulæ and syllogisms. And, again, they did not suit me, because the highest developed intellect offered me no guarantee whatsoever of the presence of lofty feelings and higher personal character in man. Still less was I ready to follow the apostle of the modern political reforms, who appeared to me yet more dangerous when, in the name of the higher human abstracts, they started to hammer us all into a uniform, imbecilised and characterless mass, depriving us of the very elementary sources of our human progress—the personal initiative and individual freedom of thought and opinion. Do you know, Professor, it was just the analytical study of these potential minds that suggested the idea to me, that we do not act on the square to the traditional enemy of our race—the Unholy one—when we accuse him of spreading all vices among men as the best means to destroy human kind. Such a measure would be absolutely inefficient—almost foolish. I should say it would at the most reach but a comparatively small number of creatures already started on the evolutionary down grade—the weak and the degenerate, who, by the natural process of elimination, would have ceased to exist after a few more generations, anyhow. The really sound elements remain out of reach, or shake off the pestilential atmosphere. How widely different matters would stand if the Evil One should suddenly start to preach the loftiest Emotionalism—which everybody could grasp enthusiastically. What an easy work he would have before him if by a slight over-reach of enthusiastic imagination, just by ever so little overstepping reasonable limits in his diction he could reduce the whole structure ad absurdum, destroying very efficiently indeed the foundation of our existence as a human aggregate. Truly, says the devil to himself, the living force of the group is the solidarity of its members, their individual consciousness of a common end and aim. As the traditional enemy of the group, bound on its destruction, I shall not waste my time in petty acts, seducing this one, spoiling that one's stomach by too much Strassburg liver patties, truffles and champagne, or robbing another one of the little sense left in his poor cranium by forcing him to absorb alcohol until he sees snakes in front of him. No, I put myself in the proper attitude and preach *the higher emotional* to crowds not prepared to grasp it—and therefore bound to give a dangerous construction to it. In my exalted inspiration I'll take care to go one point higher than the original text."

"Well, Doctor, that is exactly the opinion of the minority you think so little of. However, I beg you to proceed."

"As long, Professor, as the solidarity of the human kind is our aim, and pure reason—otherwise our intellectual faculties—contributes but a very small modicum to it—while emotionalism is found rather to destroy than enhance the adhering capacities of the natural cement—which holds the human groups together; then, indeed, is there but one means at my disposition, namely, the affinity of the human soul. Therefore my search in quest of it. You see, Professor, according to my idea a minute Divine spark is to be found in every one of us—even in the most ignorant and worst equipped for life. Let us say—to use your minority way of expressing it—there is within every human creature which remains human an embryo of that natural instinct for group preservation, common to all gregarious animals, prompting the sacrifice of the individual, for the safety of his group. This, then, would constitute my initial working material. When properly awakened, and co-ordinated with the individual's mental faculties, we get a conscious whole, otherwise his Soul within our man-creature. Such a Soul, Professor, does not need emotional hysteresis or deep learning in order normally to develop its instinctive herd feeling to a healthy, benevolent, really human activity; thereby producing the thing aimed at before everything else—the bonds of mankind."

"Yes, Doctor, a beautiful task, indeed. Most beneficial for human society, so long as the proper relation between emotion and reason is properly attended to—at any rate the theory is unassailable; but, Doctor, may I ask you how does it work in practice? With a record of over ten years of professional activity you have certainly formed some definite ideas in that all important direction."

"It may appear somewhat strange to you, Professor, but I have come to the conclusion that our professional activity, if it is to be of any real service, has to begin with a piece of work—with ourselves for the object. As ministers who preach, we need, before all else, to get rid of our cultural paint and whitewash. We have to destroy in ourselves every vestige of our intellectual overbearing before we can claim honestly to understand

the simple language of the human soul, or be able to use it ourselves. Victor Hugo's Bishop Bienaimé is not fiction but a reality. So much my varied experience has taught me."

Our pipes were out and the Reverend Dolittle rose.

Books and Persons.

(AN OCCASIONAL CAUSERIE.)

By Jacob Tonson.

AN indulgent perusal of Mr. Ernest Dudley Lampen's "Château d'Oex : Life and Sport in an Alpine Valley" (Methuen, 6s.), has made me reflect, once more, upon the opportunities offered to a realistic and ironic novelist by the life of the leisured English on the Continent, and especially in Switzerland. At this moment, what the "Daily Mail" calls the "rush" to Switzerland is just beginning. In a month every hotel in Switzerland will teem with English people who take Mr. F. E. Smith seriously and who would be genuinely ashamed to be caught reading a Radical newspaper. Now there are about a thousand "grand hotels" in Switzerland, and they all live on British Toryism. The vast and grandiose phenomenon is one of the most singular that could ever impose itself on the imagination of a novelist. Some day, I doubt not, the novel demanded by the phenomenon will be written, and then nearly every reviewer in London will call it cynical, and the persons whom it will hold up to the disdain of the intelligent will laugh brightly and regard it as an excellent joke. I may say here that no intelligent Englishman can quite understand the forces which are opposed to English progress until he has made a prolonged sojourn in a Swiss grand hotel.

* * *

Mr. Lampen's book can only interest those who have stayed in his Alpine valley, or who are staying there, or who hope to stay there one day. The amiable work is amateurishly written, for Mr. Lampen has not learned to use the English tongue. He writes : "The task has been rendered harder by the few books that have ever been published on the subject," which is not in the least what he means. He means, "by the fewness of the books," etc. The book is full of this kind of writing. It is also full of the true travelling-English spirit. "The foreign element," he writes, "though weaker here than in other great skating centres, is not entirely absent." You might suppose that "foreign" meant non-Swiss. Not a bit. It means non-English. The fact that this attitude of mind is utterly unconscious renders it all the more grave. Mr. Lampen sets out to describe "the history and development of this quiet Swiss highland valley." The apogee of the development is reached when a dozen hotels and pensions have been established, together with a luge track, an ice rink, and an English church. Modern Gothic, of course ! And of course the fane is too small, "far too small for the English population, and is to be enlarged to meet the rapidly increasing numbers of visitors that twice in the year flock to this mountain resort." Impressive thought ! Astounding race ! Yet Mr. Lampen is not so bad as I am painting him. His researches do not amount to much, but he obviously loves his Alpine valley, and his is not the temperament that regards Switzerland as a cross between a switchback and a frozen pond. He has inquired a little into the habits of the people, and I do not think that he calls them "the natives." He loves the forests, and the fascinating activities of the wood-cutters therein. And his honest, calm, ingenious, banal, clumsily-expressed enthusiasm obtains your sympathy in the end, though his habit of quoting inferior verse is exasperating. There are some very good photographs in the book. The coloured illustrations by Miss Alice Prangley carry insipidity to the extreme.

* * *

Another mountainous book—but ten thousand times more difficult to explain than Mr. Lampen's—is "Joy of Tyrol : a human revelation, edited by J. M. Blake, with 111 illustrations drawn by the lady. Stanley Paul and Co." (I copy the title page, which is a curiosity.) This is certainly one of the silliest productions that I have encountered for years. It would be interesting to know exactly how it came to be published. It may have been issued for a wager. Its silliness is not even diverting. Some books are silly in a way that produces gaiety among the judicious. I once stole from a fellow-novelist a transcendently silly work of sentimental fiction, written by a doctor, from which the novelist used to read aloud extracts to his friends, with the happiest results. I in my turn used to read extracts from it to my friends, and everybody agreed that as a provoker of mirth it was unsurpassable. The thing never failed, he never tired of it. Then some unprincipled rascal stole it from me, and I have never seen it since. "Joy of Tyrol" is not silly in this fashion. It is continuously and desolatingly facetious. I give a fair sample of its quality : "Oh, Tertium quid.—This silhouette, which Ronnell calls a silly 'at. As parsons are referred to as sexless—'my lord, ladies and gentlemen, *and* clergy'—so was this apparition. It passed our window three times. We debated it. I bet Lois an ice-cream at Bozen if it was male, Ronnell promised his sister a nice scream of unlimited profanity if it proved female." Etcetera to 278 pages. I mention Mr. J. M. Blake's book because its fatuity is really remarkable. In one respect at any rate, it is, for me, the book of the year.

* * *

In last week's article (which, owing to the holidays, was written some time before it appeared) I characterised as absurd the presumption that the police would take action with a view to suppressing a good novel written by a novelist of European renown, and published in London by a responsible firm. I was too hasty. I had scarcely despatched the article when I learnt that the London police were committing eccentricities of which I had deemed them incapable. The matter is either serious or farcical. I cannot yet decide which. But in any case I should like to know what person or persons are secretly at the back of the present outrageous campaign against even the modified freedom which is accorded to art and science in this country. The campaign is not spontaneous. It is contrary to the trend of intelligent opinion. Hidden powerful influences are apparently at work. To conjecture what these influences are would be interesting, but it might be hazardous to print the conjectures. Once past Temple Bar, and you are in Warsaw, and it is also impossible to walk out of Regent Street without tumbling into Warsaw.

REVIEWS.

By S. Verdad.

The Argentine Republic. By A. Stuart Pennington. (Stanley Paul and Co. 10s. 6d. net.)

When a book about a foreign country is well written, accurate in its facts and conclusions, and generally interesting, I am only too eager to welcome it. I have frequently laid stress upon the fact that foreign politics consist of more than merely diplomatic negotiations, and that Englishmen as a whole cannot understand them until they know something of foreign peoples. Only a few of us, however, can ever hope to live for a long time in a foreign country, and only a small proportion of the entire population of these islands can ever hope even to take a trip through some adjacent country like France or Germany. We are, then, dependent upon books for our information, and it is to the general advantage that such books should be published frequently in order that our information may be kept up to date, and that they should be well written, well printed, and well illustrated. Hence, in spite of any small defects which they may contain, I am ready to welcome these volumes.

I have a vivid recollection of the last book I reviewed on Argentina several weeks ago, and the correspondence to which that review gave rise. Nevertheless,

much of what I said regarding the potentialities for culture among the South Americans in general will be found confirmed in this work of Mr. Pennington's. The author admits that his book aims at giving information which cannot be readily obtained in any other form, and that "the information contained in the following pages is scattered through numbers of volumes." His own original comments, however, frequently show a sound insight into the characteristics of the Argentinos. Of more than average interest is chapter II, dealing with the origin of the inhabitants of the Argentina, and contrasting them with the modern Spaniards. The history of the Republic itself is well and carefully done, and the chapters on the flora, forests, geology, and mineralogy are sufficient to show that Mr. Pennington has taken pains to deal with his subject thoroughly. Chapter XII, dealing with literature and journalism, will make it clear that Argentine culture, although, of course, we cannot as yet compare it with the cultural influence of Spain, exhibits unusual potentialities, as I have already remarked—the quotations given in this book from Lopez y Planes, Fray Cayetano Rodriguez, Juan Cruz Varella, Gutierrez, and several others are sufficient in themselves to prove this.

As for Argentine politics, they consist of the usual quarrels between the Outs and the Ins, and in most cases it takes a revolution to get the Ins out. Corruption is rampant, and the country might be much better developed. But these trifles, on which a Teuton or an Anglo-Saxon might be inclined to lay some stress, do not disturb the easy-going nature of the Latin. There is one point about Argentina which should be emphasised. I have often listened to Argentine school children going through De Vedia's catechism, and the importance ascribed in it to Argentina is sufficiently awesome. The Government has for years laid itself out to imbue the minds of everyone, more particularly of the young, with respect for Argentina, and the result is seen in such questions and answers as:

Can you enumerate the chief duties of every good Argentino?—Yes, sir: (1) To love his country; (2) To love and respect his parents, etc.

What can you say of the Argentine Constitution?—We may truly say that it is the wisest, the most liberal, and the most humanitarian of all that exist or have ever existed in the world. . . . I am proud of my descent, my race, and my country.

And so on.

The cause of this national self-consciousness, which is met with in an equal degree in the other States of South America as well as in the United States, is doubtless due to the fact that these new countries still regard themselves as interlopers in the world, or, as they have no past which they can use as a foundation, they think themselves so regarded by the older nations. They shout to keep their spirits up, to make themselves heard, to let Europe know that South America still exists. The self-consciousness of the "Daily Mail" may be traced to the same psychological cause. Compare, just for curiosity, what the "New York World" says about itself in its annual almanac. When Mr. Pennington is preparing a second edition of his work he might think it worth while to refer to this matter, and also to the catechism I have mentioned.

One reads with some interest, by the way, the statement in the chapter dealing with life in Argentina that "the Y.M.C.A. welcomes members, and is not aggressively Christian." Some day someone will write a book pointing out the difference between Y.M.C.A.'s in England and Y.M.C.A.'s in America. For the rest, anyone who wants to know the essential facts about Argentina may profitably turn to this book.

Persia and Its People. By Ella C. Sykes. (Methuen. 10s. 6d. net.)

Miss Sykes has shown no little courage in facing the hardships—for there are still hardships—of a journey through Persia. The country, even in its decline, is interesting; and the author has shown herself by no means deficient in observing the characteristics of the people, and the little incidents and events, so interesting to the foreigner, of their daily life. Miss Sykes's first chapter, giving a description of the country, will enable the reader to understand why certain European Powers, and Russia and Germany in particular, are taking so much interest in it. The lack of communications, as she points out, has prevented the resources of the country from being properly exploited. The mineral wealth is practically untouched, and the well-known turquoise mines could be far more developed than they are. The Persian, however, is justifiably suspicious of the European ideal of never-ending labour for the benefit of others, and though he is disinclined to exploit the resources of his own country for himself, he is equally disinclined to let Europeans do so for him.

The Persians have often been referred to as the Frenchmen of the East, but the resemblance is to a great extent superficial. Modern Persia partakes to some extent of the cultured and cynical degeneracy of modern France, but the sound agricultural elements of France, and the logical instinct for organisation which may be observed to so great an extent in most Frenchmen, apart from the politicians, cannot be paralleled in the modern Persian. Miss Sykes, indeed, reminds us that Persia has had to suffer invasion again and again, and that the comparatively pure Persians of the Shiraz district are very unlike the inhabitants of the north-western portion of the country, who have suffered from Turkish influence, or those of the north-eastern districts, where the Mongols have left their traces. Miss Sykes's sex has enabled her to study the Persian women to a much greater extent than the strict social etiquette of the country would permit to any European male, and the result is seen in a very pleasant chapter entitled, "The Persian Woman." Other sections of this interesting book deal with the various religions of the country, including the sect of Babis, who have recently come into some prominence in Europe; and also with sports, amusements, arts and superstitions. The chapter on the history of Persia, more especially the recent history of the country, is necessarily inadequate, and an account of the intrigues entered upon by various Tsars of Russia, first to secure a footing in Northern Persia, and secondly to use the Shahs as instruments for undermining the power of Great Britain in Baluchistan and the North-West Indian border, has yet to be written. Where a work on the Persian people is required, however, Miss Sykes's book may be recommended.

The Japanese Empire. By Joseph d'Autremer. (Unwin. 10s. 6d. net.)

This book has been anonymously but on the whole well translated from the French. The author, M. Joseph d'Autremer, is a lecturer at the School of Oriental Languages in Paris, and as a result of a visit to Japan he has written a book which describes the country itself, everything inside it, everything upon it, and even the atmosphere by which it is surrounded. As in the case of Miss Sykes's "Persia," he has devoted more attention to the country itself and the daily life of the people than to its recent political history; but, after all, the international history of Japan is so recent as to be known to almost everyone, apart, of course, from all the negotiations conducted behind the scenes. One point which will strike the reader of this book is that the recent expansion of Japan has resulted, as all ill-managed Imperialism is bound to do, in a great increase in the cost of living for those who have remained at home.

Thirty years ago the life was normal, that is to say, inexpensive, and a Japanese family could easily live upon 15 yen (about 30s.) a month. Those were good times, but there was no "glory." To-day there is glory, but it costs dear, and life has become so costly that the family which formerly expended 15 yen must now expend 50. It follows that there is frightful poverty to-day in Japan, though it is true that no one complains about it, and that up to now it has been borne without a murmur. . . . Everything is taxed to the utmost, and the land yields all that it can yield, because it is poor and its capabilities are very limited. If the cost of living has thus increased for the native, it is naturally even worse for the European. (Pages 80-81.)

I am sorry that this is not a particularly good example of the translator's style, but I quote it as showing in the first place the consequences of the recent expansion

of Japan, and in the second place as showing that the patriotico-religious nature of the Japanese has not yet led him to grumble at the comparatively poor results which have followed from his attempts at colonising. Respect for their Emperor and their native land—the worship of the two is really combined—is still very strong in the people, but even the peaceful nature of the Buddhist will revolt if taxes reach a much higher level, which they are almost certain to do. While M. d'Autremer deals with Japanese administration, law, the army and navy, agriculture, fishing, arts and crafts, etc., his views and conclusions are, on the whole, favourable to the Japanese, although there is no particular reason, it seems to me, why a traveller to another country should necessarily be infected by the lues Boswelliana. We should rather have expected from a Frenchman a psychological sketch to show us why the Japanese are so greatly disliked by all who have lived among them for some time or have even come in contact with them. Their imitativeness is by now almost proverbial, but they seldom initiate; and since their victory over China and their Pyrrhic victory over Russia their conceit has been almost insufferable. Still, one must know something about these people nowadays, and this book is, on the whole, the best written and most up-to-date that I have yet met with.

The Empire Series. (George Allen and Sons. 6s. per volume, net.) **Canada.** By the Duke of Argyll. **Modern India.** By Sir J. D. Rees.

These works call for somewhat less comment; but they should on no account be neglected. As contributions to the study of Federalism rather than as an outline of the means whereby this somewhat shadowy policy may be brought about, they are undoubtedly useful, apart from the information they give concerning Canada and India. Sir John Rees has written on the subject of our great Asiatic possession before, and his work in this direction, as the result of his long experience in the East, is in pleasant contrast to the narratives of voyagers who have spent only a few weeks in the country. He gives us a concise description of the population, languages, and religions of India, as well as of its administration under British rule, and of the existing political conditions. The Curzon-Kitchener affair is passed over tactfully, and of course an explanation of the partition of Bengal is now hardly necessary. Those of us who have followed recent events in India all know now that it was not only justifiable but absolutely necessary; and it is strange that a movement of protest which was fostered chiefly by the landowning classes there should have been supported in England by those politicians and newspapers which are usually looked upon as opponents of landlordism in every form. This incident merely shows how easy it is to indulge in leg-pulling from a distance of several thousand miles. When I add that this book on India includes chapters on education, on "wild life," and economics, it will be seen that it is an excellent introductory work on India, and more than this it scarcely pretends to be.

The Duke of Argyle's book on Canada may also be approved, although the reader would be well advised to discount its rather over-imperialistic tone, more especially in the light of recent events. The information set forth regarding the merely materialistic side of Canada, however, its future commercial progress, and the place it should occupy in the Empire, is well put, though, as is usually the case in books on Canada written by Englishmen, rather too little emphasis is laid upon the influence, cultural and otherwise, of the French-Canadian element of the population. Indeed, the noble author lays too little stress, it seems to me, upon the French-Canadian influence in politics; and where education and culture are concerned, he does not tell us that settlers who have recently invaded Canada in such numbers are unfortunately not of a type likely to raise the present standards. Doubtless, however, the Duke is quite within his rights in not saying this bluntly in a work of this nature. This Empire Series promises very well indeed, and I hope to see these initial volumes followed by others.

By J. M. Kennedy.

The Religion of Israel. By Alfred Loisy. (Unwin. 5s. net.)

In a recent letter to THE NEW AGE Mr. R. B. Kerr told us to beware of Rome, and for those who are inclined to neglect the influence of faith on the minds of men the warning is not without its value. This book by the Abbé Loisy is an indication in its own way that the power of science counts for little against the power of the Church. Although Mr. Kerr, and not so long ago Mrs. Hypatia Bradlaugh Bonner also, ridiculed specific teachings of the Church, and although these doctrines may not now be held by any reasonable being, the fact remains that there is something other than reason that exercises a still greater influence upon the vast majority of the human race. Here in Rome is a powerful organisation, yet without an army, without territory, without the power to wield a tithe of the political influence it once yielded, and nevertheless exercising authority over a huge area of the civilised world. The Vatican can afford to regard the persecution of the monks in Portugal or the secularisation of the schools in France as trifles. In one respect, as the Papal authorities well know, a large proportion of the Christian world has not changed throughout the centuries. A question of faith or dogma arises, and nearly all classes of people, from simple-minded peasants in Andalusia to men of wealth and influence in Quito, from statesmen in Brussels to crossing-sweepers in Melbourne, at once turn for a decision to the Vatican, and accept it when it is given.

When the authority of the higher over the lower has so far disappeared throughout the world that the rulers of nations find it increasingly difficult, even with the help of powerful armies, to keep their subjects in check, and when, by the inversion of political systems, the lower types of men have gradually come to assume authority over the higher, the autocratic procedure of the Vatican will naturally claim the respect of anyone who still professes a belief in hierarchies. At once aristocratic and democratic—aristocratic because the best, and not the worst, rule; democratic because an insignificant priest may rise to a high position if his merits warrant his advancement—the Vatican is the only administrative power which has been able to keep its subjects in order. The recent outbursts in France, Spain, and Portugal which would lead us to think the contrary, prove on examination to have nothing to do with the ideas that the Vatican represents. The Portuguese object to the Jesuits; the Spaniards object not so much to the priests as to the religious Orders, and this on economic grounds; while France is as Catholic as ever. In all matters affecting the serious issues of life the authority of Rome is still supreme.

It is almost impossible to avoid these considerations when reading this work by the Abbé Loisy. Since the Abbé left the Church and took up his appointment to the Chair of Religious History at the Collège de France, he himself, with the Modernist movement which he and a few others represent, cannot be said to have gained ground. This very book may perhaps tell us why. The scholarship of the writer, linguistic, theological, historical, and otherwise, is undisputed. His literary style is well-known, and the translator has happily reproduced both style and scholarship in English. The Abbé's analysis of the Jewish religion, and his skilful attempts to show us how it arose and to what extent it was influenced by the religions that had preceded it, are admirable, and no one who is familiar with recent investigations of this nature will venture to dispute the essential conclusions put forward.

Nevertheless there is something lacking. For the student, the mere student, who is desirous of knowing how the religion of Israel came about and how the notion of a Messiah was developed; in short, to anyone who wishes for a résumé of Judaism and its predecessors written by a clever and learned scholar, this book by M. Loisy will be invaluable. But the psychologist will not be satisfied by the references of the translator, Mr. Arthur Galton, to a "discredited theology" and the "brute force of an oppressive and obscurantist clergy." He will want a better explanation

of the development of that spirit of implicit obedience which enabled the intellectuals, as represented by the Church, to conquer the forces of the average world and the worldly, which enabled St. Ambrose to humiliate Theodosius in the fourth century, which enabled Gregory VII to humiliate Henry IV of Germany in the eleventh, and to drive him to Canossa, and so on down the long list until even Bismarck, in 1878 and 1885, was fain to make his peace with the Holy See. We still await a book which shall adequately explain the period of religious history represented by the life of Christ: the philosophical ideas underlying late Judaism and early Christianity has yet to be explained. ,

And what an explanation it would be! The Essenes and the Ebionites are but two sects in this great religious drama; there is the influence of the Bhagavad-Gita, which was undoubtedly known in Palestine, of the later Greek philosophers, who knew not, and knew not that they knew not; of the Egyptians, who knew and knew that they knew; and of those races which afterwards gave birth to Mohammed, who knew and knew not that they knew. Let no one imagine that the Vatican and its unbending autocracy are based solely on the New Testament; let no one imagine that Modernism is anything more than a fly assaulting the hide of an elephant.

* * *

By P. E. Richards.

The Christ Myth. By Dr. Arthur Drews; translated by C. Delisle Burns, M.A. (T. Fisher Unwin. 7s. 6d. net.)

The tremendous part which Christ the son of God has played in history, almost entirely to the exclusion of Jesus the son of man, is the real subject of this remarkable treatise, which C. Delisle Burns, M.A., has just translated from the German of Dr. Arthur Drews, a professor of philosophy in Karlsruhe. The book has produced a storm of controversy in Germany with the questions it asks and answers in all seriousness:—Was Jesus of Nazareth a man, or was he a dogma and fiction created by "the religious and practical social needs of the growing and struggling Christian Church" in its grapple with Gnosticism? Did Christianity take its rise from a living historical personality, or from the ideal imagination of a cult, the ideal of the Messiah or Christ? From the title of the treatise can be gathered its conclusion—that such a person as Jesus never lived: and with whatever frame of mind one tends at a first view to approach this conclusion, or the mere proposition of the problem to which it is suggested as the solution, a reading of the book will establish respect for its author, and pour, as we believe, some fresh light upon Christianity, both in its origin and essence. We repeat that the book is worth reading, that it is a fruitful book, even for those who remain opposed to its final contention. Right or wrong in his ultimate verdict, Dr. Drews has much to say about Christianity of value to all minds unaffected by the jealousy of dogmatism, and unaffronted by an excursion taken by a professor of philosophy upon ground usually regarded as sacred to theological specialists.

Put into a nutshell, the argument of the book is to the effect that every theological idea characteristic of Christianity existed in the world in the minds of particular sects of men prior to the birth of Jesus, and owes its prevalence to-day to the powerful influence not of the human Jesus, but of the imaginative conception of the Christ, which has always been more interesting to mankind than the mere portrait of the good man which is imperfectly and unconvincingly discoverable in the Gospels. For the ultimate origin of Christianity, the author, with the aid of recent scholarship, takes us as far back as the Stone Age.

The opening chapters provide us with some account of the idea of the Messiah, and the influence of Parseeism and Hellenism upon that idea. Then follows a discussion of the meaning of the names Nazarene and Jesus, and the conclusion that "many signs speak in favour of the fact that Joshua or Jesus was the name under which the expected Messiah was honoured in certain Jewish sects" is adopted as the foundation of the rest of the logical structure. Thereafter we are shown that all the Messianic ideas with which the Gospels or the orthodox teachings of the churches familiarise us—including the ideas of the propitiatory death and the resurrection—were spread among the Jewish people and throughout Western Asia, long before the date assigned to the birth of Jesus. Indeed, Jesus, if he was born by miracle, and was put to death, and rose again, but fulfilled a programme already long mapped out for him. And we are shown further how the star in the East, the Magi, the child in the stable, the virgin birth, the flight into Egypt, the names of Mary and Joseph, Joseph's occupation as a carpenter, the baptism, the saying of John the Baptist, "He must must increase but I must decrease," the transfiguration, the Last Supper, the number of the twelve apostles, the symbols of "the rock," "the vine," "the good shepherd," the lamb," "the cross," etc., all have their indisputable counterparts, and, as Dr. Drews would persuade us, their origin, in one or another form of sun or fire worship.

Gathering up the argument at this point, the writer observes that "the faith in a Jesus had been for a long time in existence among innumerable Mandaic sects in Asia Minor, which differed in many ways from each other, before this faith obtained a definite shape in the religion of Jesus, and its adherents became conscious of their religious peculiarities and their divergence from the official Jewish religion. The first evidence of such a consciousness, and also the first brilliant outline of a new religion developed with Jesus as its central idea, lies in the epistles of the . . . pilgrim-apostle Paul."

The second part of the treatise thus introduced is devoted to an examination and exposition of the account presented of Jesus, or more properly speaking, of the Christ, in the Pauline Epistles and the Gospels; and the author confesses his inability to discover any life-like portrait of a man of flesh and blood in either of these sources. The reader must be referred to our author himself for the critical remarks upon texts and the many complementary considerations with which this conclusion is supported. Dr. Drews reasons very powerfully that it would have been impossible for Paul to conceive his glowing imagination of the Christ if he had been fastened down to homely details of the life of the man Jesus, given to him by the brother and the friends of Jesus; and both in Gospels and Epistles such homely details are wanting. The author argues also, with equal force, that the rapid spread of Christianity is far more easily to be accounted for upon the hypothesis of the Messianic sects than upon the explanation given in the Book of Acts of the dispersion of the handful of disciples from Jerusalem. There are some valuable remarks which we have not space to quote upon the alleged necessity for "great personalities" as the founders of religions. If Christianity owed more to any one man than to another, it is to Paul, and not to Jesus that the pre-eminence must be given. "Without Jesus the rise of Christianity can be quite well understood, without Paul not so." And Paul did but accept and recast in the fire of his own mind the conception of the Christ which was already in the world around him. In the words of a liberal-conservative theologian, Weinel, "Christology was almost completed before Jesus came on earth."

The summary of the author's position with regard to the Gospels is conveyed in the following words:—"We are indeed faced with the strange fact that all the essential part of the Gospels, everything which is of importance for religious faith, such as especially the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus, is demonstrably invented and mythical; but such parts as can at best only be historical because of their supposed 'uninventable' nature are of no importance for the character of the Gospel representation." Neither in Jesus' deeds nor sayings, nor in the attitude of the Evangelists' affections towards Jesus, can the author discern the recognisable and moving lineaments of a man who lived among us. "In the Jesus of the Gospels we have not a deified man, but rather a humanised God." Why, then, were the Gospels

written? The answer to this question we have hinted at in our first paragraph.

Such in bare outline is the argument of a work whose every word—its quotations of fact, its collection of historical materials, and the inferences based upon them—will be flung into the crucible of European scholarship. For our own part, we unhesitatingly accept everything the author has to say as given to us in transparent good faith, and with the honest intention of arriving at the truth and nothing but the truth. So much will come out of the crucible, and we believe also that a solid contribution to men's understanding of Christianity, an alteration in many respects from accepted ways of thinking, will be among the results of the trying ordeal. For whether our author has succeeded in "proving his negative" or not, he has thrown a new light both for orthodoxy and rationalism upon the part played for mankind by the Christ idea. It would be nearer the mark to say, perhaps, that Dr. Drews has been the first to focus and bring to a fine issue many tendencies and results of reflection that are already at work among us. From the days of the Apostle Paul until the present time, Christianity has cared but little for Jesus the man, and has cared much for the Christ, even the evangelists who are alleged some of them to have known Jesus in the flesh, sharing this feeling. This fact is all the clearer for the volume before us, and while the contention that Jesus never lived will shock the orthodox, rationalists of certain types will be no less disturbed by the information that their ideal picture of the human Jesus is in conflict with the genius alike of Judaism and Christianity. The Unitarian may be compelled to understand why with the aid of a "good man" merely, he has never been able to found a world-conquering religion.

The value of the Christ idea, or myth, to mankind, the part it has played in history, and the explanation of that part—this is the phenomenon and the problem to which the rationalist mind of Europe will be directed with a fresh impulse if our author has any influence; nor can we see, if Dr. Drews has his way, that rationalism or Christianity will be any the poorer. We lose nothing if we are compelled to put away both the God and the man Jesus for a deepened understanding of our own religious nature. After all, the Christ is more truly ours, and has more significance for us, if we created him, than if he was a man like ourselves and lived among us. And create the Christ we did, whether Jesus were historical personality or pure fiction. To this point of view the future will come, regarding the Christ as a pure invention of man, and upon that account all the more sacred. The future may ring in even a "Christ that is to be," for can mankind be expected to lay down quickly so immemorial a symbol? In the exploration of the remote, pre-historic, origins of Christianity there lies the road for the rationalist towards a deepened and refined dissent from the Church. For the orthodox indeed, the idea that the Last Supper is a "rite which reaches back into the very origins of all human civilisation and preserves the memory of the discovery of fire in the midst of . . . . the Stone Age" may be painful and disconcerting; for us it is a bridge flung across the years, and across the far more formidable chasms that separate the heretic from the ways of ecclesiasticism. We can even foresee the time when the rationalist may present himself as a partaker of the Last Supper, with large reverence and some amount of humour.

* * *

Social Idealism. By R. Dimsdale Stocker. (Williams and Norgate. 3s. net.)

This is a volume, and it may be to certain persons a useful volume, of hortatory essays of no particular distinction, in which the author gathers together as many as he has received of contemporary ideas that are in the air, derived from such sources as Socialism, Bernard Shaw, R. J. Campbell, Nietzsche, etc. Here are many good rays to be brought to a focus, and our author offers himself as a burning glass, but the result of his efforts is attended with such a mild degree of heat that we cannot conceal our disappointment. The fire of imagination is all but entirely absent from Mr. Stocker's pages, but, nevertheless, his book, as we have said, may be a useful book to persons who may possibly gain from it the idea of applying to better. Some of Mr. Stocker's chapter-headings suggest the tameness of his contents: "Eternal Hope: Salvation for all," "As a little child," "The life of the world to come," which last covers, for the most part, but an account of More's "Utopia." In his first chapter the author looks for the progress of "reform" to "a process of rationalisation, achieved by a wider dissemination of knowledge." The absence of any reference to art or imagination is typical of Mr. Stocker's limits. He is convinced, however, that "the Human Will" is a finer formula than "the will of God," that the divinity of conscience is derived from its humanity, that mankind are more interested in the present life than in the life after death (or why has there never been appointed a Royal Commission "to inquire into the future chances of the departed, and report to us upon the result?"), that the notion that God might damn a man if he chose, involves in reality an anti-social sentiment ("It was not really that we thought so much of God after all; it was that we thought so meanly of man"), that, as it stands at present, the lot of the mother is "the vilest stain upon our civilisation." These and other ideas Mr. Stocker brings forward in the style in which he conceives and dwells upon "Human Providence—the will of all good men and women, who, by their disinterested and unselfish devotion to human welfare, have transformed the world from what it was, and been the means of redeeming the wicked for social and ethical ends." This pretty notion Mr. Stocker thinks "so beautiful, so noble, so superlatively divine." After all, he must be a backward learner who can profit by Mr. Stocker.

The Recovery of Art and Craft.

By Huntly Carter.

A TOWN or city is the projection of a people's soul at its best or at its worst. At its best when built by the people themselves; at its worst when built for the people. To-day English people are not city builders; their cities are being planned and built for them.

As a consequence English towns and cities have general characteristics, but not individual ones. If we take the direct evidence of the "Town-Planning Review"—in its way an admirable and fully illustrated quarterly, produced at Liverpool University under the able editorship of Professors Abercrombie, Reilly, and Adshead—this evidence and that of the stimulating speech by Mr. John Burns to the Liverpool School of Civic Design, town-planning is not hobnobbing with the citizen and calling upon his soul for guidance, encouragement and inspiration. On the contrary, it may be seen entering Parliament on the arm of a distinguished Cabinet Minister and making its bow to an astonished House before taking its seat on the Front Government Bench. It may be seen, too, running round to unrepresentative town councils and frightening councillors with weak hearts, and whisking off to universities and making terms with learned professors. In a word it is growing up under political, municipal and academical tutors who are on their knees to Germany. Accordingly it owes nothing to the people, being neither the projection of the people's soul, at its best, nor the creation of its imagination, nor the fulfilment of its noblest vision. Individual cities, cities that reflect the finest spirit of their citizens, are, it seems, not for us—at least yet awhile. When the plain citizen removes his civic consciousness from the seats of the mighty and goes beneath the surface of town-planning and architecture with it, things may be different.

As with cities so with their units. In introducing us to "The English Home" (Methuen, 12s. 6d. net.) Messrs. Banister Fletcher and H. Phillips Fletcher, who speak with expert knowledge in the language of a professional and specially trained class, reveal how far we are removed from the "citizen" note in domestic architecture. These two gentlemen have been down the

ages, including the dark ones—which, it may be pointed out, had far more illumination than our own benighted one—for the merest glance at the character of each age as it may be read in its representative pieces of architecture. They return with a brief account of primitive houses reflecting primitive minds, of massive oppressive Norman castles, of Edwardian castles and other border fortresses, of great baronial halls and feudal castles, and churches, etc., of manor houses, and the evolution of the peaceful habitation in mixed and imported styles, to our own times. With these they dot the coast line of history as with martello towers. Most of these buildings are but projections of the ruler spirit at its worst. Having seen the way house-building has been done for centuries, the two authors then give an exhaustive account of how to select a site, design, construct, equip and decorate a house according to the extensive experience of two eminent architects. In chapter XVII they arrive for the first time at the individual taste of the occupier who having purchased an ancient and decrepit house desires to make it less ancient and decrepit. From offering suggestions for the alteration and adaptation of old houses, they turn and point to a long illustrated series of very interesting "Modern English Homes," built, one assumes, according to the individual taste of the architect—and an admirable taste it is—and waiting to have human beings fitted into them. All human beings who are already fitted with shells may set to work to study the construction thereof under the guidance of Professor Banister Fletcher's bulky and important volume. It may be the first step to the recovery of the architectural conscience.

As with town and city planning and building, so it should be with house-building and embellishment. A house, plain or decorated, should be the projection of the soul of the occupier, the materialisation of his ambition, or imagination, or aspiration, or some other personal note. This should be both the reason in building and the reason for building. Houses should arise in response to personal need, and should change as the need changes. As Mr. Cobden Sanderson says in a beautiful essay on Art and Life, "Art as a manifestation of the artistic spirit, has is origin, or, to speak more correctly perhaps, its opportunity in craft, and craft in the needs of life. And as the needs of life vary from generation to generation, and from age to age, so must vary the objects of craft, and with them the modes and manifestations of the artistic spirit." What then are the needs of to-day? What are the objects of art and craft in our own so-called highly developed communities? An answer to this query has been attempted in an admirably produced volume wherein a group of individual thinkers in materials have set down, at the invitation of the Master of the Carpenters' Company, their experiences in order to determine how, and to what extent "The Arts connected with Building" (Batsford, 5s.) offer opportunities to the artistic spirit to manifest itself. There is not space to deal at length with the essays, each of which is marked by sanity in dealing alike with material, process, purpose, etc. Mr. Raffles Davidson in the editorial chair briefly explains the aims of those that surround him, emphasising the right use of materials, and the importance of the development of artistic individuality. Mr. Weir Schultz digs at the foundations of old and modern buildings in order to explain how to discover "the reason for doing things," but finds no reason in the modern manufacture of "the general type of architect that is turned out at the present day." To him the education of the architect does not, alas, leave much space for the spontaneous creation of the architectural brain. Mr. Guy Dawber chalks the blackboard, and occasionally himself, with samples of woodwork that make one's mouth water. Mr. W. F. Troup in the midst of an accumulation of international material, demonstrates how things of mother earth, mud, stone, wood, first fashion the builder's thoughts, and thereafter are fashioned by the craftsman according to his need. His conclusion is that material rules design. Mr. A. Rodney Green designing as he goes, reproducing the patterns of Europe, maintains that the desire for perfection in design has influenced the development of the tool. He concludes that design rules tools. Mr. C. F. Voysey by his sincerity and conviction carries us back to the spiritual ideal which we have left. Our work should be informed by ideas and ideals. In other words, Mr. Voysey would doubtless say, everything we do should be the projection of our souls. But first we need the vision to see ourselves projected in space, and after that the power of interpretation to materialise what we see. Other speakers, no less stimulating than the rest, follow, each with a plea for ready invention and design born of the moment, or of the material. The lesson these lecturers would convey is that reason must be the handmaid of art and craft, and the object of art and craft should be to keep reason, reason added to instinct, busy. Though it is not quite clear whether reason, as they understand it, would unfetter the imagination, there is a great deal of invention and imagination in their own work, according to the abundant samples. So, perhaps, it is sweet reasonableness they desire for their money.

The views recently expressed in these columns on the Post-Savages are confirmed by a small shilling volume just published by Mr. Philip Lee Warner. In his "Notes on the Post-Impressionists," Professor C. J. Holmes maintains that Post-Impressionism is neither the highest pinnacle of æsthetic activity, nor the final expression of decay. It is, as I contended, a fresh impulse, "a necessary stimulus towards a larger and more decorative style of pictorial expression," and "a reversion to the principle which has inspired all the greatest art in the world." As a sincere interpretation of Post-Impressionism from the point of view of the decorator and designer, Mr. Holmes' book is enlightening.

Before the exhibition at the Grafton Galleries closes on the 15th, all who can should see the recently added portrait by Van Gogh. It is a revelation in vision, dexterity, masterly painting and conception of colour. Here indeed Van Gogh appears as the master painter.

IN DELOS—IN THE DRIFTING ISLE.

It was within the narrow isle—
  The isle long since that drifting tried
The southmost sea—where not a field
  Could wish to be more wide,
When that its straight bound so might yield
A charm the princelier lands have not revealed—
  This view so fair upon the far-off blowing tide.

To that low wall of ancient stone
  An idle wanderer I came,
And found me there a world too new—
  Too briefly fair to name;
For there against the Ægean blue,
A thousand flowers were at the first review,
  Spreading to gentle winds the valour of their flame.

Soon was the ruined barrier passed:
  And in the grasses down I lay
And saw no more than one clear sky—
  One azure from the bay—
One many-blossomed mist, that high
Above me, with a soft continuing sigh,
  Lent a bright hem of colour to the paler day.

A nodding poppy on her stem—
  Straight up she stood against the sun
And floated stilly like a cloud.
  And of her mates not one
But wore a face as gently proud,
And danced a round among the fairy crowd,
  In golden mantle fine by meek Rain-women spun.

So lying, changed from what I was,
  With ears that scarce were mine almost,
I heard a mute and lovely tune
  Some chanting god had lost:
And saw by other eyes, within the noon,
Fleet for the chase, wearing her silver moon,
  Diana, on her way, adown the singing coast.

Mildred McNeal Sweeney
(in the American "Poet-Lore").

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

A REAL LADY IN THE FABIAN CASE.

Sir,—In reply to Mrs. Cavendish Bentinck, my agreement with the backwoodsman Pontefract, so far as it goes, is not, as stated by Mrs. Bentinck, "a sneaking disposition." It is a complete, wholehearted acceptance of Pontefract's view of the facts. Upon the question of what policy to adopt in relation to those facts, I am Pontefract's implacable foe. In this sense I am "a Tory with a red tie," as Mrs. Bentinck calls me; but the tie is round the neck of my heart.

It is not a fact that, as stated by Mrs. Bentinck, I have a rooted conviction that people will not work against their own interests. In my former letter I said, "People will do anything." Many people, out of Christian self-sacrifice, out of patriotism, or out of some other kind of esprit de corps, perpetually and deliberately work against their own interests; as do the foolish working bees and ants, for the good of something not themselves that makes for slavery.

The conclusion that Alva's failure condemns him, and that the success of Christianity justifies it, was not mine (as Mrs. Bentinck imagines), but Christopher's. How otherwise explain his words, quoted by me in my former letter, on December 1, p. 118, exactly in the middle of the left-hand column, beginning "Yet"?

If William the Conqueror is, as Mrs. Bentinck claims, justified by the clement and righteous actions he performed after the Conquest, then she ought to show cause why Alva and Pontius Pilate and Harold the Second should not be absolved. For, as failure deprived them of all chance of being justified by a completed work, how do we know they were void of the good qualities evoked only by success, as in Norman William?

It is true, as my opponent says, that Cromwell's action in Ireland is not justified now. But at one time the black spot in Cromwell's character was considered to be his part in the death of the king—while the killing of Irish savages was thought a mere trifle.

My point in the two preceding paragraphs is neither an attack upon nor a defence of any of the persons named. It is an attack upon the dialectical method of Mrs. Bentinck and her friend Christopher. They seem to believe that right is always vindicated by the final verdict of posterity. There is no such verdict. In other words, as I said before, justice means anything you like.

What does Mrs. Bentinck mean exactly when she says she "admits" the class-war "(theoretically)," and "even insists upon it"? It is a very odd expression. Does she mean that, like the citizens of Baldinsville, Indiana, when Artemus Ward lived there, she "views with extreme concern the fact that we are at present involved in a war"? I will yield no thanks for such an admission if it is to be coupled with a demand for a truce—which seems to me to be the only part of the war she "insists" upon. My trouble is the difficulty of egging people on to the war; it has very little to do with intellectual convictions or admissions. The S.D.P. people say they recognise the war and that it's a regrettable necessity. This is bosh. A Socialist ought to want the war, and delight in it. A necessity can't be regrettable: it's a contradiction in terms.

I refuse to accompany either Mrs. Bentinck or Mr. Crooks or anybody else upon a slumming expedition. If she wants to know anything, I was born in a dirty little Irish town, spent my growing years in Belfast during the ugliest stage of its development, and lived for years in Mr. Crooks's part of the world; besides canvassing in County Council elections —and I hope she knows what that means. My present lodging looks out upon a street of so realistic a type that, one summer's eve when my window was open, I heard a female proclaim continuously for the space of one hour that she was Mrs. So-and-so, "bought and paid for." I cannot get the refrain of "Fall in, and Follow Me," out of my ears; and, this last Christmas Day, in the smallest hour, at the very moment when the carol-singers of the Mission Church behind the "pub" burst into "Christians, awake!" the chap who occupies the room across the landing from mine jumped out of bed and hammered at his neighbour's door and shouted, "If you've anything to say about me an' my dog, come out and say it to my face, man to man, or I'll wring your sanguinary neck in the morning!" Why should I go out slumming, when I can slum at home in bed —the bed which I have carefully "depoppilated of wampires," to use Sam Weller's guarded expression? On the mere surface of slummery Mrs. Bentinck and Mr. Crooks can teach me little; while, in the philosophy of the question, I am centuries ahead of everybody in this country, with the possible exception of my fellow-Picts Lloyd George and Keir Hardie.

When I spoke of the universal thirst for power, I was thinking of normal healthy people. Of course, the intensity of the thirst will be measured by the absence of means of satisfaction. I am more willing to believe that Mrs. Bentinck has the means of quenching it than that she is a degenerate without any vestige of the appetite.

Of course, if Mrs. Bentinck is a Christian, she has a perfect right to ignore Nietzsche and John Davidson and all their works. But what I complain of is that such as she, in writing for a reputedly advanced body like the Fabian Society, foster the hazy British notion that Christ and Nietzsche can lie down side by side in one harmonious system, with John Davidson out of sight round the corner.

I cannot answer the challenge of the last paragraph of Mrs. Bentinck's antescript because I have not read Chambers's Biography of Marx, and am debarred from reading it by (among other lazinesses) total absence of anxiety to prove that my aims are not utopian. They *are* utopian, in fact.

In my former letter I asked why a Socialist who thinks his Socialism inevitable should bother exerting himself to bring it about. Mrs. Bentinck—inspired, I fear, by Mr. Belfort Bax—replies in effect that, while Socialism in its general outline is inevitable, the details are matters for conscious contrivance and voluntary effort. This answer is based on a fallacy which Tyndall showed up in his "Reflections on Prayer and Natural Law." If the realisation of Socialism in some form is inevitable, that is only on account of a chain of causes which will with equal certainty determine whose brand of Socialism (as Mrs. Bentinck expresses it) shall be taken first. To adapt a line from Pope, "Can the whole thing depend, and not the part?"

In conclusion, I am interested to learn that the correspondence between Pontefract and Christopher is more or less of a real document. Certain internal evidence made me suspect this. Its documentariness, and not its logic, is its strongest point. But "Votes for Women," by all means!

JOHN KIRKBY.

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BRITISH WEST AFRICAN ASSOCIATION.

Sir,—Many of your readers will probably be interested in the British West African Association which has recently been founded in London to further the interests—educational, political, and commercial—of the West African Colonies. Such an association should appeal to the social reformer, the sociologist, and the antiquarian, as well as to those who are commercially inclined. A sociological and educational section will be formed if sufficient members desire it, and it is from such journals as yours that an association working in this direction expects some support. One day, probably, these Colonies will be self-governed, possibly united. The problem of Black and White antagonism has not yet arisen, hence the usefulness of such an Association.

The ignorance concerning the West African native—the educated native on the Coast and the uneducated native in the interior, is astounding. Books are few and lectures are fewer on this portion of the British Empire. Trading is in the hands of a very few monopolists, who exaggerate climatic conditions and natural conditions to hug the market to themselves. The association hopes to remedy this state of things, and invites your readers to help. (The subscription is one guinea, or life subscription ten guineas). We hope to organise a special West African Court for the White City, 1911, and a ladies' committee will be formed to assist in this work. A reception will be held during the Coronation festivities, as many West Africans will be in London for that occasion. Further particulars I shall be glad to give at any time by stamped addressed envelope to 1 and 2, Oxford Court, Cannon Street, E.C.

H. O. NEWLAND, Secretary.

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A LEAF FROM HISTORY.

Sir,—I would assure your correspondent that he has mistaken the meaning of my article if he thinks that I do not respect Prof. Maspero for his great labours in the field of Egyptology. As collections of fact, his books are invaluable, but when it comes to the deductions it is otherwise. Where almost all Egyptologists (and Orientalists) are such perverters of facts it may perhaps seem hard to introduce Prof. Maspero specially, yet, although in actual distortion he is not much ahead of his fellows, his method is perhaps rather more inclined to challenge criticism, and, even though for some of the "facts" others may be held responsible, Prof. Dobbs's "method" is not unlike that of Prof. Maspero. Witness this gem ("Dawn of Civilisation," p. 88, footnote): "The commonest etymology [of Ra suggests the meaning] the author of all things, Lauth says—Ra is a composite word (R—A, maker to be). As a matter of fact the word is simply the name of the planet applied to the god. It means the *sun*, and nothing more." So there you are!

It is especially in the matter of religion that Prof. Maspero excels, but anyone who attempted to make fun of any living—or shall we say present—religion, as Prof. Maspero does of the Egyptian, would at once lay himself

open to an accusation of bad taste. As examples I would suggest the remarks on p. 89 about the "Calf of Ra," and on p. 146 concerning creation by the Word. "Sound bears the same relation to words that the whistle of a quartermaster bears to the orders . . . by a speaking trumpet." It is all the more incomprehensible as the "Dawn of Civilisation" was published under the auspices of a society (S.P.C.K.) which is also responsible for another Book which contains passages usually known as Exodus xii., Rev. v., Genesis i., and John i.

Prof. Dobbs' remarks on history and chronology are so closely copied from well-known authors that they are most truly open to criticism as being direct plagiarisms. Take the question of "king-lists" for example. We possess a list of kings and their length of reign by Manetho, the Greek, in his History. This was intended to be chronological and a list of kings. It used to be mocked at a good deal, but the excellent work of later years, especially of Prof. Petrie, is showing that, with a little allowance for the mutilations of time, it is really very exact. There are also several other lists of names from different temples. They do not make any pretence to being chronological or to being lists of kings. In fact, the variety of the title of some of them would suggest that it was quite an open question what they were meant to record. But, as the pundits have decided that they were meant for chronological king-lists, how are we to explain the "mistakes" in them? It is quite easily done. When the architect of a million pound temple had nearly finished his job the question of decoration suddenly suggested itself to him. He looked round and saw a nice flat piece of wall. "Ah," said he, "some kings' names would look well there. John, bring along your tools and cut some kings' names on this wall." So John came and cut some—presumably those whose acquaintance he had made in the 5th standard, or which contained letters he liked writing—until he had filled the space. "What nonsense!" you say? Well, this is the suggestion, more or less clearly defined, of many Egyptologists. See what Prof. Budge say about it. ("History of Egypt," Vol. I., 1902, p. 123): "A brief examination of the list shows that the scribe arranged in chronological order the names for which he had room in the space allotted to the list, and that he made a selection from the names, . . . but what guided him . . . cannot be said. Some think that he wished to commemorate such kings as were great, . . . but it is certain that the space at the disposal of the sculptor was limited"! Quite conclusive, except that one has heard of the whole Lord's Prayer being written within the area of a sixpenny piece.

One other passage on the historical knowledge of the Egyptians deserves quotation. (Budge, p. 19): "The evidence on the subject now available seems to show that the Egyptians who made the original . . . finding in the tomb . . . various objects inscribed with his name Khent, jumped to the conclusion, like M. Amélineau, that they had discovered the tomb of Khent-Amenti. . . . The mistake once made was perpetuated. . ." M. Amélineau made a mistake, therefore the Egyptians had made one before him. This, of course, may have been so, or it may not, for, for all "M. A." or any other Egyptologist knows, there may have been quite sufficient—shall we say topical—grounds for what they did. It is quite clear that the ancients looked on things differently from us. Our point of view is of course the sensible one. Therefore the ancients were fools. When Egyptologists (and Orientalists) have found out how the ancients did look at things, it will be time to begin to decide whether their actions were self-contradictory or not. As Prof. Maspero says (p. 152): "This conception of Deity towards which their ideals were converging has nothing in common with the conception of the God of our modern religions and philosophies." With which remark I feel sure an Egyptian priest, if he had had the chance, would have entirely agreed.

The Writer of the Article.

* * *

POST-SAVAGES.

Sir,—There is one aspect of this subject which would have made Teufelsdrockh laugh for the second time in his life; and the chance that it may amuse your readers must excuse this further trespass on your space. I shall pass by Mr. Huntly Carter's compliments of the season; and congratulate him on his ably-managed Symposia, which are very interesting. The point is brought out by that Mrs. Harris of controversy, "George Fitzgerald," who in former correspondence showed that he "didn't know where 'e are," nor where he lived, giving addresses which knew him not. I fancy he is an anonymous critic whom I "knocked silly," as the boys say, and he does not seem to have recovered. If I might diagnose his case, and coin a term, I should say he suffers from "Mendacitis." Having no facts to discredit me, he invents, and his letters have always been a string of misstatements; and my only reason for replying to them was that I could meet them with a blank denial, and then use the opportunity to further develop my thesis; and I thank him for the aid thus unintentionally given. His favourite trick is to give a list of artists whose names I had never mentioned, and assert that I admired them, thinking that sufficient to discredit my judgment.

Now, I say, once for all, that as in religion and philosophy I am an Omnist, taking the good of all systems, the narrowness of none; so in Art I welcome the good in all styles, and of all ages. I am most eager for all new developments that widen the field of art without degrading it, and all new revelations of a higher order of beauty. I have my likes and dislikes, of course, but I make the personal equation and do not let them bias my judgment. I esteem as "good" everything that shows competent craftsmanship and artistic feeling. Shortcomings in perfect realisation I condone when the colour is fine, or the idea poetic, or there is imagination and invention of a high order. Turner, the idol of my boyhood, remains my idol still.

Mr. George Fitzgerald selects four Academicians, as unlike in style as possible, and says I profess to admire them. This is the suggestio falsi, as usual; but let it pass for the moment. Here are four artists selected from the whole body of our painters, elected as Academicians by 70 of our most accomplished painters and sculptors as the most worthy of that honour. Now comes Ignorance in all the pride of its boundless nescience, and opposes its opinion to all their united knowledge, and assumes that for me to admire the works of any of these Academicians is sufficient to discredit my taste and judgment! Since the world begun was there ever such an amazing position? Whenever did a people of alleged intelligence fall into such abysmal depths of inanity and absurdity, or topsy-turveydom? Yet that is the position of the whole of the MacCollites and Modernity critics! Could fatuousness further go? Take the only one of the four Academicians whom I have professed to admire, Frank Dicksee. Will any one of my critics condemn himself as an utter ignoramus by denying that Dicksee is a splendid draftsman, colourist, and accomplished craftsman, who gives us poetic subjects, and who, had he lived 300 or 400 years ago, would have been regarded as one of the greatest of the Old Masters? In all these respects he stands head and shoulders above the idol of the moment, Manet. What can be said against Dicksee except that the objector does not like his style, his subjects, his thoroughness, and, perhaps, the over-conscientiousness of his work? Does this condemn the critic or the painter, which? Are our critics to pose as fashion's fools and assume that because a style of work is not in vogue for the moment that it is, therefore, bad? If so, then they must say that Rembrandt is bad because just after his death his paintings could be bought for half-a-crown apiece! Take the case of Manet. From the time of the great colourists there had gradually developed a subtle seeing into the play of colour and light and shade in flesh; Manet revolted against that, and painted flesh as the common man sees it in a searchlight of day, crudely and strongly; he painted subjects which were little more than "life studies," and he infused everything with intense vulgarity. This was, as Whistler said, the one touch of nature which made the Modernity critics kin. So those who oppose my views show they judge by narrow prejudice, enthrone Ignorance with its foot on the neck of Knowledge, and worship Vulgarity as the tenth Muse. They thus innocently demonstrate the absolute correctness of my analysis when I described the position as "Anarchism in Art, and Chaos in Criticism."

E. Wake Cook.

* * *

Sir,—For generations Mr. Cook has been pouring out his soul on the sublimities of Leader, and school of Leader; on Cooper, and school of Cooper. Indeed, he declares that when he slings his Hook he will sing their triumphs "to his last gasp." He will elect to be buried with his Leader, and metallic Cooperesque sheep will graze around his Stone. It is the old, old Story. He's goin' away from Dicksee, and there's one more Riviere to cross His sun, which rose in the West, Sims to have culminated in the East. It's a Long journey, and the Lord only Knaus what will happen to him. If the gate is slammed by Peter he will not be the only Leighton. I only Opie won't be sitting on the Cole Poynting pictures and longing for a Frost. Perchance he may go with Egg into the Calderon. Murray, forsooth, go to! Heaven Grant that he may be saved from such a Faed. There he will find his "Daily Meal," and he will be able to solace himself with Mudie's all-cane driver. He will listen to sultry Gaiety symphonies, and breathlessly follow the dramatic masterpieces of Mr. Recil Saleigh. R.I.P.

Hugh Blaker.

* * *

HAND v. MACHINE.

Sir,—Your correspondent, W. S. Murphy, is too sweeping in his assertion that all the handwoven cloths sold on the market are mere botches compared with machine-woven goods. I have for many years worn both Burmese and Indian (Kollegal) silks and Irish and English woollens. Both for good appearance, hard wear and technical excel-

lence in weaving, the homespuns made by the Somerset weavers at Clevedon, and the washing silks from Kollegal, in Mysore, are better than any machine-woven fabrics I have seen or heard of, besides being moderate in price.

The most magnificent fabrics of all, with the exception perhaps of certain velvets, viz., silk brocades, always in the East, and often in Europe, are woven on the hand loom. Finally will your correspondent assert that Chinese silk crape can be made of equal quality with the imported hand-loom product? I say nothing of the muslins and other fabrics of Benares and Dacca. Even certain plain cotton fabrics, when hand woven, possess good qualities not seen in the machine-made product.

A. P. GRENFELL.

* * *

WAGE EARNERS AND ART.

Sir,—A wage-worker and machine-minder who knows nothing of the canons of art, but who, nevertheless, cannot yet "give up" THE NEW AGE, nor pass over its art articles, ventures to ask Mr. Huntly Carter where he has discovered "the social instinct for cheapness and shoddy."

If such an instinct exists at all I must certainly look elsewhere than in the wage-earning class to find it. Surely Mr. Huntly Carter, who knows somewhat of the life of a wage-worker, does not believe that we have an instinctive preference for cheap and shoddy goods, and when producing the finest still desire the nastiest?

A. E. PLATTEN.

* * *

HOME OFFICE AND MRS. COBDEN-SANDERSON.

On December 14 Mrs Cobden-Sanderson addressed the following letter to the Home Secretary at the Home Office. No reply to it has been received by her:—

December 14, 1910.

Sir,—In the "Daily Telegraph" of the 12th inst. you are reported to have said that Mrs. Cobden-Sanderson was in Downing Street to throw stones at the Prime Minister's windows. I was in Downing Street on the occasion to which I presume you refer as one of a deputation to the Prime Minister.

I am, for personal reasons, a passive resister, and I had no intention of throwing stones at the Prime Minister's windows. I had been left on the pavement by the police, exhausted by the struggle in which the police, obstructing our approach to the Prime Minister's residence, and driving or attempting to drive us back, had obliged us to engage, and I had just risen to my feet and was resting against a window of the Foreign Office when I saw you approach. I went forward to speak to you, for you were not unknown to me, when, without inquiry as to my purpose or pause to hear what I had to say, you ordered the police who accompanied you to remove "that woman." I protested, but your order was executed and I was "removed."

You are a Secretary of State, but your office does not release even a member of the present Government from the obligations of a gentleman, or authorise him to make allegations without foundation. On the contrary, his high office should impose the obligations of a gentleman even where they have not been naturally engrafted, and it should make the holder of it particularly careful as to the truth of his observations and the justice and propriety of his public conduct.

If you have been correctly reported you have in this case made a statement which I know to be false, and you have made it in defence of conduct which you know to be indefensible.

I await your apology and am,

Yours faithfully,

ANNE COBDEN-SANDERSON.

To the Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill, M.P.

* * *

PORTUGAL.

Sir,—Please allow me to congratulate S. Verdad on the eminently sane attitude he has taken up all along on the Portuguese affair. He appears to have been the only critic in Great Britain who has kept a level head, and who has made it clear that a mere change of name from Monarchy to Republic does not necessarily mean a change of political administration. The Liberal Press here, in particular, has once more demonstrated its utter incompetency to deal with questions relating to foreign affairs.

J. M. KENNEDY.

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