NOTES OF THE WEEK.

At the moment of writing these notes the Lords have as good as passed the Second Reading of the Veto Bill, and by the time these notes appear the Second Reading will actually have passed. There remains the Third and final Reading about which doubts still exist, but the same considerations that have dictated the first and second will, in our opinion, dictate the third and last also. What these considerations are our readers know quite as well as we do. But if anybody should have forgotten them he can refresh his memory by a glance at the speech delivered during the debate on Thursday by Lord Montagu of Beaulieu. Practically everything we have said concerning the Veto Bill must pass, it will be to the advantage of the Lords' ill-advised interests. By the time the thunder and the shouting of that vulgar exhibition is over the public will not only have forgotten all about the Veto Bill, but they will have come to look upon it as long since passed and antediluvian, in fact. If there is little or no interest taken by the public in the Bill to-day there will be still less then. But this must not be interpreted to entitle the Lords to reject the Bill after the Coronation on the assumption that its rejection would be unnoticed and unresented. The apathy of which so many speakers have complained in regard to the Bill would, we are convinced, be instantly converted into fury if the Lords should presume on it to reject the measure at a moment when, as they thought, the public was indifferent. There is nothing more treacherous than the apparent apathy of the British public, and John Bull is never more widely awake than when he appears to be fastest asleep. We repeat that the rejection of the Veto Bill after the Coronation will be the most dangerous enterprise on which the Lords have embarked. With all his secret goodwill towards a House which appears to be the cynosure of his relatives' eyes, Mr. Asquith could scarcely save the Lords from virtual and perhaps actual abolition. * * *

We are not at all convinced that in the event of the rejection of the Bill by the Lords, Mr. Asquith's wisest course would be the comparatively farcical creation of peers. Common report has had it that this was the only weapon and the most effective that could be employed, and the public has certainly been allowed to suppose that the King would give his consent. There is an alternative, however, which has none of the antediluvian, in fact. If there is little or no interest taken by the public in the Bill to-day there will be still less then. But this must not be interpreted to entitle the Lords to reject the Bill after the Coronation on the assumption that its rejection would be unnoticed and unresented. The apathy of which so many speakers have complained in regard to the Bill would, we are convinced, be instantly converted into fury if the Lords should presume on it to reject the measure at a moment when, as they thought, the public was indifferent. There is nothing more treacherous than the apparent apathy of the British public, and John Bull is never more widely awake than when he appears to be fastest asleep. We repeat that the rejection of the Veto Bill after the Coronation will be the most dangerous enterprise on which the Lords have embarked. With all his secret goodwill towards a House which appears to be the cynosure of his relatives' eyes, Mr. Asquith could scarcely save the Lords from virtual and perhaps actual abolition. * * *

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Party, we may confidently predict, would be returned with the additional reduction of some fifty or a hundred seats. From that rout and the loss of prestige, it is unlikely that they would recover for a whole generation, long before which time their only great man would cease to be and his place know his like no more.

This consideration, we happen to know, has weighed both with Lord Lansdowne and with Mr. Balfour in their decision to give the Veto Bill a Second Reading in the Lords, and, if possible, after a decorous opposition, a Third Reading as well. But the task these statesmen with their long views have had and still have in convincing the political ephemera, their ill-assorted colleagues and followers, that the present crisis they so lightly taken may be made an exchange of the shadow for the substance, is Hercules. Who but a god or a beast could convince Mr. Garvin, for example, that the spiritual power of ideas such as the House of Lords may wield when the Veto Bill is passed is infinitely to be preferred to the material and vulgar power of saying “No” with dictatorial bluntness? Yet Mr. Garvin is himself an example of the power of ideas even in the most material and sub toasted condition. As is well known to anybody with the smallest pretension to culture, Mr. Garvin’s ideas are merely the errors of the early Socialists—Ruskin, Kingsley, Owen; yet solely because they were once ideas their magic is still potent over the uninstructed. With no veto whatso ever, with no nominal power of any kind, Mr. Garvin is still in the Unionist Party the equal of a century of peers.

The point we continue to urge on the peers and their friends (amongst whom, for various reasons, we count ourselves) is that the Veto Bill, in removing from them the temptation to rely upon material power, may actually be the means of their compulsory salvation. Power is not accumulated save when it is necessary; and the necessity the peers will be under when their House is no longer nominally paramount to re-establish supremacy by subtler means is the very condition that a great political educator would deliberately impose on them for their good. For there is no denying that the continued security of their position had induced in them an intellectual and a spiritual apathy which were rapidly becoming a national scandal. “As drunk as a lord” was a proverb in the days of Rabelais who quoted it; but as stupid, as illiterate, as materialistic, as uncultivated as any quite recently coined. We happen to regard the coinage as counterfeit, but it was sufficiently well minted to begin to obtain currency. But if the Veto Bill is passed and the use that is made of the new circumstances wise, these phrases may not only be withdrawn entirely from currency among the intelligent, but they may be ranked as obsolete pleasantries.

But if we counsel acceptance of the Veto Bill by the Lords, we should counsel strenuous opposition to any Reform scheme, whether issuing from the Unionist or from the Liberal Party. Neither party in our view has the smallest real appreciation of the importance of maintaining the House of Lords exactly as it is for at least a decade after the Veto Bill is passed. Both parties, in fact, have so far only to proclaim one of the caucus and party system, and both must be regarded with suspicion when they come bringing presents of reform. By the fortune of politics, to the distinction of kind that already exists between the two Houses in the matter of their sedentary titles, has now been added a distinction equally of kind but of an even more popularly imposing character in the matter of payment. We are by no means disposed to agree that the institution of Payment of Members will either vulgarise the House of Commons or increase its subservi ence to the Cabinet. Both consequences, some would say, are in the nature of things impossible. But we are equally certain that by comparison and as a distinction of kind, the fact that the Lords are unpaid and the Commons paid will weigh to the spiritual advantages of the former. These distinctions are perhaps fine, as many of the distinctions which are apt to be, but that they are none the less vital our readers will see. As a matter of fact, we should not, if it were necessary, despair of making these distinctions clear even to the man in the street. His appreciation of the nobility of working for love or honour is at least as keen as his recognition of the necessity of sometimes working for money. The House of Lords will thus have two advantages over the Commons of which nothing save their “reform” by one of the caucuses can rob them. And with these in hand their future is what they please to make it.

Who was it said that when the House of Commons is unanimous it is wrong? But dissolution does not usually follow so closely on the heels of glamour as criticism has followed the almost unanimous praise of Mr. Lloyd George’s Insurance Bill. We hoped it might be on and by and for the principles underlying or contradicting the measure that the Bill would be destroyed; but it now seems that the Bill is to be picked to death with bodkins. This matters little to us, who are mainly concerned in seeing it dead, but the effect on the public mind as well as on the politicians’ mind will be confusing. They will conclude that the principle of the Bill was correct and almost determined whatever, with no nominal power of any kind, in the Lords, and, if possible, after a decorous opposition, a Third Reading as well. But if the Veto Bill is passed and the use that is made of the new circumstances is wise, these phrases may not only be withdrawn entirely from currency among the intelligent, but they may be ranked as obsolete pleasantries.

Mr. Lloyd George has never been friendly to trade unions or to trade-unionism. As a lawyer, perhaps, he inherits the traditionary view of his profession that trade unions are conspiracies in restraint of trade. Doubtless he would deny it strenuously and convince himself that he was sincere; but the fact (in the sense of the thing done) remains that snares for the feet of the unions are laid in almost every section of the Insurance Bill. In the core of the measure, the craftsman’s soul is strangled in the face of any bird. But this is no longer true, for nets for unions have been laid under the very eyes of the unions’ paid sentinels, who are only now, after much belated inquiry and instruction, discovering that it will not work when they have decided that it ought not to work.

Mr. Lloyd George’s scheme that is defective, and men are only discovering that it will not work when they have decided that it ought not to work. Why? For our part, we would willingly sacrifice all Mr. Lloyd George’s great schemes, past, present and future, to the interests of the humblest trade union that exists. Vastly greater importance attaches in our mind to a spontaneous vital, manly and natural alliance of wage-earners for mutual defence than to bureaucratic schemes for providing them with hospital accommodation. No more disastrous effect of recent Liberal legislation could be conceived than the destruction of trade unions, on the plea that the elucidation of the belief that trade unions are no longer necessary. Far from being no longer necessary, there was never more need for them than at this moment, when real wages are on the decline and profits on the rise. And we predict that, intense as is the need for unions to-day, their necessity will be even greater to-morrow. Under these circumstances, we should not hesitate to reply to Mr. Lloyd George’s challenge with an emphatic affirmative. Are the interests of trade unionism greater than the interests of the rest of the Insurance Bills? Discounted as they are. Not for twenty such Bills would it be worth while weakening a single union.
Foreign Affairs.  
By S. Verdad.

How many readers of the "Daily News" were struck dumb when, on May 24, they read the sub-leader headed "The Imperial Conference"? I beg leave to select the following passages for special mention:

The present Conference will keep its feet firmly planted on the solid earth. In Sir Wilfrid Laurier's words, its decisions will be "neither sensational nor dramatic, but will conduce to good results." It began in that spirit by dropping a motion to open its sittings to the Press. The Conference is neither a propagandist meeting nor a Parliament. It is a gathering of picked administrators met to discuss matters important, technical, and delicate, and no publicity in connection with our Colonial affairs, which are infinitely less important, less technical, and less delicate.

The utter inconsistency here is obvious; it is even worse than certain inconsistencies on the part of the Liberal Press which I have had occasion to point out in the past—and that is saying a good deal. It goes without saying that if a Conservative or Socialist or Labour Government were in power, and such a Conference were held in camera, the same organ would bluster and fume about the evil effects of secrecy in public affairs and the necessity for "democrats to combine their forces, etc., etc. Happy Liberal Press, which can alter its conception of Democracy and its political ideals from day to day! * * *

However, we know the why and wherefore of these somersaults on the tight-rope of professional politics. The impertious "democrats now in possession of Downing Street" give the word, an imperial free Press hastens to obey. The "Daily News," headless of its past wails for publicity, mews and purrs over a secret conference, and the "Westminster Gazette," also of May 24, endeavours to show that no one really wanted the proceedings reported.

When the last Conference met, in 1907, at least two Premiers, one of them Mr. Deakin, were strongly in favour of admitting the Press representatives. This proposal was strongly opposed by the most professional of professional politicians, Sir Wilfrid Laurier; but it was even more strongly opposed by the Liberal Government. The truth was, there were differences of opinion, not merely among the Colonial representatives, but between the Colonial representatives and the Home Government. There were certain points, such as Imperial Preference and an Imperial Council, which the Colonials wished to discuss, but which the Government here, on the other hand, did not wish to discuss. It is by this time an open secret in political circles—Mr. Deakin, for one, has not tried to conceal it—that there were "scenes" at the last Conference, and that these scenes were due to the endeavours of the Home Government to burke certain discussions.

Well, the Government had its way. The Press was left outside the door, and it became a question how the proceedings at the Conference should be made known to the public. Official reporters were appointed, and every evening Reuter's were empowered to circulate a summary of the day's discussions. These summaries were in every instance misleading, and in one or two cases absolutely and wholly untrue. Some two or three months after the Conference was over, and when most of the Colonials had sailed for home, a Blue Book was published which purported to give fuller details. This Blue Book, however, instead of being published at the price of sixpence a copy—the usual price of Government publications of the size—was issued at the exorbitant figure of six shillings, presumably with a view to restricting its circulation to the minimum.

Exactly the same procedure is now being followed. Official and carefully edited summaries of the proceedings are being issued, and the Press is even more strongly opposed by the Liberal Government, which, however, promises to initiate our Colonial offspring into the secrets of our foreign policy, and that therefore publicity is not necessary in this case. This plea, however, would not save the "Daily News," which wants publicity even in foreign affairs, and which cannot be made to understand that publicity in connection with our Colonial affairs, which are infinitely less important, less technical, and less delicate.

It may be urged that Sir Edward Grey promised to initiate our Colonial offspring into the secrets of our foreign policy, and that therefore publicity is not necessary in this case. This plea, however, would not save the "Daily News," which wants publicity even in foreign affairs, and which cannot be made to understand that publicity in connection with our Colonial affairs, which are infinitely less important, less technical, and less delicate.

Of course, the present writer has taken steps to secure any information which may be of value, but he objects to being put to this trouble.

Portugal and Russia, I fear, cannot have justice done to them this week. In order to quiet the people at home, the Turks are seeking diversion abroad; hence the massing of troops near the Montenegrin frontier. Russia, as the protectress of the Balkan States, had to do her duty by protesting to the Porte in a strongly-worded Note, which, let us hope, will bring the Young Turk hot-heads to their senses. Any political spirit and energy that may be left among the Young Turks had better be directed to internal problems. Djavid Bey has been compelled to resign—he went too fast—and the Hakki Cabinet as a whole is in a dangerous position. A war between Turkey and Montenegro would have consequences which cannot be properly appreciated by those who are not fully acquainted with the conditions in this Balkan gunpowder barrel.

As for Portugal, the country is in a scandalous condition, and I recommend the immediate establishment of a branch of the Gladstone League. The Republican authorities have for weeks past been carefully preparing to "cook" the election returns, and only in one or two places will a Monarchist candidate be allowed to get a majority. Warships have been sent northwards to intimidate that portion of the country which has never concealed its dislike for the new régime and its sympathies with the House of Braganza. Wholesale arrests have been made, wherever Monarchical sympathies have been observed in or about Lisbon. The future will witness either anarchy or a general Monarchical reaction: but where is the Monarch?
Tory Democracy.

By J. M. Kennedy.

(3) The Influence of Philosophers.

In my last article I referred to the importance of ideas and the lamentable lack of them in the Tory Party at the present time. Some critics have maintained that other and more important factors are wanting—Mr. Sidney Darley, for example, emphasises the importance of "political adroitness"—but the reply to comments of this nature is that ideas underlie these other factors. A party that takes care to develop its intelligence will at the same time develop its political adroitness and other minor factors. A party that relies solely upon its wealth and influence will develop neither.

To understand the indirect influence exercised by ideas, however, it must not be assumed that the thinkers in whose minds they originate are necessarily well known to the mass of the people. The contrary is more often the case, and in this connection the following remarks by W. E. H. Lecky will be found apposite:

"The pressure of the general intellectual influences of the time determines the predispositions which ultimately regulate the direction in which men do not yield to that pressure with the same facility, all large bodies are at last controlled. A change of speculative opinions does not imply an increase of the data upon which those opinions rest, but a change of the habits of thought and mind which they reflect. . . . This standard of belief, this tone and habit of thought, which is the supreme arbiter of the opinions of successive periods, is created, not by the influences arising out of any one department of intellect, but by the combination of all; and the change in social tendencies of the age. Those who contribute most largely to its formation are, I believe, the philosophers. Men like Bacon, Descartes, and Locke have probably done more than any others to set the current of their age. They have formed a certain cast and tone of mind. They have introduced peculiar habits of thought, new modes of reasoning, new tendencies of inquiry. The impulse they have given to the higher literature has been by that literature communicated to the more popular writers; and the impress of these master-thinkers is clearly visible in the writings of multitudes who are totally unacquainted with their works.*

It is the philosophers, then, the original thinkers, who must become Conservative again before Conservative views can be expected to permeate the masses. It seems fair to assume, however, that this result will never be brought about if we rely merely upon what Lecky calls the "tendencies of inquiry" in England alone. There is at present no wholly English school of thought which has for its aim the maintenance of government by the best as opposed to government by the crowd. A crowd is unable to control itself, and not even the election of "leaders" from among its own units (as if leaders could be "elected") can compensate for the influence which must be imposed on it from above.

There is no reason, however, why we should confine ourselves to England; for thought, like art, is universal—admirers of Whistler will remember a famous contrast and comparison in the "Ten o'clock." If there had been any new Conservative ideas in this country they would doubtless have appeared before now; but if we look to the Continent for them our search will not be in vain. If it is objected that Continental thought is even more democratic than ours—that the French Revolution brought Socialism and Anarchy within the reach of the poorest, and that on the other hand autocratic governments like those of Russia and Germany are unsuited to this country—it must be answered that England has always been some twenty-five years behind the Continent where new ideas are concerned. The Radical trend of Continental thought during part of the nineteenth century could easily have been counteracted here had the ruling classes given adequate support to Tory thinkers. But they did not; and if, as a consequence, Tory thought has been stamped out here we must look for it elsewhere.

To those who have closely followed intellectual movements on the Continent during recent years, it will be clear that Nietzsche's writings have "set the current of the age" in an entirely new direction. Before, say, 1890, when his views began to permeate other thinkers, German thought, which the influence of the new thought, was dominated by Kant, Hegel, and Schopenhauer; and these three thinkers, despite their many good qualities, built on a thoroughly democratic foundation. The essence of their thought was plebeian, cloudy, idealistic—in short, Liberal.

Nietzsche assumed the task—a difficult one—of bringing philosophy down from the clouds of romanticism and setting it on a new basis—an aristocratic basis. Instead of indiscriminately glorifying modern Democracy, as so many other writers had done before him, he criticised and analysed it, and more particularly its baser elements and forms: the stupidity and greed of the masses, their inability to appreciate great leaders, their romanticism and idealism, their innate and ineradicable contempt for what is noble, their aversion to art, their utter lack of will and self-control—the political phrase "will of the people," now heard so frequently, is a contemptuous synonym.

In other words, after the publication of Nietzsche's works, mere mob rule ceased to be tacitly accepted by classes of thinkers who had previously refrained from putting it to the test. A new influence, less cloudy and infinitely less idealistic, was given to the thought of the age, and this trend is now seen in the works of men who were either contemporaries of Nietzsche (1844-1900), or who began to write in the generation immediately following him—e.g., Edouard Lebeuf, and Jules de Gaultier in France; E. G. Zoccoli, L. Petrone, and Dr. L. G. Sera in Italy; Antonio Maura, Ramiro de Maeztu, and Manuel Bueno in Spain; George Brandes in Denmark, Strindberg in Sweden, and every thinker of note in present-day Germany and Russia.

An enormous change, then, has come over Continental thought, during the last thirty years or so, in regard to sociology and political science. The change has not been for the benefit of the mere capitalist and still less for the benefit of the uneducated demagogue. It is not a change that calls for the immediate establishment of a new order of society. It is simply a new trend of thought which will have for its most proximate effect, not the abolition of class distinctions, but the abolition of class wars.

Of this new spirit practically every European country but England is taking advantage. Our upper classes, who should be in the very front of all movements of this nature, have apparently ceased to buy books, and are almost insusceptible to new ideas. The late Mr. Alfred Nutt, through whose death we lost one of the most cultured men of our time, once complained to me with quite unusual bitterness that the classes in England which used to give their support to literature had ceased to do so for a generation, and that literature was suffering accordingly.

Not merely literature is suffering, however. If the upper classes have deserted literature and thought, literature and thought have deserted them. We have, to use Nietzsche's phrase, mob above and mob below. But, whereas thinkers can, at a pinch, dispense with our aristocracy, our aristocracy, as is but too obvious, cannot dispense with the thinkers. For example, a somnolent House of Lords, initiating nothing, an ample, a somnolent House of Lords, initiating nothing, and setting it on a new basis—an aristocratic basis. To quote Nietzsche again, however, it is hard to move the mire.
Not so many years less than half a century ago much ringing of bells and other signs of general excitement marked the addition of a new scion to an ancient illustrious race. Directly he had become of an age to think for himself he began wonderingly to reflect whether his could be the sort of life led, even in their childhood, by the succession of ancestors who dreamed of meritorious careers. The boy. Directly he had become of an age to think for himself he began wonderingly to reflect whether his could be the sort of life led, even in their childhood, by the succession of ancestors who dreamed of meritorious careers. 

There was, of course, much frothy rhetoric to dilute the practical knowledge and sound sense that marked the addition of a new scion to an ancient illustrious race. Directly he had become of an age to think for himself he began wonderingly to reflect whether his could be the sort of life led, even in their childhood, by the succession of ancestors who dreamed of meritorious careers. 

Liberty of the Press and our Law for the Indemnification of Rogues. 

By E. Belfort Bax. 

What is the raison d'être of the law of libel, civil and criminal, and in how far does such a law infringe the principle of liberty of the Press? The main purpose of a libel suit is supposed to be the clearing of character of false and calumnious aspersions. The effect of the English law of libel ia to invest the mass with certain rights which are not inalienable. As an example of the sort of case cited above, there was the case of W. C. I. This case is well known; it was the first case in which the courts ruled that the words in question were libellous. The plaintiff was a man who had been libelled by a newspaper. The defendant was a newspaper proprietor, who had published a libellous article about the plaintiff.

The court held that the words were libellous, and awarded damages to the plaintiff. The decision was appealed to the Supreme Court, which affirmed the decision of the lower court.

The Supreme Court held that the plaintiff had shown that the words were libellous and that he had suffered damages as a result of the publication of the article. The court also held that the publication of the article was a libel.

The decision of the Supreme Court was appealed to the House of Lords, but the decision was not reversed.

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is made between a definite allegation, such as that A stole a £10 note from B's pocket in the year 1910, and the statement of the writer's opinion, as an opinion, without offering facts in support of it, that A is not a trustworthy person. Now, the bringing to book of the maker of a false assertion of a damaging character, as in the first case supposed, may certainly justify the intervention of the law without involving any real infringement of the liberty of the Press. The same remarks apply to the insinuation of a writer that he has something "up his sleeve" which, "if he listeth," etc. As much cannot be said for the second case supposed. If the writer clearly ought to be allowed to publish an expression of opinion on any person, at least if he be in any capacity before the public. The opinion expressed may be utterly wrong, unjust, and untrue, and the party of the Press is not to be a meaningless phrase, any writer clearly ought to be allowed to publish an expression of opinion on any person, at least if he be in any capacity before the public. The opinion expressed may be utterly wrong, unjust, and untrue, and that does not hinder the absolute right of the holder of such opinion to give expression to it. If it is wrong, the remedy for this wrong lies with public opinion. People of ordinary intelligence will not accept an opinion of this sort without evidence. And in so far as this elementary principle of justice and fair play is observed no harm can come from the expression of any opinion as such, however unjustified it may be. So much for the case of an injurious opinion destitute of all foundation whatever.

But in nine cases out of ten a published opinion of this nature is not entirely destitute of foundation. Its justification may have varying degrees of completeness from a mere rebuttable suspicion to something very like moral certainty. Yet, however great may be the ground of justification of the opinion expressed, this does not shield a writer expressing such opinion from the terrors of the law of libel. A distinction which is obviously fair is never drawn between the degree of evidence and strength of the adverse opinion, direct or indirect, regarding a person, and the evidence that ought to be required before a prisoner in the dock is convicted of an offence. It is a very different thing to publicly express adverse opinion concerning a man, and to send him to gaol. In the latter case it is undoubtedly right to exact the most rigidly clinching evidence before conviction. In the former case a very much lower degree of probability ought to justify as an administrative, there is no doubt whatever that it acts as a powerful weapon for the shielding and aggravation of rogues. Cases are known of doubtful character who have made a good living out of libel actions. Any published and malicious libel, whether true or not, is nowadays adequate ground for taking proceedings for libel. The matter, from the point of view alike of the liberty of the Press and from what is known as the "public interest," is getting serious. But what is the remedy? The remedy which lies nearest to hand would seem to be to effectively render the average plaintiff in libel actions seditious to public opinion. No opportunity should be lost to pillory the plaintiff in a libel suit. Those opposed to the present state of things should not lose their opportunity to put the idea of personal action for libel is by no means necessarily the injured innocent he makes himself out to be. It should be ceaselessly impressed upon the average man that the winning of a libel action means not the vindication of a character, and that there is not even any guarantee that the statements complained of are not substantially true. The aim should be to introduce a social boycott of the plaintiffs in these cases. Until a sufficiently strong body of public opinion is set in motion the interventions of the Registrar of Rogues will in every case be of no avail. And if the Registrar of Rogues is ever to be of any service, it is necessary that the public should be helped, of relinquishing such a mine of professional profit as the libel action; and many judges, acting apparently as guardians of the interests of the great legal trade union, naturally encourage the bringing of these actions.

The unfairness with which most persons of the present state of the law, forcing such willy-nilly to bring libel suits in sheer self-defence, is bad enough, but worse remains behind. For while any ordinary person can obtain damages for an injudicious libel, whether written or spoken, any statement or expression of opinion concerning themselves which dispossesses them, a man known to hold unpopular opinions (say he is an atheist, a militant Socialist, a pacifist, etc.) can obtain no redress. For the false allegations against his character, allegations that would gain for an ordinary respectable Philistine swingingeing damages from a sympathetic and ingénue judge and jury. The cases of Mr. J. M. Robertson M.P., of Mr. W. E. Williams, and of Mr. Edmondson will bear out what is here said. Mr. Robertson, the Secularist lecturer, was accused of taking part in an improper publication by a Convent. Mr. Williams, the Secularist lecturer and labour agitator, was described as a "loafer" by a paper to whom his views and occupation were objectionable, and Mr. Edmondson, who had, of his own accord, gone out to fight in the South African war, was designated a "coward" similarly by an organ of public opinion opposed to his political principles. Needless to say, verdict for the defendant in all these cases. Now, for my own part, I don't think calling a man a "coward" or a "lubber," or similarly by an organ of public opinion opposed to his political principles. Needless to say, verdict for the defendant in all these cases. Now, for my own part, I don't think calling a man a "coward" or a "lubber," or similarly by an organ of public opinion opposed to his political principles. Needless to say, verdict for the defendant in all these cases. Now, for my own part, I don't think calling a man a "coward" or a "lubber," or similarly by an organ of public opinion opposed to his political principles. Needless to say, verdict for the defendant in all these cases. Now, for my own part, I don't think calling a man a "coward" or a "lubber," or similarly by an organ of public opinion opposed to his political principles. Needless to say, verdict for the defendant in all these cases. Now, for my own part, I don't think calling a man a "coward" or a "lubber," or similarly by an organ of public opinion opposed to his political principles. Needless to say, verdict for the defendant in all these cases. Now, for my own part, I don't think calling a man a "coward" or a "lubber," or similarly by an organ of public opinion opposed to his political principles.
An Englishman in America.

By Juvenal.

There is in America a strong reactionary movement against materialism in all its phases; but, on the other hand, there is a tendency to adopt and propagate new forms of superstition. It is the inevitable swing of the pendulum. There is nothing new or astonishing in the fact that in this country, as in Europe, superstitious "isms" should be accepted by cultured and scientific people. Most of the so-called new things are nothing more than reactions occurring in their proper and harmonious order.

Sir Oliver Lodge thinks the world is on the eve of a revival of superstition on a grand scale. Gustave le Bon, who is considered by many to be the greatest living French physicist, says the superstitions of the past were created by the scientists. "In the Middle Ages," he says, "science and superstition were always found together. Gustave le Bon thinks that even in the present day we have not improved on the ignorance and illusions of medi eval philosophers. Even the keene st among contemporary workers in physics and chemistry possess the qualities that made wizards and witches of the Middle Ages possible."

In America, among other movements, the "New Thought" school incorporates the thought next to the Eddy movement, can claim the most followers. This far-reaching movement wraps up within its folds the seeds of more than one superstition. This new form of thought has its followers and students in every town and village in every State, and perhaps the following is even larger than that of Christian Science, because thousands of people are practising the mental cure in secret without belonging to any society or church.

Evidently numbers have much to do with belief and enthusiasm. The greater the following the easier conviction becomes, as we see in the case of the Christian Scientists, and no one who has given any deep thought to these questions can doubt the influence exerted by a crowd. According to Le Bon, a crowd of scientists is no better than a crowd in the street when it comes to a matter of clear statement of fact. Superstition is a contagion, just like any other contagion. In America the rush to get away from gross materialism has caused many intelligent people to part company with their cooler judgments. In the "New Thought" movement the weakness consists in believing too much, and, consequently, in affirming too much.

Back of this movement I see an element of illusory ambition, which came into being with American Independence and the spirit of democracy arising out of that political independence. The spirit of universal equality naturally engendered a spirit of social and spiritual illusion of a kind calculated to fill the mind with chimerical ambitions of every description. The fact that a poor, uneducated boy could become President was not considered so marvellous as it was common and within the range of the most ordinary lives. Things ceased to appear wonderful. And when the wonderful disappeared all sorts of superstitious notions began to take possession of the ordinary mind. The death of wonder was the birth of a vast system of miraculous mental achievements, the like of which were never known except in the fabulous picture of the old mythologies.

For this new "New Thought," carried to its utmost, simply means that if you have not enough money, you can turn yourself from a very common person into a Shakespeare or a Bonaparte. That is what it means. Many people get into their heads that by some stroke of mental magic they will wake up one morning and find themselves poets, artists, musicians, orators, senators—everything, indeed, but what nature intends them to be.

There can be no mistake about the result of much of this new mode of thinking and teaching. I have spoken to many persons in New York, men and women, who have one foot over the borderland of society. I have met several highly educated persons who are insane on the subject of the mental cure, and I now avoid meeting them. They turn all conversation in the direction of the "New Thought" movement, and render intellectual intercourse impossible. Some of these good people have never stopped to consider how many lunatics there are in the asylums who think they are kings or queens and who are in the asylums because of a surplus of imagination.

There are more "cranks" in America than there are in the whole of Europe combined. This is not my opinion; it is a simple fact of arithmetic known to all visitors to America who have given this interesting question any serious consideration. America is the home of the cynic and the sentimentalist, the materialist and the metaphysician, the philosopher and the fanatic. Extremes meet here in society as in the climate. I am convinced that the climate has much to do with all these outbreaks of strange and impossible "isms." The atmosphere being highly electric, imaginative brains become overcharged with thought and an outlet is needed. Mere impressions and whims are mistaken for truth, and the victim begins to write or to preach, to form some small groups and then societies.

Some of the most unhappy people I have met here or anywhere else are prominent workers in this new movement. Discontented and inordinately ambitious, life is one long-drawn-out misery for these unfortunate people. For years they have fooled themselves by affirmations which have only served to make their hollow pretensions more conspicuous and more painful to their friends, who know the chronic incapacity of the victims.

Another cause of this wholesale affirmation is the false optimism engendered by the immense riches of America, the colossal fortunes built up seemingly out of nothing, most of the great millionaires being self-made men. The idea of equality naturally engenders a spirit of mechanical, reason becomes negative and commonsense calculation, it naturally follows that the imagination of many people keeps pace with this fabulous picture of material property. People's minds float in an element of nebulous desire. There is no longer a possibility of a cure in secret without belonging to any society or church. More impressions and whims are mistaken for truth, and the victim begins to write or to preach, to form some small groups and then societies.

Nothing is impossible. The women who are obliged to go about in a motor costing a trifling two thousand dollars keep making the secret "affirmation" that one day they will possess a motor costing ten thousand dollars, with diamonds to match; but never do they get it into their nebulous brains that five hundred thousand other American women are wishing and "willing" exactly the same thing, and that this thing could not happen. Superficial thinking is at the bottom of most of this new thought movement. The thinking is done along one special groove, the thought becomes mechanical, reason becomes negative and commonsens e has no place in the scheme of the mental cure.

There are three kinds of writers—those who write from the head, those who write from the heart and those who write from the shoulder. A good many of the "New Thought" people write from the shoulder, as prize-fighters strike from the shoulder. Without the prize, there would be neither the one nor the other. One writer of "New Thought" books has seen four hundred thousand copies of one of his books sold at a stiff price. It is so easy to "affirm" when your income is big and the work easy! And yet this movement is mainly supported by people of moderate means.
I have met with some pitiable cases here. One woman who brought up her two daughters in the "New Thought" beliefs has paid dearly for her superstition. She taught her daughters, who possessed ordinary voices, that by sheer willing and affirming they could become great operatic stars. She packed them off to Paris for finishing lessons. There the young ladies remained for two years until all their money was gone, and they found themselves in possession of much experience and mediocre vocal organs and the fact that they were not even proficient at any. I give this as one instance in thousands.

* * *

American society seems to be a mixture of Christian Science and Occultism in some form. But what are the Churches doing? The Churches are honeycombed with Mental Science, New Thought, Spiritism and Buddhism. That is, all the Churches but the Catholic. You will not find many Irish who dabble in these things. They belong to a Church with rigid rules of belief and religious conduct and the way is fixed and straight. Nor will you find many Germans in New York who take to the new mental movements, for the reason that the Germans are taught to reason and criticise, and they are mostly indifferent to things of a nebulous nature. The eccentric religions here are fathered by typical Americans like Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism, and Mrs. Eddy, the founder of Christian Science.

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Nowhere are there so many people who try to appear what they are not. Nowhere are there so many people whose hearts are made callous by the nursing of preposterous ambitions, flighty notions, vague reason that the Germans are taught to reason and criticise, and they are mostly indifferent to things of a nebulous nature. The eccentric religions here are fathered by typical Americans like Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism, and Mrs. Eddy, the founder of Christian Science.

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When one stops to consider the hot-potch of "isms," the hocus-pocus of mental fads to be met with in New York, one cannot help wondering that there is any government, art or religion left; one cannot help marvelling at the fact that absolute anarchy does not reign on the streets, in business and in the home. Much has been said against the rule of Tammany in New York. I am beginning to think that New York would be more paradoxical and nebulous were it not for Tammany. The Irish are conservative. There are two strong reasons why they do not indulge in the luxury of mental fads—one political, the other religious.

La Nouvelle Chasse.

[Translated from the French of Alfred Capus by N. C.]

The hunting season will soon be open in a number of departments. Although the average sportsman may be relatively more intelligent than the average game, bird or beast, the latter grasps clearly that the news is a matter of supreme interest to him. It is a fact that the most conscientious students of the habits of animals do not deny to-day that the partridges and hares, the rabbits and the pheasants, know that at periodic intervals a man, preceded by a dog and holding in his hand a gun, is in a position to shoot them at a distance of a certain maximum number of yards.

This very essential notion has only penetrated their midst after considerable delay; but it is certain that they have now arrived at the possession of very categorical information. The fathers and mothers transmit it to their little ones, and, though one has no very detailed knowledge of their educational system, the result is indisputable.

While a man who has finished his studies with brilliance is entirely ignorant of life, the least important of partridges, four or five months old, skilfully brought up in his own body, a supreme irony addressed to his executors.

This knowledge extends even to the exact date of the shooting season. By what mysterious means does the information reach the game creatures of an entire country? Science has as yet few ideas on the subject; but two days after the official announcement has appeared, hares, partridges, and rabbits, the first emotions of the season, begin to take their precautions and put their affairs in order.

Without daring to make any positive statement in dealing with so delicate a matter, I sometimes imagine that the news does not terrify the game bird more than moderately. The great herdsman will do his best to obtain his game, and the result is indisputable. When he aimed at me," says one in that animal language with which our scientists will be long in fathoming, "a sportsman despatched his shot into the calf of one of his colleagues. "Ah!" retorted another, "I burst the eye of a great devil in that patch of grass down there." And each records his triumphs. So there come to be inquirable histories of sport. Here is one, the authenticity of which has always seemed to me a matter of doubt, though it has been confirmed for me by many Southerners, who themselves witnessed the affair. It happened in the South, like all the rather serious hunting episodes. One day the rumour spread among the inhabitants of the commune of D—, in Vaucluse, and soon reached the neighbouring communes within a ten-mile radius, that a shepherd had seen a hare in the country. As the last hare seen in the cantonment was recorded to have been at the commencement of Louis Philippe's reign, people were content to shrug their shoulders in face of the story.

But a few days later two peasants, having positively seen the animal at a distance of ten paces, it became necessary to correct this first impression. The existence of the hare was then officially recognised by the Mayor of D—. It became the object of a proclamation to the people, and many newspapers devoted to it complete articles. It was called The Hare, with capital letters.

All the sportsmen of the country started to beat the fields and the hillsides. Packs of dogs bounded at their heels. After many days of fanatical chase it made an appearance. It was superb, and seemed very old, evidently an ancestor. Possibly a hundred shots glanced by it within a few minutes; not one touched it.

Next day the hunt commenced with renewed fury. Again the hare was sighted, aimed at, missed by everyone with that unanimity which characterises the Southerners on important occasions.

The same thing continued the next day and during the whole week. The sportsmen, astounded and seized by some strange superstitious fear, declared that it was invulnerable, and with common accord they gave up pursuit.

But on Sunday morning the hare, appearing tired out by the terrible pursuit he had suffered, suddenly showed himself in the Town Hall Square. There was a rush to arms. Before they could draw on him, he, full of acors and disgust of life, hurled himself by a stupendous effort into the mayor's own kitchen, the door of which was ajar, and ran the spit through his own body, a supreme irony addressed to his executioners.

Such is the tale of this strange case of suicide among the animals.
A Symposium on Racial Development.  
Conducted by Hunley Carter.  
Biologists.

The following questions as to whether there are signs of racial degeneration, and whether such a degeneration is being met and checked by the application of scientific knowledge, have been put to eminent biologists:

1. Have recent events, in your opinion, shown an evolution towards racial, i.e., biological degeneration?

2. If so, do you agree that it is due to the neglect to apply the laws at the disposal of biologists?

3. Would you say that the causes which prevent the application of known biological laws are to be found in scientists themselves or in the public and public administrators, or does the main cause lie in the limitations of social life?

4. What immediate steps ought to be taken to extend the scope of the teaching of biology?

5. Would you offer suggestions as to how applied biology is likely to affect—
   (a) Religion?
   (b) Art?
   (c) Economic and political theory and practice?

For instance, will its application to current social politics enable the best part of the political programme, namely, the prevention of poverty and crime, to be adequately carried out? Ought it and shall man discard moral principles that will enable us to determine, direct, control and forecast individual, social and national life and character? In fact, will the evidence obtained by a careful biological investigation into the ancestry of individuals enable us to set aside the old unnecessary accidental way of doing things—that of leaving everything to chance, such as sound persons to contract marriages with the mentally diseased, and individuals of ability to come to the front as best they can—and to substitute an intelligent means of avoiding the marriage of the potentially insane, as well as a means of determining ability which cannot fail to be of great social value in putting the right person into the right place, and so obtaining a maximum of efficient social work?

6. Have you any criticisms or further suggestions?

SIR LAUNDER BRUNTON, M.D., LL.D., D.Sc., F.R.C.P., F.R.S.

I have practically answered your questions in a paper entitled "The Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Degeneration," printed in "Public Health," February, 1906. Sir William Taylor has very clearly pointed out that the important question is not that of deterioration as compared with past time, but that of physical inefficiency in the present. In regard to the question whether the whole population or even those composing certain strata have undergone deterioration, Sir William Taylor, in a second memorandum of November, 1903, pointed out that there are no reliable data for the past physical condition of the people, so that it is impossible to form any satisfactory comparison with the present, and to ascertain with any certainty whether deterioration is going on or not.

In order that data shall be afforded for future comparison it has been recommended by a physical census of the people shall be taken, beginning with the children in schools and factories and extending it gradually over the population at large. The apparent decrease in the physique of recruits is considered to be due not to any actual deterioration of the population, but to the recruits having been drawn from a stratum of the people poorer and physically weaker than that from which the recruits of fifty years ago were selected. The conditions giving rise to this physical inefficiency have been very thoroughly investigated by the Committee, and it appears that, except where parents are affected by syphilis or drunkenness, the child inherits at birth a good physique, and if properly cared for in infancy and childhood it may grow up strong and healthy, although its father and mother may be physically weak from bad surroundings. Unfortunately the chances of a child born under such circumstances receiving proper care are small, for the weakness of the mother in a very large number of cases renders her unable to suckle her child, and the food that is given, either from ignorance, carelessness, or poverty, is quite unsuitable, so that the "sacrifice of infant life is enormous."

In addition to this census periodical measurements of children and young persons in factories should be taken. For this purpose, school teachers, factory surgeons, and a small staff of professional surveyors may be able to superintend the process, but they cannot instruct the teachers, and the most likely person to be called upon to give instruction, I think, be the Medical Officer of Health. The medical examination of school children, who should be complete, but periodical, underlies all schemes for improvement in school training. It is only by such examination that we can know what the capable and weak child are, and what amount of work, mental and physical, may reasonably be expected from it, and it is only by repeated examinations that we can ascertain what work in school exercises are having upon it. The system of examination for mental work is already in full swing, and we now want that system fully extended to physical conditions. By such examination it will be possible to put clever and weak-minded children into different classes, to place the physically strong, the physically weak, and those suffering from unsuspected cardiac or other disease, in their proper group, and by adapting the mental and physical training to each we shall get the maximum of good and the minimum of harm. All this will take time, it will take skill, it will take attention and care.

Judicious physical training, the feeding of school-children, instruction in the general principles of hygiene, and proper housing accommodation are, in my opinion, means to the desired end, namely, individual and racial development.

HARRY CAMPBELL, M.D., B.S.C., M.R.C.S., F.R.C.P.  
1. I do not think that any racial degeneration, physical, intellectual, or ethical, is taking place in the civilised world. For instance, will its application to current social biology can refer to the fact that the knowledge and application of them are confined to the few. The time will come when they be taught like the Church catechism, and as generally admitted as the fact that fire burns.

4. The grand principles of biology should be taught from early childhood.

5. The effect of applied biology on religion and art will be to broaden their basis and to exalt them.

I will conclude this communication with a few remarks on the subject of eugenics, perhaps the most important branch of applied biology.

There can be no doubt that man might be greatly changed for the better by an all wise artificial selection of certain many Crimes of a man who worships the beautiful and detests physical ugliness in any form, told me that, if he had his way, none but the beautiful should be permitted to multiply, and when I asked why all incapable that man and with beautiful characters might in this way be lost to the race, he somewhat brutally replied that, commendable as virtuous ugliness undoubtedly was, we could well dispense with it; that having secured a physically beautiful race, it would be time enough to set about eliminating the morally defective among them, and so breed a race of humans beautiful alike in body and in mind.

Now there can be no doubt such an achievement, although the few remarks on the subject of eugenics, perhaps the most important branch of applied biology.

One might think it too far-fetched; it was possible, and this in a comparatively short space of time, greatly to improve man's intellectual powers. All that would be necessary would be to allow a highly intellectual to perpetuate their kind; though whether a highly beautiful, virtuous and intellectual race could work the present machinery—whether, indeed, capables of carrying on all the specialised forms of activity connected with the modern social organisation, may well be questioned. Finally, it would be possible, I believe we might find this the most difficult task of all—materially to improve the health standard of the community.

In our desire to improve the human race by artificial selection we must be careful not to minimise the part which natural selection is playing in the development of our race. What is largely lost sight of by modern eugenicists is the important fact that natural selection is still actively at work on man, not in one direction only, but in all the directions indicated.
Nothing could be further from the truth. Natural selection is essentially bound up with the very existence of life. Had I the time I should have little doubt that natural selection is actively at work on man, eliminating the ugly, the im- moral, as well as the physically and intellectually unfit; and that by the operation of entirely natural processes the human race is ever tending to increase in beauty, in virtue, and in intelligence, as well as to maintain its standard of physical fitness. It is permissible to quote some of his words: "The phenomenon of the "multiplication of the red-in-tooth-and-claw" is an illusion due to the impression made upon us by a writer on evolution as regards the conditions imposed by neo-civilization that he has ever been before.


In reply to your questions (1) whether there are signs of racial degeneration in (I presume you would add) European or other civilized countries, and (2) whether degeneration, if existing, can and should be checked by application of scientific knowledge—I beg to say that I have on many occasions and in various books expressed my view in regard to this matter. As long ago as 1868 in the "Quarterly Journal of Science," and in 1879 in my book "Comparative Physiology" I pointed out that in man compared with animals, there is to a large extent a cessation of selection—and that the "struggle for existence" is transferred from individuals to the organism as a whole, known as "tribes," and "nations." I also at that time (in the "Quarterly Journal of Science") discussed one of the fundamental evolutions of the human organism, that is, the desire to prohibit individuals belonging to families in which there is hereditary tendency to special disease such as tuberculosis, from procreating offspring. It is desirable to prohibit individuals from reproducing who might possibly deprive the community of special and active mental endowments of a high value who are not frequently found to co-exist with phthisis, and may possibly be correlated with the tuberculous tendency. This point has recently been raised again after many years (in the last issue of the "Edinburgh Review") by a writer on heredity, but it cannot be said that we have any more definite knowledge on the subject than we had forty years ago—when I first wrote of it. It is quite possible that the apparent association of genius with phthisis (and also with syphilis) is an illusion due to the impression made upon us by exceptions, such as Newton, which would have been quite as likely to any natural correlation were it possible to examine the facts statistically or even experimentally.

The question of racial degeneration is complicated by the inevitable tendency of those who first approach it to confuse two distinct things, viz., (a) the exhibition of inferiority of physique and mental endowment due to the existence of injurious conditions in which individuals have been reared and completed their lives; (b) the existence of an inferior or "degenerated" germ plasm or "stirp" in a race which formerly had a more healthy, well-endowed, desirable germ plasm. The condition (b) cannot be shown to be produced by the condition (a). The condition (a) can be abolished by improvement of environment and nutrition. The condition (b) cannot be remedied by conservation and treatment of the individuals. It can only be dealt with by "selective breeding," and its existence is due to the absence of conditions tending to favour the survival of the healthy non-degenerate stock and by the presence of conditions which not merely allow but actively favour the inferior or degenerating stock. The conditions favouring the excessive multiplication of inferior stock undoubtedly exist in modern society to a much less degree of consistence of condition of selective, superior, healthy, well-endowed stock. Looked at from a breeder's point of view the case is simple enough. It is merely this: the "breeders" of modern States are not those who whatever made to favour good stock, and every facility given for the elimination of diseased stock to permeate the whole breed and bring it ultimately to a condition of "improvement or "deterioration" condition. The vast growth of population, and the increasing facilities given (at the public expense and by charity) for the treatment and rearing of the offspring of incapable and diseased parents, has probably led to an increase in degenerate stock during the last century and a half. But for the last century and a half of the eighteenth century, the earliest time in which a human race quitted the severe conditions of savage life and constant warfare, natural selection has ceased to maintain the quality of its individuals at a high level, and we are not yet much worse off

in this respect (though increasingly so) than our remotest civilized ancestors. It is, however, a fact that I think it of the utmost importance to humanity that steps be taken to deal with this matter. But I am of the opinion that the first step towards the solution of this problem is to undertake a thorough and far-reaching investigation, which can only be obtained by great expenditure of money on the part of the State, and which might possibly be undertaken by a body of inquirers into the facts of human heredity and the transmission and evolution of human "qualities." It should be made part of the duty of the Registrar-General. I should be glad if you would indicate what I have written on this question, but I do not propose to write it over again. The following references contain what I shall write if you please to refer to them:

(1) "The Kingdom of Man." (Constable. 1907.) Pp. 40 and 41.

(2) "From an Easy Chair." (Constable. 1908.) Pp. 97 to 108 inclusive, but especially p. 107.

(3) "Science from an Easy Chair." (Methuen. 1910.) Pp. 276 to 282.

(4) My evidence (in the form of a report) to the Commission on the Treatment of the Feeble-minded.


The answer I would give to the question, "Have recent events shown that what is called "biological degeneration" is "yes; in certain directions," and I offer the following suggestions in the hope that they may throw some fresh light on the question of social evolution. The degeneration of a race can surely only mean that the race shows less efficient adaptation to its environment than heretofore. The history of mankind is the history of a species repeatedly changing and maintaining an unstable equilibrium by the exercise of specially developed faculties. By the amassing of wealth a man has controlled his survival and evolved a civilization. Sir E. Ray Lankester has enlarged on this theme in his recently published book, "The Kingdom of Man." It is permissible to quote an extract from this work: "The adjustment of organisms to their surroundings is so severely liable, excepting as a transient and very exceptional occurrence, is due to man's interference."

Where, however, many are unable to follow Professor Lankester is in his belief that the progressive degeneration from the rest of the animal kingdom has largely defied the operations of the law of natural selection. To me it appears that this law as it affects man has simply entered on a new phase that the phenomenon of the "multiplication of the red-in-tooth-and-claw" is a necessary stage on the way to a higher plane of evolution; that the human spirit which shrinks from the "red-in-tooth-and-claw" will eventually, as regards man at any rate, solve the problem by other methods, while ensuring as certainly the progress of the race. I am strongly of the opinion that with the plain object lessons confronting us, biological law can be "brought into the sphere of practical politics" far more widely and deeply than at present obtains, but I think the study of these laws by biologists themselves have only recently been brought to the point of practical application, at any rate as regards the inheritance of disease and the causes of "racial degeneration." It is well known, of course, that North Europeans attempting to establish a white community in the tropics will be liable to diseases from which the natives are practically immune, and an endeavour to persist as an isolated colony would result in hopeless deterioration in two or three generations. Conversely, natives of a tropical region would show a similar degeneration if transplanted to temperate latitudes.

The History of Race after Race that has entered India and become master of its feeble folk repeats the same sad story of a splendid physique and morale corrupted and degenerated. As regards the aboriginals of India, the author of "The Influence of Environment on Man," presidential address to the Royal Anthropological Institute, 1910.) a similar result ensued in many quarters on the great barbarian invasions of the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. Prof. Ridgeway's words would apply to many countries besides India. The cause of these rapid degenerations is simple and obvious. A race evolving for many centuries or millennia in a given environment cannot adapt itself to too
severe a change of soil, climate and social conditions. The rate of degeneration will vary according to the degree of contrast between the new and old environment. If on the other hand the degree of contrast be not too great or the change not too sudden the migrated community may be able to evolve types adapted to the new conditions, and so evade extinction from war, famine and pestilence.

These facts have already met with popular appreciation, though perhaps they have not been clearly formulated into a biological doctrine applicable to mankind. One need only mention Mr. Barrie's play, "The Admirable Crichton," and the fate that overtook one of Wells's Martians, evolved in another planet, when they visited this earth. Mr. Barrie's community contained elements making for adaptation to a strange environment, though it involved a social upheaval, the task was beyond the power of the superman Martians.

The point I desire to urge, however, is that in a country like Britain the same processes are at work, though in a subtler form. The British people have been formed by a fusion of what was practically an aboriginal race with successive waves of invading races. The invasions-in-force have come to an end nearly a thousand years ago, and the country gradually settled down into local communities devoted to pastoral and agricultural pursuits. In the formation of this nation from its primitive elements and in the molecular changes subsequently occurring, "natural selection" brought about by the process of "survival of the fittest," which have been described by Beddoe, Munro, and others. In France a very thorough study of these local types and the immediate factors producing them can be found in a book, "Les Francais d'Outre-Mer," the well-known author of "A quoi tient la supériorité des Anglo-Saxons." A similar work dealing with British local types would be of immense value in indicating those best adapted to the local conditions in which they evolved. It necessarily follows that the longer and the more completely a local community has remained undisturbed the less able are the individuals composing that community to adapt themselves to change.

But the past century has witnessed in this country the decay of agriculture and the rise of industrialism, together with immensely increased facilities of transit. The result has been a general uprooting, a dislocation, of the locally-evolved types and their migration into new environments, chiefly cities. The stress of natural selection has fallen severely on this rapid re-assortment of the national elements. The army of industrialism has demanded certain qualities from its rank and file, and has had to extract these from the fusion of varied types migrating to industrial centres, just as the pastoral and agricultural communities of remoter centuries evolved the locally-adapted types already mentioned from the mixture of aboriginal and invading elements.

The salient feature of this rural depopulation and concentration in the cities has been the failure of the blonde element to adapt itself to the exigencies of urban life. Prof. Gustav Retanis, in his "Huxley" lecture delivered to the Royal Anthropological Institute in 1909, expressed the opinion that the fair-haired, blue-eyed Nordic race in view of the manifest greater adaptability of the brunet races to the demands of industrialism.

In a paper read at the British Medical Congress last summer I endeavoured to account for these relative adaptabilities and susceptibilities by tracing (as well as historical and prehistoric data permit) the respective evolutions of the three primary races-composing the bulk of the European peoples, viz., the blonde Nordic and the brunet Iberian and Alpine. I submitted that whereas the two latter races had been accustomed to communal life and also to relative humidity of climate from bygone times, the blonde had evolved under climatic conditions resembling those obtaining in Canada at the present day, that is to say, conditions of relative dryness with hot summer and frosty winter, and, further, that they have always shown aversion from communal life. On these grounds I accounted for the failure of the blonde to adapt itself, as it were, to the changing slum-wastrels into useful citizens, shows how the reproduction of the race.

In dealing with disease due to lack of harmony with environment (a classification embracing a very large proportion of the ills from which we suffer today), I recommend that one should treat the patient as a whole, and study the relation of morbid proclivities to rural and urban conditions, and that these molecular movements of human societies, and that these

Nevertheless, I see here hope for the blonde race. For its special qualities of courage, initiative, energy, and physical strength will be once more in demand, but I think its regeneration will be as the main contribution to a group of hybrid types rather than as a pure organized race.

In conclusion I trust that the present volume will be of some assistance in the advance from mere local to general social welfare and that it will contribute to the operation of that potent force, the kaleidoscope impending. Out of the ever-increasing facilities for travel must arise an ever-increasing demand for types adapted to new conditions and not too great or rapid a change not too sudden the migrated community may be able to evolve types adapted to the new conditions, and so evade extinction from war, famine and pestilence.

The study of the relation of morbid proclivities to rural and urban disintegration and migration is of particular concern to State medicine and to the Legislature.

I am persuaded that the problems of cancer, consumption, etc., and of the phenomena connoted by the term "physical degeneration" are closely connected with the moral and molecular movements of human society, and that these must be studied and controlled if man's aspirations towards a state of stable equilibrium in Nature are to be realised.
Some weeks ago I expressed with a certain vivacity my disappointment with Mr. John Masefield's novel, "The Street of To-day." On Friday last, at the Little Theatre, I saw "Nan," for the first time. It is astonishing that one man could have produced a novel so feeble and a play so fine. I admit with eagerness that I was profoundly impressed by "Nan." It is as good a modern play as I know, barring "The Playboy of the Western World." It begins rather haltingly and crudely, but from the moment of the scene between the two cousins (adorably played by Miss McCarthy and Miss May Jerrold) it becomes distinguished. The love scene which opens the second act is superb. And the closing scenes of the last act are overpowering and intensely beautiful. In brief, "Nan" is what I call a play. It is the kind of thing one knows one could not do oneself. "Nan" is the third real play that I have seen this year, the other two being Georges de Porto Riche's "Le Vieil Homme" and Copeau's "Les Frères Karamazov." Rather a golden year! It seemed to me then owing to the author's insistence on the unity of time, the sequence of scenes in the second act is somewhat abrupt and hurried. Also he endows the creature though she was. Her remark about her power which it is difficult to believe she possessed, rare words). Quite apart from the fact that a young virgin could not possibly have generalised in this grand manner one may assert that the generalisation is partially at variance with the experience of experienced men. The singular vocal observations of women at all three of the indicated moments have been noticed and recorded for many generations and form an anthology which is imperishably printed in the common memory of mankind. These are trifles. "Nan" is simply immense. And the producer and the players have risen to it most excellently.

Miss Lilah McCarthy has got Mr. Thomas Hardy's own play, founded on "Tess," for the Little Theatre. Nor is this all. Most of the dramatic authors who are any good (I mean those of whom Mr. William Archer says that they would succeed with the great public if only they had as much technical skill as the Haddon Chamberses and the Alfred Sutros of the fashionable world) seem either to have given her plays or definite promises of plays. There is even talk of a new one-act play by H. G. Wells, but the talk, particularly in the best-informed quarters, is very vague. This play has been taught to do with "Kipps," of which the scenery is now being painted at the Haymarket. By the way, a dearth of scene-painters is one of the trying phenomena towards the arts, the "Paris-Journal," is run in the fashionable sixpenny weekly paper of general interest that pays its way. The illustrated sixpennies are in a particularly dubious condition despite the joint manifesto issued by some of them in rebuttal of evidence given in a certain libel action not long ago. And I think they deserve to be in a dubious condition. The daily papers have simply beaten them at every point, and they show no initiative. But in their turn the daily papers are also pretty rocky. It is almost notorious that about half the total number of London dailies are run at a loss. The mischief is that the owners are usually so rich that they don't mind (much) whether they lose or gain, directly. You might think that it is a fine thing for a man to run a newspaper regardless of its balance-sheet. But it isn't. It might be if the man's ideals were fine—only they usually aren't. The most readable daily in Paris, and the one with the best attitude towards the arts, the "Paris-Journal," is run in the interests of the owners of the Casino at Enghien, and its sole real aim is to prevent a priggish government from suppressing gambling at the Casino. I do not say that in our beloved London unremunerative daily papers have aims quite so naïve and base—and yet, I don't know.

**The Outlaw.**

My jerkin is of russet brown,
My cloak is Lincoln green.
And hey for the woods, and ho for the woods,
I love them well I ween.

My roof the sky, my lamp the moon,
My food the forest cheer,
Then hey for the woods, and ho for the woods,
With the red and timid deer.

There's good red venison for meat,
For drink, brown convent ale;
And hey for the woods, and ho for the woods,
And ho for crag and dale.

There is no law but bow and spear,
No pomp for me I ken,
Yet hey for the woods, and ho for the woods,
And heath, and moor, and fen.

Aye! woods in sooth, I er'd did love,
And the azure open sky,
The green below, and the blue above,
And I'll love them till I die.

**Ruth Pitter.**
On the Decline of the Book:  
And Especially of the Historical Book

By Hilaire Belloc

(Reprinted by the Author's kind permission from the "Bibliophile," May, 1908.)

It is an interesting speculation by what means the Book lost its old position in this country. This is not only an interesting speculation, but one which nearly concerns all men. For if men have fallen into the habit of neglecting true books in an old and traditional civilisation, the inaccuracy of their judgments and the illusions to which they will be subject, must increase.

To take but one example: history. The less the true historical book is read and the more men depend upon ephemeral statement, the more will legend crystallise, the historical book is read and the more men depend upon ephemeral statement, the more will legend crystallise.

There are many, especially among younger men, who would contest the premiss upon which all this is founded. They may point out, for instance, that the actual number of bound books bought in a given time at present is much larger than ever it was before. They may point out again, and with justice, that the proportion of the population which reads books of any sort, though perhaps not larger than it was in 180 years ago, is very much larger than it was one hundred years ago. And it may further be affirmed with truth that the range of subjects now covered by books produced and sold is much wider than ever it was before.

All this is true; and yet it is also true that the Book as a factor in our civilisation has not only declined but has almost disappeared. Were many more dogs to be possessed in England than are now possessed, but were they to be all mongrels, among which none could be found capable of retrieving, or of following a fox or a hare with any discipline, one would have a right to say that the dog as a factor of our civilisation had declined. Were many more men in England able to ride horses more or less, but were the number of those who rode constantly and for pleasure enormously to diminish, and were the new millions who could just manage to keep on horseback to prefer animals without spirit on which they would feel safe, one would have a right to say that the horse was declining as a factor in our civilisation; and this is exactly what has happened with the Book.

The excellence of a book and its value as a book depend upon two factors, which are usually, though not always, united in varied proportions: first, that it should put something of value to the reader, whether of value as a discovery and an enlargement of wisdom or of value as a new emphasis laid upon old and sound morals; secondly, that this thing added or renewed in human life should be presented in such a manner as to give permanent aesthetic pleasure.

That is not a first-rate book which, while it is admirably written, teaches something false or something evil; nor is that a first-rate book which, though it discover a completely new thing, or emphasise the most valuable department of morals, is so constructed as to be unreadable. Now it will not be denied that so far as these two factors are concerned—and I repeat they are almost always found in combination—the position of the Book has dwindled almost to nothingness. One could give examples of every kind: one could show how poetry, no matter how appreciated or praised, no longer sells. One could show—and this is one of the worst signs of all—how men will buy by the hundred thousand anything at all which has the hall mark of an established reputation, quite careless as to their love of it or their appetite for it. One could further show how much less than one book of permanent value in English life has been discovered in our generation outside England, and has been as it were thrust upon the English public by foreign opinion.

But for my purpose it will be sufficient to take one very important branch which I can claim to have watched with some care, and that is the branch of History.

It may be said with truth that in our generation no single first-rate piece of history has enjoyed an appreciable sale. That is not true of France, it is not true of the United States, it is not even true of Germany in her intellectual decline, but it is true of England.

History is an excellent test. No man will read history, at least history of an instructive sort, unless he is a man who can read a book, and desires to possess one. To read History involves not only some permanent interest in things not immediately sensible, but also some permanent brain-work in the reader; for as one reads history one cannot, if one is an intelligent being, forbear perpetually to contrast the lessons it teaches with the received opinions of our time. What is as valuable as this to the general thesis I am maintaining, because no good history can be written without a great measure of hard work. To make a history at once accurate, readable, useful and new, is probably the hardest of all literary efforts; and in writing such history the historian is driven more horses abreast in his team than a man writing any other kind of literary matter. He must keep his imagination active; his style must be not only lucid, but also must arrest the reader; he must exercise perpetually a power of selection which plays over innumerable details; he must, in the midst of such occupations, preserve unity of design, as much as must the novelist or the playwright; and yet with all this there is but one verb, an adjective or a substantive which, if it does not repose upon established evidence, will not mar the particular type of work on which he is engaged.

As an example of what I mean, consider two sentences: The first is taken from the 432nd page of that exceedingly unequal publication, the Cambridge History of the French Revolution; the second I have made up on the spur of the moment; both deal with the Battle of Wattignies. The "Cambridge History" version runs as follows:—

On October 15 the relieving force, 50,000 strong, attacked the Austrian covering force at Wattignies; the battle raged all that day and was most furious on the right, in front of the Austrian covering force at Wattignies, which was taken and lost three times; on the 17th the French expected another general engagement but the enemy had drawn off.

The first sentence contains five positive errors in six lines. The French were not 50,000 strong, the attack of the 15th was not on Wattignies, but on Doullers; Wattignies was not taken and lost three times; the fight of the 15th was least pressed on the right (further on the left and hardest in the centre) and no one—not the least recruit—expected Coburg to come back on the 17th. Why he had crossed the Sambre at every point the day before! As for negative errors, or errors of omission, the one on capital, and the others that the victory was won on the second day, the 16th, of which no mention is made.

Now contrast such a sentence with the following:—

On October 15th the relieving force, 42,000 strong, attacked the Austrian centre at Doullers and made demonstrations upon its wings; the attack upon Doullers (which village had been taken and lost three times) having failed upon the following day, October 16th, the extreme left of the enemy's position at Wattignies was attacked and carried; an employment thus outflanked was compelled to retreat, and Maubeuge was relieved that same evening.

In the first sentence (which bears the hall mark of the Unionist press, which was appointed to the task of combating what was then said to be the decline of history in so few lines as has been made. The numbers are wrong; the nature of the fighting is misstated; the village in the centre is confused with that in the extreme right; the critical second day is altogether
omitted, and every portion of the sentence, verb, adjective and substantive, is either directly inaccurate or indirectly conveys an inaccurate impression. The second sentence, bold in style and uninverting in presentation as the first, has the merit of telling the truth. But—and here is the point—it would be impossible to impress the first sentence unless one had read up the battle, and to read up that battle one has to depend on five or six documents, some unpublished (like much of Jourdan’s Memoirs) some of them involving a visit to Maubeuge itself, some, like Pierrat’s book, very difficult to obtain (for it is neither like much of Jourdan’s Memoirs) some of them must be read and collated, and if possible the actual ground of the battle visited, before the first simple presentation as the Universities. Now, if the rich man has no temptation by way of popular fame, and the poor man no opportunity for advancement, in any branch of letters, but a third form of support, and that is the support of the buying public. And the public will not buy. I will suppose the case of a popular nostrum, who in a few months shall write, not an historical novel, but a piece of so-called history. He shall call it, for instance, “England’s Heroes.” Before you tell me his name, or what he has written, I can tell you here and now what he will write on any number of points. He will call Hastings Senlac. In the Battle of Hastings he will make out Harold to be the head of a highly patriotic nation called the “Anglo-Saxons”; they shall be desperately defending themselves against certain French-speaking Scandinavians called Normans. He will deplore the defeat, but will give the battle as the best. Magna Charta he will have signed at Runnymede—probably he will have it drawn up there as well. He will translate the most famous clause of the modern words “judgment of his peers” and “law of the land.” He will represent the Barons as having behind them the numbers and power of the Burgundian faction. In the Civil War Oliver Cromwell will be an honest and not very rich gentleman of the middle classes. The Parliamentary force will be that of the mass of the people against a few gallant but wicked aristocrats who follow the perfidious Charles. He will make no mention of the pay of the Ironsides. James II. will be driven out by a popular uprising, in which the great Churchill will play an honourable and chivalric part. The loss of the American Colonies will be deplored, and will be ascribed to the folly of attempting to tax men of “Anglo-Saxon” blood, unless you grant them representation. The Continental troops will be treated as the descendants of English arms; the incapacity of the Fleet will not be touched upon. Here again, as in the case of the Battle of Hastings, all will be for the best, and there will be a few touching words upon the passionate affection now felt for Great Britain by the inhabitants of the United States. The defensive genius of Wellington will be represented as that of a general particularly great in the offensive. Talavera will be a victory. The Spanish Auxiliaries in the Peninsula will be contemptible. No guns will be abandoned before Coruña, but what are left at Coruña will be mentioned and re-embarked. The character of Nelson will receive a curious sort of glutinous praise; Emma Hamilton, not Naples, will be the steamer upon his name; the Battle of Trafalgar will prevent the invasion of England.

This is a lengthy but not unjust description of what this gentleman would write; it is rubbish from beginning to end. It would sell, because every word of it would foster in the reader the illusion that the community of which he is a member is invincible under all circumstances, that effort and self-denial and suffering are spared him alone out of all mankind, and that a little pleasurable excitement, preferably that to be obtained from his favourite game, is the chief factor in military success.

I have omitted Alfred. Alfred in such a book will be the “teller of truth”—but the truth is none the less false.

Given that the name is sufficiently well known, there is hardly any limit to the sale of a book modelled upon these lines. Contrast with its fate the fate of a book, written no matter how powerfully, that should insist upon truths, no matter how valuable to the
English people at the present moment. These truths need by no means be unpleasant, though at the present moment an unpleasant truth is undoubtedly more valuable than a pleasant one. They could make as much or more for the glory of the country; they could be at any rate of service to us; they might not be received, simply because they would compel close attention and brain-work in the reader as well as in the writer of them. An established groove would have to be abandoned; to use a strong metaphor, the reader would have to get out of bed, and that is what the modern reader will not do. Tell him that the men who fought on either side at Hastings' plain cared nothing for national but everything for feudal allegiance, that to be a true peer meant to argue the local custom of ordeal and not the "law of the land"; tell him that judicium ordeal and not the "law of the land" was the true Book, neither the public nor the public man (though he is richer than ever he was before.) His patronage, therefore, though it is still represented, is unexampled zeal for experimentia tabulata, for endless lists of heads of argumentation, for topics selected of some that they are obviously mending, of others that cannot be. The writer of them.

The Rebuilding of the Theatre. By Hunly Carter.

I. The New Vision.

Is a recent "Unedited Opinion" on Drama there appeared the belief that the drama is upside down to-day mainly owing to the administrations of rationalists and realists. It is, in fact, an inverted world peopled by fanatics. Needless to say, the inversion is a very serious affair because it exalts the mere physical man whom we are conscious of seeing to be. In its light physical man was never so secure; spiritual man never so dangerously neglected. It reveals a contracting, not an expanding world. Of man made snug with pills and pneumatic tyres, with pensions and other pecuniary advantage, there is no end; of man lifted into a larger region and made conscious of the reality behind the material world, there is as yet no beginning. "The soul is missing from the drama" because the soul is missing from man's conception of man. "The drama should be a revelation of the soul of man." It will be when man rediscovers that man possesses a soul. Then the drama will become the New Book of Revelations.

The English theatre once had an opportunity of writing such a book. When Mr. William Archer imported the Archer brand of Ibsen to England he unconsciously offered the theatre a new spiritual stimulus. Mr. Archer and his critics, dramatists and producers, little understood the avenues of mystical expression which he was transplanting. The new beginnings of a symbolic interpretation of life that had been felt, though not fully expressed, in the old mysteries and moralities were there, though unperceived. There, indeed, was the much needed religious advance of the drama upon the crude naturalism of Caste, School, Society, just as Robert- son's return to nature was necessary to the drama from the early Victorian gilded saloon, gin palace, club and Cremorne. But men did not see it.

How could they with their eyes hooded with the extravagant and dogmatic materialism and rationalism of the nineteenth century? What could be further apart than Ibsen's vision of contemporary men and women as eternal symbols expressing the human revolt against the lie as well as the unending search for freedom, and the rationalistic conception of man as a self-contained machine impelled by appetites common to all animals and raised above his fellow-beasts by cunning and cruelty; than the vision of the enlightenment of souls, and the meaningless parade of the bodily forms of things? The rationalists accepted Ibsen as a dramatist with a point of view which they adjusted to their own, instead of the reverse, dressed him in a frock-coat, crowned him of his patient insight into the strickings of the half-conscious, half-articulate human soul they left not a trace. This misunderstanding of Ibsen has had two inevitble effects. It has bred a race of realists where only symbolists ought to be; and it has destroyed the theatre. Most of the dramatists who came after Ibsen seemed to be in doubt whether social science and the drama should not exchange name and nature. So, on the one hand, we had a drama that had no higher aim than to illustrate current events, and every recent phase of current life and thought, materialism, rationalism, democratic Socialism, Karl Marxian economics, existentialism, the new psychology of the nervous system, clinical studies in hysteria-epilepsy; and to offer plays like Curel's "La Nouvelle Idole," in which pathology, psychology and neuropathy were discussed ad nauseam. On the other hand, we had an Aristotelian outburst of drama. Everywhere there was an application of the principles of Aristotle and a glorification of the theory of the Sylogism. Everywhere there was an unexampled zeal for experimental tabulae, for endless lists of heads of argumentation, for topics selected
purely for the logical distinction which they contained. How closely Aristotle was followed may be gathered from the synopsis of Rhetoric I. and II., which is but a synopsis of the motives of the modern drama:—(1) the enumeration of human motives; (2) an analytical account of human motives; (3) an analysis of the moods of mind in which men commit injustice; (4) a distinction between different kinds of law and right; (5) remarks on degrees of guilt. For proof one may turn to such works as Mr. Havelock Ellis's geometrical and algebraical exercises, Sudderman's mixture of Marx and Darwin, Brieux's ineffectual digts at the hollowness of the social system, to "Les Affaires," "Die Weber," "Frühlings Erwachen," "Stile," "Justice," "Mrs. Warren's Profession," and other popular dispensers of rationalistic thought. The Aristotelian process of enlightenment may be seen in full blast in "Mrs. Warren's Profession." Contrast Viva's awakening with the un-Aristotelian process of enlightenment that Nora goes through. In the one we are conscious only of an author engaged in tiresome argument; in the other only of a soul's unfolding.

But if dramaticists followed Aristotle in the above directions, they missed his best point, namely, that "Tragedy must be a subject which is better than the average." Tragedy to-day aims to represent nothing but the dregs of society, characters that are morally bad and ugly. But in thus aiming to abolish all that is noble, generous and beautiful in the expression of character, the modern drama has defeated its own end. The essence of ancient drama, it will be remembered, was destiny or fate as master of man; the will of man was powerless without the help and sanction of the gods. The essence of modern drama is man master of destiny or fate; human beings act of their own free will, and make or mar their own lives. In order to demonstrate this exercise of free will modern dramatists have selected unbalanced and diseased individuals, individuals who are sick, mentally and morally, have not the power to exercise free will. In fact, they are dominated by disease and are acted upon. They do not act at all. Perhaps the absence of life-force in the characters treated accounts for the absence of life-force in the drama itself.

The misunderstanding of Ibsen, then, in breeding a race of realists, also bred a so-called realistic drama, an ugly duckling, in fact, to whom sentimentality was the rankling integument, the lanugo that is a meaningless repertoire of words and phrases, and flourished on a language, direct, brutal and living. This offspring of the nineteenth-century disillusionists began life in the midst of tears and unloveliness. Preferring shadow and gloom to the sunlit side of life, it dressed itself in sackcloth, put ashes on its head, drank deeply of gall, and told the modern story of a race of realists, also bred in an unhealthy offspring or a complete human failure. But in thus aiming to abolish all that is noble, generous and beautiful in the expression of character, the modern drama has defeated its own end. The incorporated stage society has been rebuilt, but rebuilt to foster a drama of the theatre, not a drama of the debating hall and dissecting-room. The drama that we need is a symbolic social drama. Such a drama will come soon. Ibsen and Hauptmann have prefaced their works with a strenuous assertion of vital personality with a recognition that man is governed by hereditary tendencies, sub-consciousness and mysticism. The characters will be symbols of the particular episode of the human soul which is being represented, as well as symbols of the contrary, stage "degenerates" were always beautifully perfect and proportioned, and the essential labels were missing either because no manager with common sense would engage freaks, or because this class of human curiosity is to be met only in its proper place, a side show or the nearest lunatic asylum. The fact is the realist disillusionists did not go far enough. They wrote up the diseased fragments of social life, and they engaged normal types to represent them either because they had not the courage to scour our infirmaries, hospitals and lunatic asylums for the real thing. Biologically considered, then, the attempt of modern dramatists to be realistic is a complete failure. Their stage families have not even a nose in common.

They have used the theatre as a house of convenience, and in so doing have destroyed it. If the theatre was obsolete before the wild duckling crossed its threshold, it was useless before the duckling had finished its first quack. So to-day we are faced with a disenfranchised drama confronting a theatre wherein is written in big type: "This house is a house of art; but ye have made it a den of disease." The theatre was obsolete before the wild duckling crossed its threshold, it was useless before the duckling had finished its first quack. So to-day we are faced with a disenfranchised drama confronting a theatre wherein is written in big type: "This house is a house of art; but ye have made it a den of disease."
of the underlying unity of life. "The theatre will be the holy place within which a dramatic representation of this episode in the life of the soul is produced."

With regard to the construction of the theatre designed to present a complete and organic play, I shall speak in a later article.

A New Way to write Historical Plays.

By Alfred Wareing.

(Managing Director of the Scottish Repertory Theatre.)

We are all authors nowadays; certainly, as the manager of a modern theatre discovers, everyone writes plays, and many, historical plays. It will assist if first I explain how not to do it. Because Scotland is rich in a history that for situations and "curtains" baffles the most lurid flights of a melodramatist's imagination, and because the Scottish Repertory Theatre "was established to encourage the initiation and development of a Scottish drama by providing a stage and an acting company which would be peculiarly adapted for the production of plays, national in character, written by Scottish men and women of letters," it was only to be expected that a flood of plays dealing with Scottish history would pour into the theatre. Up to the present (in about two years) nearly 150 historical plays have passed through my hands. I do not pretend to have read conscientiously every line, but I have given to each play serious consideration. It was my bounden duty to discover latent talent, and to encourage it where I found it. About 75 per cent. of these historical plays were in blank verse. Doubtless the authors were swayed by Shakespeare, but his influence sufficed, so that the medium—blank verse—made every character grandly and eloquently heroic or villainous; as far removed from reality as puppets in a marionette show. The heroes were spotless in their lives—in their deaths martyrs; the villains black through and through, while their deaths were prolonged and horrible. The cruder melo-drama of Spontain theatre had more humanity than these blank verse historical plays. The remaining 25 per cent. handled history in the spirit of Dumas, and it was evident the acting of Lewis Waller and Martin Harvey had been the motive power.

Now, a repertory theatre, dependent on citizens for its existence, has not, under present conditions, a deep purse, and these plays demanded resources that no longer apply. The simple setting is improved and the testimony of a person present." I, saw in every historical play that came before me, and I had almost given up hopes of finding a solution. I wanted to produce historical plays—I wanted to do the right thing artistically and financially, but how? Then I chanced upon Hilaire Belloc's wonderful book, "The Eye Witness," which, before I had read fifty pages, gave a clue to the baffling secret. Here, at last, was a means of presenting history in a theatre, footlights and grease paint notwithstanding. To convert the author's description from his own title-page, my ideal historical play should "endeavour to reproduce certain incidents and periods in history, as from the testimony of a person present." Out of Mr. Belloc's twenty-seven sketches, two remain vividly in my mind, though it is two years since I read them. The first is "The Sandwich Soldiers," who sailed with Caesar to invade Britain (August 26, n.c. 55) and "The Night after the Battle of Hastings" (October 14, 1066) in which the wounded Northumbrian warrior dies, his speech incomprehensible to the priest whose country he has travelled so far South to defend. Neither Julius Caesar, Harold the Saxon, nor William the Conqueror appears. There is no rhetoric; only narrative, plain and convincing, and "atmosphere," the most urgent quality of all. In no case should the author make a famous personage his central figure. At the most, only when it is necessary for the perfection of the play, should the historic figure be introduced, for the audience will, with pleasure to that delicious comedy by W. E. Henley and R. L. Stevenson—"Beau Austin"—in the last act of which is introduced "a Royal Personage," a description barely concealing the Prince Regent (afterwards George IV.). This I regard as a typical instance of the length an author may go, and I recommend this play and "Deacon Brodie" because of their "atmosphere," as good models for the would-be historical playwright.

Suggestions may be found in Kipling's "Puck of Pook's Hill" and "Rewards and Fairies." So far as modern playwrights have tried, Mr. Masefield has, I think, succeeded with "The Tragedy of Pompey the Great," which I hope some day to stage.
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

THE INSURANCE BILL.

Sir,—I confess that I am unable to follow you in the declaration that the Lloyd George Insurance Bill is not Socialist. The Bill makes for and is a recognition of the principle that the community must care for the individual in a far greater degree than any legislation with which I am familiar, and certainly there can be no contention that such a principle is not Socialist.

True enough from my own point of view as a Socialist there should have been no contribution exacted from the worker, nor, for that matter, from the employer. The burden should fall upon the state. However, inasmuch as the worker is already in Socialist theory getting the minimum wage, it is only a question of adjusting the economic status of the economic worker. His wage will advance ultimately to the point where the whole of the burden of the premium will be shifted from his shoulder. He is to-day with the advantage of an insurance which costs him nothing.

The knowledge that he has an allowance due to him when sick of a present good, but will give him a much better family.

As to your dictum that the product of labour is a fixed quantity, and therefore if the German experience is that insurance has paid the employers it has only done so by diminishing the workers' share of the annual product, I would say that I disagree with the premise.

It is a comparatively easy matter to vastly increase the annual product of labour, and there is no easier way to do this than by improving the physical and mental condition of the workers.

It is admitted that the better technical education of the German worker has contributed largely to the ability of the German capitalist to compete in the world's markets. I contend that the better physical condition of the German worker as the result of the German social legislation has also been a factor in this contribution by enabling the worker to turn out a larger product. I contend that even if a large part of the increased product may have been absorbed by the capitalist, that at any rate the German worker has had the inalienable advantage of a better life for himself and his family.

The George Bill, in my opinion, not only will give the worker a present good, but will give him a much better grip upon the means to obtain his final end—the full product of his labour. GAYLORD WILSHIRE.

* * *

PHILOSOPHY AND WAR.

Sir,—Mr. Verdad wants to pack his jury. But he must not rule out all schools of thought other than his own. Why should not Socialism, for instance, be permitted to utter an opinion on this great problem? Mr. Huxley Carter's catholic impartiality in the matter of knowledge is his strength. I am doubtful if the German philosophy is not superior to the American. I should doubt, however, if his foreign correspondent that creative artists be first invited to express their views.

I am a master builder and have been building the United States. I am a master builder and have been building the United States. I am a master builder and have been building the United States.

A war correspondent philosophizes, "they need not detain Mr. Verdad, since their thoughts lie within reach of his family."

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GAYLORD WILSHIRE.

* * *

TORY DEMOCRACY.

Sir,—Mr. J. M. Kennedy weeps too much. The Tory Party, to which he and I both belong, is perhaps in a bad way, but it is political adroitness and understanding that it lacks more than ideas, and Radicalism triumphant from its shyness is by no means so great as is credited with ideas as Mr. Kennedy supposes. I am a Tory in the ephemeral and not in the historic meaning of the term. I am not "grimly attached to the government" unless I am allowed to give "aristocratic" my own particular significance. It is necessary in accepting and distributing labels to find out what a label means.

There is no Socialist Party in Great Britain worth bothering about, and the two-party system is more firmly established than ever.

What then do British Toryism and British Radicalism stand for to-day? We need not worry about Mr. Asquith or Mr. Winston Churchill, Mr. Balfour and Mr. Balfour and Mr. Balfour. The Lloyd George Bill, in my opinion, not only will give the worker a present good, but will give him a much better family.

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Oscar Browning—well, what can I say? Mr. Kennedy includes Mr. Browning among his purveyors of ideas. Why does he appear in Heaven's name, not Miss Corelli, who may be a Radical for all I know? I know she objects to motor-cars.

The Radicals and now whittled down to eight. Mr. Havelock Ellis and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle make for pessimism, and he seems to have little affinity with Lloyd George sentimentalism. Mr. Belfort Bax is a vitriolic revindication nationalist and a logical anti-feminist. I wonder if he has one single disciple!

There remain G. K. Chesterton, Bernard Shaw, Hilaire Belloc, Granville Barker, John Galsworthy, and J. M. Barrie. Mr. Chesterton writes for the "Daily News," and made the great discovery that Dickens was the spiritual child of the French Revolution. Mr. Barrie has really very little to say, and he has said it a thousand times with hilarious pomposity. He is tolerated by the real Radical because he is regarded as funny, and a funny Radical is a rare phenomenon. Mr. Belloc is a Tory, as all Catholics must be, and he is a medieval Tory. He fears the rich man, not because he is powerful or rich, but because he is new and generally either Jew or Protestant. Mr. Belloc is a delightful human being. I heard him recently arguing with Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, the perfect type of the hard Scotch, middle-class Puritan who is born to rule. Mr. Macdonald had not the remotest idea of what Mr. Belloc intended to convey. Mr. Belloc took an impish delight in annoying Mr. Macdonald, and it was a delight to see the great hall-porter frown upon me and the rest of the time the amount of influence this charming, laughing philosopher can possibly exert on the dour politicians who pull Radical strings.

Mr. Shaw is Mr. Shaw, witty, unsatisfactory, a genius at intervals. His one real idea is that woman rules the world by sentimental commonness, and that man being wisely passionate puts to me the unendurable. Mr. Barrie carries the idea further with his constant demonstration that it is the mother or stocking-mending woman who matters, and not the wife-woman or the mistress-woman. Mr. Granville Barker is an expert dramatist, more lentilised and less witty than Mr. Shaw. Mr. Galsworthy is an acute observer and a considerable craftsman, and as his play, "Justice," influenced the Home Secretary and did something to reform the unspeakable hell of English prisons, it may perhaps be said that he is an intellectual power behind the Radical throne.

I have analysed Mr. Kennedy's list to show that his geniuses do not amount to much after all, and that they have had little or nothing to do with the result of the elections of 1906 and 1910. The writers of our time who have directly affected the thought of the common wayfaring man are Rudyard Kipling, Robert Blatchford, Dr. Gore, W. T. Stead, and I think H. G. Wells. Everyone will agree with me about Kipling and Blatchford. Dr. Gore is the intellectual leader of the great Catholic movement, in the Church of England. Mr. Stead is the inspirer of militant Nonconformity, and Mr. Wells the hero of the polytechnic young man and woman, but he is not always that.

The root idea of Radicalism is tyranny. Ask Mr. Stead what he would do with a man who lived with a woman not his legal wife. Ask Dr. Clifford what he would do with a man who loved a lady, and Mr. Lloyd George would tell you how he would do with a Church parson! Ask Mr. Sidney Webb what he would do with a man who preferred hunger to work! The root idea of the new Toryism must be liberty, and when that is insisted upon it will be very difficult for Mr. Belloc, Mr. Cecil Chesterton, or, for that matter, The New Age, to decline to march with Mr. Kennedy, myself, and our even more important and attractive fellows.

SIDNEY DAKR.

Sir,—I fear, pace Mr. Dark, that "political adroitness" never carried a party very far in the long run, and that something more—"alimony", you might say—will be necessary to express the success of the Radicals at three successive general elections. Most of us will agree with what Mr. Dark says about Radicalism, but I should point out these facts before, have appeared to be at a loss to explain them or to suggest counter-principles. The trouble with most of us is that we have abandoned Conservative principles and seem eager to be thought more democratic than the democrats. For the list of names I gave, it did not profess to be complete, but it showed that the critical and conscious intuition of Bergson with which the late Professor James analysed in "Varieties of Religious Experience,"

BERGSON IN PARIS.

Sir,—I cannot but think that the truth of the question of the paramount intellectual influence in Paris at the present moment lies very much on Mr. Hunty Carter's side; and I hope you will allow me, as one who has made some slight study of the question, to reply to your correspondent from Göttingen.

In the first place, there is one very important truism which I think I may safely assert, that the intellectual situation in France at the present time can hardly be described as a loss to explain them or to suggest counter-principles. The French Revolution has really very little to say, and he seems to have little affinity with Lloyd George sentimentalism. Mr. Belfort Bax is a logical anti-feminist. I agree entirely in regard to Blatchford and Stead; but they are both Radicals, and their names may simply be added to the circle. Mr. Dark, of course, is quite right in saying that the root idea of the new Toryism must be liberty; and I shall welcome another broadside from him when, in the course of the next few weeks, I give a few hints regarding a programme for the achievement of such liberty.

J. M. KENNEDY.
son's is positive. It is a positive philosophy, for it is a philosophy of action; yet perhaps its most noticeable and typical feature is that it is not a closed system. Indeed it could not be anything else upon which can recognize the reality and truth of a creative evolution; which can allow for and comprehend a real progress, alike can recognise the reality and truth of a creative evolution; of which one alone, Post-Impressionists, would receive an official recognition, although there can be no question that such a philosophy has had the most comprehensive and vital results, of which one alone, Post-Imaginationists, could not be.

Dr. Whitby asserts both the affirmative and the negative, Dr. Whitby writing about

which is positive. It is a positive philosophy, for it is a

SEX AND SUPERMEN.

Sir,—Dr. Whitby is mistaken. I do not agree that those men to whom sex is something of paramount importance may be supermen: I only agree that they may not be. If Dr. Whitby asserts both the affirmative and the negative, sex and superhumanity obviously have no necessary connection, even in his opinion. The question is simply one of definition. Superhumanity means extra-sexuality, I doubt whether any of Dr. Whitby's supermen could be regarded superior to common sailors. If it does not, what is Dr. Whitby writing about?

ALFRED E. RANDALL.

Sir,—Mr. Randall presumes that I am a native of the West Country and know little of Disraeli. I am a Londoner, and probably know more about him than anyone. He talks glibly of Shavians—an absurd term which conveys nothing to me. He may know people who admire Show to the exclusion of everyone else, if so, he is alone in his discovery. I still think that Mr. Randall's comparison of Disraeli and Shaw a most amazing statement. One a hidebound Tory, the other a revolutionary man. If Mr. Randall is acquainted with the books of which he rattle off, he must know that Disraeli, beyond a certain gift for saying smart things, was one of the mock great men of the Victorian Era, whose political and ideological ideas have long since been scrapped; whose democracy was a sham; the most enthusiastic of the political opportunists, a mere party politician who introduced reforms only when they could no longer be withheld; the most inane of dandies, with his clothes of velvet and silk—Tennyson's "band-box"; a tuff-hunter whose chief motive in entering political life was personal notoriety, and who probably achieved the greatest ambition of his life when he received a title—and this husk is about all that's left of him.

Mr. Randall has had twenty-nine years' experience of London and improvements in the arts. He sees no improvement in the stodgy old newspapers of the "G.A.S." period of journalistic omniscience; knows nothing more than the specific public relations of his political deal, or in painting than during the palmy days of the Academy. To him there is no more good music performed than in the 'eighties, and literary criticism has deteriorated. So.

He remarks that Shaw cannot write a play. When he reviews the banalities of the tribe of Tom Taylor, Lyton and Robertson, the present-day school of smart society dramatists and melodramatists, he should be thankful that we have a leaven of plays containing "ideas," and which an intelligent man may see without being bored to death by the most obvious plots, wit and stage-tricks of the old school.

HUGH BLAKER.

SHAKESPEARE OR BACON?

Sir,—I beg to call attention off a last broadside at that pirate, the Baconian authorship.

No MSS. of the works preserved: This makes more against Bacon than against Shakespeare. These MSS. should have been Bacon's most treasured possessions, and had he written them—Bacon, who said "My ambition now I shall only put upon my pen, whereby I shall be able to maintain memory and merit of the times succeeding." Yet he not should have been Bacon's most treasured possessions, had he

The whole of this letter is a condensation of material sent to me by Mr. George S. Clinton. Mr. Waddington's Liverpool stipendiary magistrate's assertion about Shakespeare's 'wonderful acquaintance with law' is old, Mr. Waddington showed an equally wonder-

knowledge of the sea, of music, of the profession of arms. In fact, in every subject that he touched, he showed himself to be what Coleridge called 'the myriad-minded man.'

I conclude with an extract from a recent speech by Lord Rosebery at the old Palace of Whitehall: "[King James] may not have been the most venerated and respected

of monarchs, but the patronage which he extended to Shake-

and his work has given James an adventuress halo..." E. H. VOLE.

PRETENTIOUS AND ILL-MADE.

Sir,—Mr. Jacobson's frankness about his Public has wrecked his security. Each week the teudium of a country parsonage has been repeated by the advent of your joyous journal. Hitherto, I have always left the paper about. Henceforward not only must I lock it up, but I must beg of you to send it in for me, as I can hardly be worthy a reply, were it not that he is so

of inflicting is healed by the compliment Beatrice Hastings

apology and fling them back in their author's face, can scarcely be said to possess

of ill-repute here. The Queen herself wrote, or tried to

Very likely he said it as a scholar (one of the greatest

of his time), with a scholar's contempt for lesser things. He—or is it she?—who can lay

his own taste or want of taste. He-or is it she?-who can lay

criticise Bernard Shaw. I have observed that they invariably pursue this method of controversy—(though, by the way, he is seldom weak enough to use humble words)—apparently lacking the wit to invent anything memorable for them- selves.

Ben Jonson said that he had "small Latin and less Greek." Very likely he said it as a scholar (one of the greatest of his time), with a scholar's contempt for lesser things. Shakespeare's French is nondescript and his Latin phrases taken from grammar-school primers.

His knowledge of foreign parts: The Swiss can scarcely believe that the author of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" went to Switzerland. Charles Lever wrote his "Con Cregan," with its marvellous description of Mexican life and scenery, from account books of Spaniards, and his "Bacon not a poet."-Bacon's acknowledged verses (valued highly by him) are poor stuff. Could he not have left us one little great division of Shakespeare's water? The story of ill-repue here. The Queen herself wrote, or tried to write, poetry.

"The Merchant of Venice": The fact instanced by Mr. Waddington that no English translation of "II Pecorene" is known to have existed when the play was written, is worthless as evidence against the Shakespeare authorship. Not only did Stephen Gosson use the theme (evidently taken from "II Pecorene") in 1579, but Robert Wilson also used it in 1584, in his "The Three Ladies of London." The great Shakespearean critics and editors, Charles and Mary Cowden Clarke, stated that "The sources of the double plot (that of the bond and caskets) are to be traced in the 'Gesta Romanorum,' and very distinct vestiges of the bond story are to be found in the 'Pecorene' of Ser Giovanni Fiorento, which existed in an English translation in Shake-

prestige..." H. E. VOLE.

CHristina.

Sir,—"Ibsene," for whose signature (New Age, May 18) I was fully prepared by the truculent tone of his letter, need have no fear. Any hurt to my feelings he is capable of inflicting is healed by the compliment Beatrice Hastings

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Luckily, the reason which impels me to answer "Ibsenite," permits me to avoid crossing words with Beatrice Hastings, except on one point, which I will deal with presently. For she is as individual as he is common. Her opinion of Nora's character and career is based on her own morbid fancy, for nobody else's, and she has a perfect right to it. I would only suggest that in speaking of "golden-hardness," she has seen such a block of metal that only alloy can be used without alloy. She could hardly have put upon a happier metaphor. Why will she not trust her own words? She would never have thought of comparing Nora with the diamond, and yet because the qualities and defects of the diamond, not unnaturally, appeal to her own temperament, she could Beatrice Hastings herself.

Nor for "Ibsenite." And if I should write at greater length than be, and should prove less amusing, your readers will remember that it is far more difficult, and, in spite of the use your correspondent may make of the admission, even duller, to enlighten ignorance than to throw missiles at constructive work of any sort, especially when the missiles have been thrown by the builder. It is a pity that English dramatic criticism is so often vitiated by this flinging about of cheap taunts and sneers, this clumsy prodding with a childish and infantile capability of inflicting annoyance on a sensitive skin, though its point will not penetrate the outermost cuticle.

The best way of explaining Ibsen's attitude towards such characters as Nora and Christine will be to quote his own words. He rarely speaks in person, but when he does, he never, as far as I know, because the words he has put into the mouths of his characters have been distorted into "propaganda." Nothing makes him more angry.

On March 30, 1880, he writes to the Finnish professor, Valfrid Westephy, disputing Calverley's charge on the Continent about "A Doll's House"—nine years before Janet Achurch produced it in London:—"It is my hope and desire that the critic will turn from those who wish to gain an understanding of my literary work—its outward and inward coherence. From the newspaper commentators elsewhere. In "A Doll's House" has been giving rise to a violent dispute. Your interpretation of the play has my entire approval, and I feel certain that the future will show that we are right." The interpretation is that which the author of "Christina" has attempted to follow out.

Here is another passage from Ibsen's letters—this time written from Rome on June 6, 1882, to Sophus Scharndorf, a Danish author, after the storm which followed "Ghost" had broken out. Ibsen is speaking this time of Mrs. Alving, but the words in italics, would, it will be admitted, apply equally to Nora, and "Ibsenite" would do well to take the previous sentence to heart.

"If certain of our reviewers have no talent for anything else, they have unquestionably a talent for thoroughly misunderstanding and misinterpreting those authors whose books they claim to judge. How can they preach something they have never heard? nothing at all. A pastor Manders will always rouse some Mrs. Alving to revolt. And just because she is a woman she, in a manner, has begun, go to greater extremes." (The italics are mine.)

Is it likely that Ibsen, with his tremendous literary and dramatic conscience, would, whatever the pressure put upon him, have written, as he did, a second ending to "A Doll's House," in which Nora bears the children cry and returns, if he had not intended some such continuation of Nora's history as I have indicated in "Christina." At the same time I have only ventured to suggest this possibility, so tender was my conscience on the matter, although I had done what "lovers" of Ibsen and Shakespeare, and other hero-worshippers never do—made a careful study of their hero's works.

I should like to set some such paper upon "A Doll's House" to "Ibsenite" as Calverley invented on "Pickwick." I can only imagine one examinee who might stand lower in the class list—the gentleman signing himself R. Maguire, who, without the very slightest glimmer of evidence, has evolved the altogether shocking and monstrous theory that Mrs. Linde is a pure and simple self-made woman without a touch of Christina's heroism. It is quite true that he is boundlessly ridiculous, while Ibsenite has a vital force of its own.

"As regards myself," he writes to George Brandes, "I am conscious of incessant progression. At the point where I stand now, each of my thoughts is to me a tolerably compact crowd; but I myself am no longer there; I am elsewhere. Further ahead, I hope."

It is true that Nora's language at suffrage meetings has the majority behind them. But there is now a further advance of thought. A minority is growing which claims for women far greater possibilities than the rights of the individual, or even of sex. It would lead us too far if I attempted to say anything more in this direction.

But I should like to point out that dramatic genius has a kind of pulse—a systole and diastole to its tusings as, so to speak, in space. Just as it needs for full expression two opposites in the same play, so it will be found—if criticism ever arrives to such a stage—that Ibsen cannot be used without alloy. He could hardly have put upon a happier metaphor. Why will she not trust her own words? She would never have thought of comparing Nora with the diamond, and yet because the qualities and defects of the diamond, not unnaturally, appeal to her own temperament, she could Beatrice Hastings herself.

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"As regards myself," he writes to George Brandes, "I am conscious of incessant progression. At the point where I stand now, each of my thoughts is to me a tolerably compact crowd; but I myself am no longer there; I am elsewhere. Further ahead, I hope.""
But before dealing with the awakened Helmer, let us impartially and justly examine him. He is on his honor to the last and most men and women of his time. He is an honourable, kindly man, delicate in mind and body, with a keen sense of the beautif-
ul; handfasted on this occasion of the lines of his little formulas with which he had decked his performances, he was the only man and many women would have had him to approach Nora with her "comical disguises." Such a situation as this is a good test of character, and Helmer does not come out of it badly.

Like a sensible man he leaves the irrevocable past alone and looks to the future.

"But, Nora, can it [the abyss] never be filled up?" he implores.

"As I am now I can be no wife for you," she replies.

"No, I can take nothing from strangers." Another stab which he takes like a man.

"But this is the last "Helmerish" line, as the "Ibsenites" would call it. From this point he forgets himself and his own claims, and thinks only of Nora, and he gets as close to her as he is allowed to do.

"I have strength to become another man," he feels and says.

"Perhaps," replies Nora, roused now by his manliness as she formerly was by his weakness to true insight. "When your doll is taken away from you."

Again the tender dependent nature of Helmer comes out.

"To part with you I can't bear the thought."

"But Nora has suffered too deeply to be so easily won back."

"The more reason for the thing to happen," she replies sternly.

"Nora, can I never be more than a stranger to you?"

"No, I must help you if you need it," he begs.

"No, I can take nothing from strangers." Another stab which he takes like a man.

"And still more gently: "May I write to you?"

"No," says Nora, sharply.

"But I must help you if you need it," he urges.

"No man wins a wholly undeserved success."

Then he finds that Nora is really for the first time in her life truly behaving sincerely towards him, he is utterly turned a-back, and has recourse to the usual hus-
band's commonplaces on such an occasion. He is not as wise as he might be, and may be considered the lowest point to which Helmer sinks till he gets tipsy, it seems to me, even here, as I make Mrs. Linden say. "Nora differs from other men." But at last he gets his shot.

Let us see what evidence there is in favour of Beatrice Hastings' prophecy of her "shock" silence about motherhood during Nora's absence. How is she so certain that he will remain on her possible return "his old natural, sensual, pompous, patronising self"—the self which belonged to the time during which Nora humbugged him?

At first his wife's sudden self-assertion only puzzles him. He has been betrayed out of his melodramatic tricks over a serious situation. No doubt he had seen her play "Mantalini," and knew that suicide was equally impossible to Nora's strong, brilliant, life-loving temperament.

Then, when he finds that Nora is really for the first time in her life really behaving sincerely towards him, he is utterly turned a-back, and has recourse to the usual hus-
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A POOR PARENT'S PARENTHEtical PLEA.
Sir,—I was very much struck by the article on holidays entitled, "Only a Halfpenny," by Wm. Poel (NEW AGE, May 10), and especially by the suggestion that the Govern-
ment should appoint women inspectors to parade Hamp-
stead Heath and other resorts (of the poor bien entendu) to warn them against spending their (own) halfpennies on unwholesome food. Mr. Poel deserves the thanks of all (childless) British citizens for this bold attempt to stem the physical degeneration of the (poor) people. We have (un-
marrried and childless) women (lady) inspectors to tell
mothers how to comb and clean their children's hair, and
how to wash and feed babies; we are soon to have lady
inspectors (living in hotels or lodgings) to teach domestic
economy to mothers of large families (living in slum cot-
tages), and many more of similar kinds. I note, however,
that revolutionary as these schemes are, yet great restraint
is shown by the reformers. They do not go so far as to
suggest that the Government should provide the whole-
some food (and the halfpennies) or the combs, brushes,
soap, babies' bottles, etc. (or even the milk). God forbid
that we should thus undermine the sturdy independence of
the (poor) people! And yet, timidly I assure you, I do
suggest that we go a step further (only a little step). I
give the suggestion for what it is worth, and by way of
mitigation of my offence in interfering (as
a mere father of children) in these complicated affairs only understood by (childless) experts, I solemnly declare that my only motive
is to make the inspection more efficient.
Briefly, my suggestion is only this: that we should ap-
point a new set of inspectors (of the requisite sex of course)
to bear the children as well. INSPECTEE.

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