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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

NEITHER the association of Churchmen and Dissenters nor Mr. Lloyd George's own express repudiation will deceive anybody into crediting his address at Cardiff on Friday with an absence of partisan bias. True, he stated, in terms made familiar by the "Clarion," the problem of poverty as emotionally conceived. True also that he affirmed that the great lesson of Christianity (and he might have added of Socialism) is the fact that the poor cannot be made richer without the rich being made poorer; but no word of apology for his own legislation, legislation demonstrably tending to make the poor poorer, escaped him; but on the contrary he was almost servile in adjuring the churches to "help the men who are fighting"—namely, himself. With his blasphemous language (for it is in our opinion blasphemy to associate "our Master" with political jobbery) we are only too familiar; but we shall never cease to marvel at the ease with which it is swallowed by our public and the confidence with which the Welsh charlatan pours it out for us. The simple truth which no gloze of godliness can conceal is that Mr. Lloyd George has proved himself either a fool or a tool. If he is in earnest in his professions on behalf of the poor, the result of his action should strike him dumb with horror, for under his reign wages have gone down while prices have gone up and the poor are poorer than ever. If, however, he is simply the tool, willing or unwilling, of the American and Anglo-American red-spider capitalists, his blasphemy while possibly innocent is none the less hideous. Until we see some consistency between what Mr. Lloyd George the politician does and Mr. Lloyd George the preacher says, we shall believe one or other of his assumed characters a sham.

It must be confessed that the doctors are making no great haste to sign the death-warrant of the Insurance Act. Ten or eleven thousand of the twenty-eight thousand have so far undertaken to be as good as their word and to refuse to work an Act they have condemned; but, as some Scotch medical coach has suggested, the remainder are quite sufficient for Mr. Lloyd George's purposes, and most of them are certain to be rewarded for their treachery to their union. The letters from doctors which have been appearing in the "Times" make quite public what has hitherto been the exclusive knowledge of the medical profession and the poor, that club medical practice of the kind now to be inflicted on fifteen million people is entitled neither to the name of medicine nor even to the name of practice. As practice simply it might be useful to science to place the poor at the disposal of young or dull experimenters; but club practice affords no time even for this advantage. As for its medical value, the less said of that in print the safer from criminal libel. Nine out of ten club doctors are quite aware that they are no more than Voodoo medicine men. The tenth is a saint. We do not know whether the "Practitioner's" plébiscite will be successful in its declared aim of aborting the Insurance Act; but we do know that if the Act comes into operation and its medical administration is as negligent, brutal, and incompetent as club practice too often is, the medical profession will descend in public opinion to the level of knackers. On its medical administration, above all, the small modicum of value the Act contains will depend. If the doctors are unable under its provisions to guarantee a high level of efficiency, it is their solemn duty to decline, in the public interest as well as in their own, to work it.

* * *

At the Albert Hall meeting of protest against the servant tax the most persistent critic and interrupter was Miss Mary Macarthur. To judge by the heat of her comments she was as infatuated with the Insurance Bill as, let us say, one of the editors of the new "feminist" journal, the "Freewoman": that is to say, she was perfectly blind to the defects of the Bill. Now that the Bill has passed and the plans it concealed are disclosing themselves, Miss Macarthur is becoming aware of its dangers. In particular the threatened formation of approved societies under the direction of the Free Church Council has aroused her "alarm and con-

cern." It is practically certain (and anybody save Trade Union officials could have calculated on it) that the benefits which non-industrial bodies, such as the churches, and business bodies such as the Prudential, will be able to offer under the Bill will exceed the benefits which a Trade Union can offer. On the insurance side, therefore, the trade unions will be beaten in competition with the other organisations. We see no reason to beg the Churches not to persist in their competition. On the contrary, if the Act is to be worked the maximum rather than the minimum advantage should be derived from it. Miss Macarthur was one of those who accepted the collar of slavery for her constituents. It is now her duty to see that the collar sits easily on the neck.

* * *

During the Govan by-election the Chief Whip announced that Mr. Lloyd George would consider the introduction of an amending Bill to the Insurance Act before the latter came into operation. For this reason alone it is worth while continuing the agitation against the measure. We have not the smallest hope that the Act can be amended so as to lose its deliberated venom; but attempted amendment might again draw attention to its defects and possibly result in its repeal. If, for example, further concessions are made to the doctors by way of conciliating their present opposition, the Friendly Societies will thereby be disturbed; and in the game of pull-devil pull-baker that will ensue the Act may be imperilled. Still better, the discussions of the Act which will prove necessary may drive into the minds of wage-earners the perils of which they are only beginning now to be aware. Strange as it may seem, the majority of working-men are still quite ignorant of the fact that under the Bill a part of their wages will be compulsorily deducted and spent in their behalf by Mr. Lloyd George's officials. Any occasion for bringing this proposal home to them before it is actually in operation will be welcome.

* * *

Workmen, however, are at this moment much too engaged in the industrial campaign to have much attention to spare for politics. The shameful surrender and defeat of the railwaymen's officials last August has had the effect of provoking members of the other unions to a bellicose attitude not only towards their proprietary shareholders (called employers), but towards their own paid officials. Neither in the cotton lock-out nor in the impending coal-strike is there much need to fear that the union leaders will be allowed to sell their men as the railway officials sold theirs. In the case of the cotton lock-out the principle at stake is no less than the very marrow of trade unionism. While the unions were comparatively weak, and were, in fact, feeling their way to a plan of campaign; while, moreover, employers were disposed either to compromise or at least merely passively to oppose; there was no urgent necessity that trade unions should adopt the rules of war and treat as traitors such of their class as declined to join them. But now that the employers are federated not merely for defence but for offence, and with the assistance of their paid politicians are carrying war into the ranks of organised labour, the consolidation of the forces of labour is imperative. A workman who does not belong to his union at the present juncture of affairs is in exactly the same position as a soldier who should refuse to fight when his country was in peril of conquest. The position of trade unionism at this moment is not merely one of attack, it is one of self-preservation. The governing classes, including financiers, lawyers, and politicians, have elaborated a plan of campaign which is designed on the one side to restrict by degrees the legal rights of labour combinations and, on the other, to dope their members to apathy by means of illusorily charitable legislation. Against this enclosing nightmare of servitude the only course for trade unionism, if it would remain active and alive, is to protest by all the means at its disposal. It is true that the lock-out of a quarter of a million workers for the sake of two or three appears extravagantly

fanatical, but in essence this attitude is necessary. Only those who are prepared to throw away their lives can possibly save them.

* * *

The sophistries employed by the Press to put the trade unionists in the wrong will have no effect even on public opinion, which, we believe, will remain favourable to labour. Few journalists and still fewer politicians realise how deeply sunk in the public mind is the accumulated evidence of economic disorder. You cannot continue during a quarter of a century dinning into people's ears the statistics of poverty without finally convincing them that the state of the nation requires to be changed. And if, as is obvious, the present Cabinet which came into power on a tidal wave of hope has done nothing, absolutely nothing, to remedy the unjust distribution of wealth, but has rather accentuated it, the public mind is predisposed to approve of any attempt made by the workers themselves to take measures into their own hands. Between politicians and the trade unionists the public would prefer that reform should be carried out by the former. But if they fail as they have failed, reform is so pressing that tacit consent to the trade unionists will readily be granted to attempt to succeed where politicians have failed. Trade union leaders may therefore be advised that timidity on their part will prove as unpopular with the public as with their own men. The paid capitalist press will, of course, shout and declare that the liberty of the individual is in peril; but the public will silently approve of any necessary means of enforcing trade union demands. Trade unionists are engaged in war, and the rules of war must be observed. A non-unionist is a traitor.

* * *

We are thankful to say that the prospects of "unrest" in the coal industry multiply daily. In 1909 the referendum on the subject of a coal strike resulted in a majority for a strike of something like seven to one. In March next the majority, we confidently anticipate, will be twenty to one. The ostensible subject of dispute is the demand on the part of the men for a Minimum Wage, but point has been given to this demand by the actual decline in wages, both real and nominal, over the past three years. Despite Conciliation Boards, Sliding Scales, Eight Hours, etc., etc.; despite, also, the fact well known to unfortunate householders that the price of coal is higher now than ever, wages in the coal industry have gone steadily down, certainly since 1908, and in the opinion of several experts, since 1900, while during the same period the cost of living has steadily risen. The position of miners at this moment is therefore worse than it was a decade ago; and since every device known to mathematicians has been tried to adjust wages to coal prices without success, the dissatisfaction of the men has gathered in a demand for a human minimum. Now there is not the smallest reason why this demand should not be successful. In the first place it is definite and therefore beyond dispute as to its terms. Seven shillings a day will either be won or it will not be won. In the case of the railway strike, the object of the struggle was the blessed word Recognition, a formula with which the Hendersons and the MacDonalds, the Thomases and the Bellamys could juggle to their hearts' content. With a fixed and concrete object like a Minimum Wage verbal jugglery will be impossible. Next, it is well known that the men are not only almost unanimous and their leaders (particularly in Wales, which will prove the storm-centre) eager, but the funds of the Union are sufficient to provide at least a month's campaign. In the course of that month it will go hard with labour's fortune if other industries are not dislocated and the rest of the unions involved in the strike. Nothing would conduce more to the success of the campaign than the simultaneous downing of tools of every organised workman in the country. In place of a minimum wage for miners alone we might secure a minimum wage for every British workman. Lastly, as we have already said, public opinion is undoubtedly on the men's side; and if there is no unnecessary violence

it will stay there. A miner-correspondent has sent us a cutting of a speech delivered to miners by Sir Arthur Markham, in which this Liberal member of Parliament frankly confesses that if he were a miner he would be preparing at this moment to strike. Sir Arthur Markham's attitude, we can assure trade unionists, is typical of the best and the most influential public opinion. The middle-class organs may appear to oppose the movement for a Minimum Wage. When the struggle is joined they may even do their best to defeat the unions. But at heart they secretly hope that the men may win. With this moral approval of their ostensible opponents, the men's leaders must be bunglers to be defeated.

* * *

In the degenerate condition of intelligence among journalists any confusion is possible. The "Standard" is now competing with the "Daily Express" for the distinction of displaying the most vivid ignorance of Socialism possible to forked radishes. We shall refrain from inflicting on our readers any account of the attempts of these journals to earn the money of their capitalist proprietors; but we would draw their attention to the note of the "Times" in reply to Sir James Barr's manifesto on the Insurance Act. The president-elect of the British Medical Association has apparently confined his reading to the "Express" and the "Standard," for he repeats their obvious lie that the Insurance Act is a Socialist measure. His chief reason (if that is the word) for disapproving of the Insurance Act is that "it is a long step in the downward path towards Socialism." The "Times" very generously saves us the trouble of reply by commenting thus: "The opposition of all the Socialist bodies ought to convince Sir James Barr that the term Socialistic can only be applied to the Act in such a wide sense as to deprive it of all meaning." In other words, the description is nonsense. The "Times" adds that the main purpose of the Bill was accepted "by all political parties save the Socialists." The fact which we have laboured to demonstrate has now been recorded.

* * *

We shall have more trouble, however, in convincing political journalists of a fact which is equally demonstrable—namely, that, in spite of appearances to the contrary, trade unionism and Socialism are not synonymous terms. While Socialists are compelled to support any endeavours of workmen to raise wages, the implications of their possible success are not to be disguised. For the present it is a matter of comparatively small concern whether advances in wages are at the expense of rent and interest or at the expense of prices. But this indifference can obviously last only a little while. Already we have noted that, in consequence of the seamen's strike, passenger fares have been increased. The railway companies have been even more prescient. Months before the new Conciliation Boards can possibly raise railwaymen's wages, the travelling public are to be put to the cost of increased charges. So long as the rise in prices is distributed over the whole community, the effect on wages alone will be beneficial. We shall each contribute a little for the advantage of the workers. But the mechanical force of monopoly will presently tend to throw the increased cost of wages on the class that invariably pays for everything—the workmen themselves; and then the old trouble will revive. Trade union action may therefore be regarded as a temporary relief, but as no more. Until the objects of monopoly, land and capital, are communalised, their rent will be diverted in proportion to their necessity to private pockets. Nothing in the long run can reduce the sums thus paid by labour save the transference of these monopolies, in whole or in part, to the community. While hoping, therefore, that trade unionists will not slacken in their efforts to force wages up, the community at large must safeguard itself by nationalising industry. If the recent railway strike had ended in nationalisation it would have been a great blessing. Similarly, the proper reply of the community to both coal-owners and collieries is to take possession of the

mines. That alone is Socialism, and trade unionism is its prophet.

* * *

The recrudescence of an old controversy is at present taking place in the Fabian Society. During the last few years two contending views of the society's business—and both in our opinion wrong—have been expressed: the view that the Fabian Society should merge itself politically in the Labour party, and the view that it should merely employ the Labour party as its chief political means. As a result of the compromising spirit, of which the older Fabians made a fetish, the present position of the Fabian Society is morally anomalous. Affiliated with the Labour party, and having a representative on the latter's executive, the society nevertheless permits not only its own members but its own officers to oppose Labour candidates whenever they feel inclined. As a matter of fact, the majority of the prominent Fabian officers are Liberals in politics and Socialists only in private. This double-faced attitude towards the Labour party would probably be resented by the Labour members if they chanced to have any respect for the Fabian Society. As it is, they negligently tolerate the vagaries of their professed ally for the sake of the few pounds annually contributed to their funds. This indifference, however, is not wholly to the taste of many of the younger Fabians, who, in conjunction with the I.L.P., have formed a Fabian Reform Committee, the object of which is to bind the society honourably to the Labour party and to purge it of its equivocating members.

* * *

This course, while obviously honest and straightforward, is, nevertheless, impossible for two reasons. In the first place, it cannot succeed for the simple reason that the majority of the Fabians are against it. The majority of the members of the Fabian Society are, in fact, naturally equivocators who love to run with the hare while hunting with the hounds. The position of reaping any advantage from alliance with the Labour party while at the same time enjoying complete freedom—both eating their cake and having it—exactly suits them. It is the theory of things to which their minds naturally move. And, secondly, it would be a disaster for the Fabian Society to abandon entirely its traditional position as a body of economic students and propagandists. Its affiliation with the Labour party has always, in our view, been a mistake. Politically its members were compromised however they denied it. On the other hand, in this plight of neither being entirely in nor entirely out of politics, the theoretical value of the Society has declined. At present it is not only useless to the Labour party, but it is useless to itself. In politics it speaks with as many voices as articulate members; in economics and in political ideas it speaks with no voice at all. The best course we can recommend the Fabian Society is to abandon its affiliation with the Labour party and to resume its discussions and tracts for the use of all parties.

* * *

The valuable book, "Seems So," by Stephen Reynolds and his fishermen colleagues has been the subject of a little controversy between the authors and Professor Sadler on the subject of Elementary Education. Professor Sadler was till lately a severe critic of the elementary system, but his recent appointment to the Vice-Chancellorship of the Leeds University seems to have disposed him personally to a rosier general view. "We are," he says, "struggling out of the clutches of the evil tradition imposed upon elementary education by the mischievous system of payment by results." Measured by the test of experience there is, however, no proof that we are struggling out at all. Messrs. Stephen Reynolds complain that the criterion of useful education—"knowing how to keep your end up and rear a family of kids fitty on a quid a week"—still condemns the modern system. Yes, and in our opinion it will continue to condemn it. For the old bad system of payment by results as measured by his Majesty's Inspectors there has been instituted the new and worse system of payment by results as measured by the local

authorities' inspectors. As these latter are of all the implements of the governing classes (save, perhaps, rent collectors and workhouse officials) the most brutal and stupid of their tribe, King Log in our elementary schools has merely given way to King Stork. To measure the value of the present teaching by its results twenty years hence—which is the only real educational standard—is a task requiring imagination—in other words, a task beyond the existing type of local officials. Workmen themselves, moreover, as they grow up and enter into the harvest prepared for them are acutely aware of its meagre character. Save for reading and writing, no intelligent working man has any use for the "education" now being thrust on him.

* * *

From an interview with him in the "Daily Mail" we learn that Mr. Hammerstein, the founder of the new Opera House in the Kingsway, is both pleased and disappointed with the public recognition he has received. The musical appreciation of London audiences is, he says, acute and hearty; but the box-receipts are unsatisfactory. They are likely, we fear, to continue unsatisfactory, since the object of Mr. Hammerstein's venture is to educate London, not to please it, and education is never willingly paid for. There are three ways of approaching a great educational task such as Mr. Hammerstein's. You can set out with the intention of making it pay. In that case you must prepare to throw all your ideals overboard; the pursuit and still more the capture of profits in an artistic enterprise are fatal to its success. Or you can propose to yourself just to cover expenses. This is Mr. Hammerstein's ambition. "I do not want to make money out of it," he says. "All I ask is that it shall pay its way. Otherwise I should be offering London charity, and she would be rightly offended." This, too, we fear, is an unrealisable dream. London nor England nor anybody ever takes offence at the free offering of services which they have not a sufficiently strong desire to perform for themselves. At bottom it comes to this: Mr. Hammerstein is more desirous of providing London with good music than London is desirous of good music. The greater desire being his, the sacrifice will be his also. The third way and the only way of approaching a great task of this kind without imperilling its success by profit or breaking one's heart in attempting to make it "just cover expenses" is to make of it an affair of honour. Honour is assuredly the only reward that artists, whether in private or in public affairs, can expect to receive. Only utilities, fancied utilities and amusements ever pay. Art, like religion, must be its own reward.

* * *

There exists, it appears, a Simplified Spelling Society to reform, as they call it, the orthography of the English language. To judge by the sample of spelling they present the society's chief members must be deaf as well as blind and stupid. Only prejudice, they assure us, makes the following corruption of a verse from Gilpin's Ride "seem queer and ugly":

So, turning tu hiz horse, he sed,
 "I am in haist to dien;
 'T woz for yuer plezhur yu caim heer,
 Yu shal go bac for mien."

Apart from the hideous appearance this negroid spelling presents to the eye, apart also from much profounder considerations than the "Society" is capable of appreciating, the pronunciation of the above words as spelled would result in a sort of rude dialect of English. Until one examines the list of distinguished advocates of the reformed spelling, it is impossible to credit English-speaking people with so little ear for their own tongue as to confuse the pronunciation of "haist" with "haste," or of "yuer" with "your," or of "mien" and "dien" with "mine" and "dine." English spelling, we do not deny, is difficult and anomalous; but so also is the best English pronunciation. A word is but an attempt to record the infinite variety of sound contained in a single part of speech. As a realistic and scientific record it is imperfect very

likely; but as an artistic living symbol it is infinitely nearer to reality than these pseudo-phonograms. Sound it is that is the living spirit; the written word is only its garment. To change the spelling of the word in the belief that only the spelling would suffer is a complete misunderstanding. If we consented to the change, most certainly pronunciation would change accordingly. We should have "ha-ist" and "di-en" and "yu-er" instead of our own perhaps unrecordable but traditional and characteristic sounds. This, however, would make little difference to the distinguished supporters of the "Speling" Reform Society. They number among them Professor Gilbert Murray, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, Mr. Carnegie, Mr. William Archer, and Mr. Bernard Shaw. What a set to pose as artists and authorities on English pronunciation! Professor Gilbert Murray, we understand, speaks Oxford, a vulgar dialect more offensive because less naive than Cockney; Mr. Carnegie speaks a bastard tongue, the offspring of bastard parents, Scottish and American; Mr. William Archer speaks the sort of English that is spoken in middle-class Scandinavian households; Mr. Bernard Shaw's Irish-English is amusing only in the music-hall; as for Mr. MacDonald, a doubtful authority on everything else, neither his example nor his views in the matter of pronunciation have any value whatever. We suggest that these "Speling" Reformers should start a Society for the Encouragement of Pure Pronunciation; and enrol themselves as its first subjects.

INCARNATION.

I am a clod;
 A thing of Earth instilled with fear of God;
 A dream made manifest,
 Wherein do rest
 The agony of ages, and the broods
 Of mocking spirits such as shun the moods
 Of Earthly consciousness, and only yield
 A maddening glimpse;—a moment stand revealed
 To the sub-conscious mind and then are fled,
 Leaving no trace of whence,—or whither sped.

A Being I,
 Impalpable as some vast world-heaved sigh,
 Embodied of the dust in human shape;
 Abode of brutes that lust for Hellish rape
 Against the Angels of a higher self.

I am the creature of a boundless space.
 This Earthly race
 Is but the passion of a mad embrace,
 The satiation of a Soul accursed
 With high-adventure's thirst.

I am a part
 Of one vast pulsing heart;
 An atom of a comprehensive whole.
 My Soul
 Is bond of Flesh and Mind,—till its caress
 Of this brief phase of Earthly consciousness
 Shall prove the frailty of human clay,
 And it shall fearless face the Unknown Way,
 Strong in the faith that grants the timid peace,
 Nor scorns release.

TOM SEFTON.

AURORA.

O aching heart! O frozen ground
 In grief's black winter iron-bound!
 O misty ocean, dark and frore!
 O ghost-ship drifting evermore,
 'Mid flocs of ice that groan and crack
 Like a world riven on the rack!

O glory of the jewelled sea!
 O flashing hand that waves to me!
 O streamers of eternity!

E. H. VISIAK.

Foreign Affairs.

By S. Verdad.

THE daily Press, I see, has at last found out that Persia is to be partitioned, in fact if not in theory, and that there is a reaction in Turkey. So let us drop the details of these matters for the present and consider another aspect of the Persian question, viz., the agreement which binds us to Russia.

It is, perhaps, only natural that this agreement should be greatly disliked by the Liberal and Radical Press of this country. An entirely mistaken view of Russia prevails here. Few great nations are more misunderstood by the average Englishman; of few countries has the internal administration been more distorted. We hear a great deal about tortures in prisons, about ruthless banishments to Siberia, about knouts and flogging, about despotic government, about sensual and malignant dukes. But we hear little about other features of Russian life, those features with which the masses come into contact daily: the fact, for example, that Russia is above all an agricultural nation, and that most of the benefits conferred by an agricultural régime are to be found among the people. The Russian peasant may be, judging him by the conventional standards of Western civilisation, uncouth and uneducated; for the poor fellow can seldom read or write. He is not, however, of the sluggish disposition which many writers here attribute to him: he has preserved his folklore, his primitive customs, his half-Oriental traditions and simplicity. He is quite an interesting person when you come to know him. His daughters are not seized for grand ducal harems and his sons are not brutally flogged with great regularity while serving in the army and afterwards sent to Siberia.

A most remarkable feature of Russian life, of course, is the almost entire absence, except in the large towns, of what we know in England as the middle class. In Russia this class can hardly be said to exist. That vast country still contains all the elements of a strong, if primitive nation: a patriarchal class of landed gentry—or what we may call landed gentry for the sake of convenience—and a peasantry which is not nearly so discontented, or anything like it, as Russia's enemies try to make out. The absence of a middle class, of course, is due to the absence of commerce; for the Russian has but little taste for commerce as we understand the word. His commercial affairs are managed for him by Englishmen and Germans, and discontent in Russia is greatest where a small middle class has begun to arise as the result of the commercial exploitation of the peasantry, or of men who might have been peasants. Commerce, in our sense of the word, is demoralising, and calls into being an artificial class: I think that will be readily admitted. The absence of the middleman is one of the factors which makes life in Russia tolerable for the artist.

Apart from all this, however, the opponents of the Anglo-Russian Agreement never appear to have asked themselves the question: By what is this Agreement to be replaced? Would some of them answer: By cultivating friendly relations with Germany? Perhaps so; but it must be pointed out at once that the expression "friendly relations" is vague and unmeaning in the sphere of diplomacy. The fact that England has—though only to some slight extent—tended to become a pacific nation in the course of the last decade or so should not allow us to overlook the fact, equally significant and important, that there are still military nations in the world; and that when a military nation is opposed to a pacific nation, the military nation invariably has its way. "Friendly relations" are cloudy, romantic, and untrustworthy; a definite alliance is something substantial. As Sir Edward Grey pointed out in his recent important speech, the days are long past when the Salisbury and Gladstonian policy of isolation could serve this country in its diplomatic relations. The balance of power in Europe has changed. The rise of

the German Navy, the enormous increase in the German Army, and the disappearance of the Russian Navy at the time of the war with Japan: these things have effected a diplomatic revolution. It became necessary for British statesmen—for those among them, at all events, who thought of the welfare of their country—to find a means of counterbalancing these events.

It was obvious to such statesmen in the first place that the relative value of the British Navy had greatly declined. When the navies of other Powers were small, unimportant, and generally known to be inefficient, the British Navy was a powerful factor in diplomatic negotiations. But this factor was gradually countered by the rise of the German Navy and the increasing importance of the United States and Japanese Navies. It was clear, too—a study of military history will make it clear to anyone—that great European wars have always been decided more on land than on sea, and that, with the introduction of conscription, the relative strength of the British Army had greatly declined from what it had been in the days of the Peninsular wars.

In these circumstances, and in view of the marked hostility of Germany to this country, our statesmen were wise in opposing the powerful Triple Alliance—for at the time it was undoubtedly powerful—by a Triple Entente. We simply had to enter into agreements with France and Russia; for there was no alternative to choose.

With those who talk smoothly and glibly about the absorption of an inferior Eastern nation by a superior Western one I do not, of course, agree. Eastern culture, as I have often maintained in these pages, is superior to Western culture; and as I myself, in harmony with what I conceive to be the general policy of this review, am more interested in culture, which is eternal, than with the immediate circumstances surrounding a particular event, which are transient, I am sincerely sorry to witness what I take to be the disappearance of the old régime of Iran. It is not true to suggest—and least of all to suggest as regards culture—that a nation can continue in its old groove after a defeat such as Persia is now undergoing. I have heard it maintained by many Socialists, for example, that the absorption of England by Germany would not matter, as everything, after a period of unavoidable confusion, would go on as before: we should only be governed by a different set of rulers.

Arguments like these, considering them from the point of view of culture, I think, are fallacious and superficial. For culture, i.e., creative art, real creative art, demands a state of physical and mental exaltation, exuberance if you like, which can never arise out of a national defeat. A defeat brings with it, always, a feeling of humiliation among the vanquished; and when the vanquished, as is the case with the Persians, belong to a superior civilisation, the feeling of humiliation is all the more bitter and galling. Out of it come rancour, hatred, spleen, sorrow—any qualities you like except poetic (i.e., creative) qualities. When poets sing of national humiliation they do not give utterance to their thoughts and moods as the result of a truly poetic, exuberant state of mind; they are inspired by hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness: and creation arising from what some philosopher has called "inner poverty" is a melancholy sight for the artist to contemplate.

Perhaps the artist may comfort himself by indulging in the hope that the wild tribesmen of the South—far away from the Russian "sphere of influence"—may yet exist long enough to carry on the traditions of the Iran which we associate vaguely with Zoroaster, or the less ancient traditions of Kai-Khusru, Gushtasp, and Ardeshir Dirazdust. And the tranquil observer of international affairs may still be able to say, ere Persia is polluted by some new and more recent faith,

The dew is on the lotus!—Rise, Great Sun!
And lift my leaf and mix me with the wave
Om mani padme hum, the Sunrise comes!
The Dewdrop slips into the shining Sea!

Peoples and Governments.

By Guglielmo Ferrero.

[One of the most important articles on the peace question which has yet appeared is that by Signor Guglielmo Ferrero, entitled "Peoples and Governments," which Mr. J. M. Kennedy has translated for THE NEW AGE. Our acknowledgments are due to the Paris "Figaro" of December 6, in which paper the article first appeared.]

HISTORY often takes delight in frustrating, with unexpected surprises, the forecasts and calculations of men. For a century and a half Europe has been trying to take away from kings the right to wage war or make peace. Whole libraries have been written, and philosophy, law, and history have been laid under contribution to prove that this privilege of theirs had been the chief cause of the wars which had drenched Europe with blood. The ambitions of kings and the intrigues of courtiers compelled the peoples of the world to fight against one another at every moment in behalf of causes which had but little direct interest for them; the peoples had to give freely of their blood and their money in order that dynasties might cover themselves with glory; and war, under these conditions, could not but go on for ever.

There was only one remedy for this state of things, as unjust as it was dangerous: to take away from kings, who were traditionally bellicose, this right of declaring war and to transfer it to the people, who were peaceful by nature. On the day when war depended on the will of the people peace would reign throughout the world.

These ideas gradually spread, gained ground, and exercised in time a certain influence on the political evolution of Europe. The propaganda of the pacifists was turned away from courts and palaces and directed to the cottage. And now see what we have come to: sovereigns and governments have become peaceful everywhere; but the peoples are becoming warlike.

In the latter half of this troublous year which is now approaching its end we may see, in two striking instances, this curious reversal of rôles. Few persons have forgotten amid what fears the German Emperor ascended his throne. It was said in every newspaper in Europe that the young sovereign longed for the laurels of war; that he would let loose war all over Europe so that he might secure for himself a prominent place in the history of his family beside his ancestors. One paper even said that the young Emperor had sworn never to drink a glass of champagne so long as the province of Champagne was not a part of the German Empire!

Twenty-three years have passed since then, and not only has the German Emperor not waged the war or wars which were to slake the thirst of his ambition, but he is to-day accused by his own people, more or less openly, of being too peaceful. "History will one day acknowledge," he said to a distinguished visitor on one occasion, "that Europe often owed to me the preservation of peace."

But it is this very fact which a part of public opinion in his own country attributes to him as a reproach rather than as a merit, as M. Moysset has shown in his excellent study on "The Public Mind in Germany." Formerly parliamentary oppositions ceaselessly denounced the bellicose intentions of governments. Yet only a few weeks ago, in the German Imperial Parliament, we saw the Opposition bitterly reproaching the Government with its weakness in showing a continual desire not to disturb the peace of the world.

We find the same phenomenon in Italy in another form. It is now no longer a secret that the Government hesitated for a considerable time before declaring war on Turkey. If it had been able to make itself master of events the conquest of Tripoli would very probably have been put off once more. Reasons for postponing it were not wanting; and they would have been sufficient for any government which desired to maintain peace. But public opinion did not permit of this; it was the nation which forced the hand of the Government. A

wave of warlike enthusiasm swept suddenly through the country; and even the leaders of the peace movement turned all at once into apostles of war: and the Government could not overlook this great current of public opinion.

One is tempted to say that if in former times the peoples had to fight for the pleasure of kings and governments, the time is approaching when sovereigns and governments will be obliged to wage war for the pleasure of the peoples.

The philosophers who have created the modern state would be rather astonished, perhaps, if they could only witness this spectacle. And their astonishment would increase when they saw that the peoples nowadays desire and sometimes decide to wage war with the same irresponsibility as that with which they were in the habit of reproaching the former régime.

In all ages, even in those when authority seemed to be established in an impregnable position and highly respected, governments had always to take into consideration the aspirations and ideas of the masses. A people has never been governed with the aid of mere force alone and against all its aspirations, except in transitory and quite unusual circumstances. Public opinion, then, has always been a powerful social force, even under the most despotic governments. Many contemporary historians experience great difficulty in understanding the past, simply because they have not sufficiently taken this fact into consideration.

There is, nevertheless, a difference of some magnitude between our own age and those ages which have preceded it. In former times public opinion was timid and easily satisfied. It was content with little, and never made its voice heard too loudly. It was not difficult for governments to satisfy it and to preserve at the same time a wide liberty of action in the most important matters with which the State had to deal.

To-day public opinion is everywhere conscious of its power. The diffusion of culture, ideas, and democratic institutions; the Press; the liberty of making itself heard in every way which public opinion has acquired, from speeches to cinematographs, from pamphlets to riots, have all tended to multiply its energy. Public opinion would fain be a great and uncontrolled power; and, like all absolute rulers, it is becoming capricious. In all countries it exhibits contradictory aspirations. It calls for prosperity and glory, order and liberty, progress and peace, increased expenditure and the diminution of taxes, the benefits of peace and the advantages of war. If many of these aspirations are mutually exclusive, public opinion nevertheless persists in wishing to satisfy them all at the same time, and it holds governments responsible for its inevitable disillusionment.

This violence on the part of public opinion is a new phenomenon in the history of the world; and it is perhaps one of the most serious weaknesses of our civilisation. Everywhere, in republics as well as in monarchies, in parliamentary states as well as in absolute states, we see increasing symptoms of a profound political crisis. Everyone, in every country, complains more or less bitterly that governments are becoming weaker and more disorganised, and that they are developing a regular system of incoherence. It is difficult for contemporaries to appreciate the exact value of these recriminations and the real extent of this crisis, which actually exists and is widespread; but it is certain that public opinion and its demands are the most important factors in it. That which is impossible is no less impossible for the most powerful of peoples than for the most powerful of kings. In every country governments to-day have to solve too many insoluble problems; and their strength gives out in the endeavour to perform such a difficult and dangerous task.

Amongst these insoluble problems we must in future count those which bring about peace or war. How is the bellicose spirit which is now taking possession of the masses to be reconciled with that need of peace which we feel to be so profoundly necessary for our age? For our civilisation, as for all complicated civilisations, war can be only a rare and transitory crisis. Wars which are too frequent, or which last too long, would disorganise our civilisation completely. That

explains why those who take politics seriously are, in this question of peace or war, much more prudent than those whose political career is irresponsible, those who are submerged and lost in the midst of that vague and enormous mass known as the public. These latter, nevertheless, wield a power nowadays which must not be lost sight of. To reconcile these two contradictory tendencies is one of the most difficult tasks which fall to the lot of a government, but it is also one of the most necessary: and this, perhaps, explains why, among modern statesmen, there are more compliant and yielding men than men who are energetic and audacious.

The Durbar and After.

By Syud Hossain.

IT will probably be many weeks yet before public opinion, in this country or in India, crystallises itself in regard to the great political changes whose announcement in the King's Speech marked, with fine dramatic effect, the close at Delhi of the greatest Imperial pageant of modern times. And certainly it will be a matter of months before their full scope and significance come to be adequately realised. Nevertheless, it may not be without interest briefly to consider the trend of the new policy—it is a new policy—which these changes connote, and whose genesis is outlined with remarkable candour and ability in the important despatch of the Government of India (dated Aug. 25, 1911) just published.

The outstanding impression which one derives from a perusal of this historic State Paper, supplemented by a consideration of the tone and substance of the Royal declaration, is this: that an attempt at constructive statesmanship, replacing and transcending the political jugglery of recent years, has at last been made in Indian affairs. No half-hearted attempts at "conciliation," no burking of vital issues, no complacent blindness to the inexorable writing on the wall—but a great and unhesitating step forward in the direction of progress: that is what the Government have achieved. They were face to face with a parting of the ways in India; with a situation which, while doubtless forced to the front by the incidents connected with the aftermath of the Curzonian régime, may be described as really the outcome of the growing solidarity and national consciousness of the Indian peoples consequent upon the spread of English education in the country. For a while it looked as though reactionary recklessness would triumph, and the splendid mission of England in the East be thus robbed of its promise and its reward by the short-sightedness of bureaucratic underlings. Happily, British statesmanship has vindicated itself when all the indications pointed to the danger of its being submerged by Imperialism run amuck, and ensured, for two generations at least, the peaceful political development of the great dependency.

The proposed changes are drastic in nature and far-reaching in consequences; but even more important than them is the spirit in which they have been conceived. It is not often that a bureaucracy, any more than a personal despotism, departs from its traditional custom of abstaining from such admissions—direct or implied—as the future may render inconvenient, and the Government of India have hitherto made a religion of non-committal reticence. It took the Indian National Congress twenty-five years to secure "official" recognition of its existence, and nothing short of anarchy and anarchism would convince the powers that be that the partition of Bengal was passionately resented by the millions of Hindu Bengalis.

In the light of this traditional penchant for ignoring everything that is unpalatable to the bureaucratic conscience, a passage in Lord Hardinge's despatch, which furnishes the key-note of the practical policy enunciated in the Royal declaration, attains a degree of significance which renders it memorable:—

It is certain that, in the course of time, the just demands of Indians for a larger share in the government of the country will have to be satisfied, and the question will be how this devolution of power can

be conceded without impairing the supreme authority of the Governor-General-in-Council. *The only possible solution of the difficulty would appear to be gradually to give the Provinces a larger measure of self-government, until at last India would consist of a number of administrations, autonomous in all provincial affairs, with the Government of India above them all, and possessing power to interfere in cases of misgovernment, but ordinarily restricting their functions to matters of Imperial concern.*

The italicised portion of the above excerpt represents a degree of generous frankness unparalleled, we believe, in any statement of administrative policy of recent years in India. Nor is it difficult to perceive how the official disclosure in itself involves not only an irreversible and wholesome departure from existing administrative precedent, but provides an unalterable constructive programme for the future which requires the harmonious co-operation of the official and the non-official to be successfully carried out. Henceforth the game of cross-purposes between Nationalism and Officialism, between the patriot and the politician, must cease. Complete local autonomy is the goal set before Young India, and the scheme of devolution designed and sanctioned by the Government is fully worthy of engrossing, for the next two or three decades, the energies and intelligence of the educated community, and of attracting to its service the best ability and patriotism that the country can produce. This administrative experiment in its results, it is no exaggeration to say, will be pregnant with the fate of India. The vista of ultimate federal emancipation which its success must open up will be equally indubitably marred and obliterated by its failure. That is the fateful issue which shall rest on the knees of the gods.

Coming to the list of "grants, concessions, reliefs and benefactions" comprised in the Royal declaration, one cannot fail to be struck by the elaborate care and caution expended on its composition. Some of the items—e.g., award of bonuses to the lower grades of the Military and Civil Services, the abolition of the customary Nazrana from the Indian Princes, the release of prisoners, including, one imagines, political offenders—are purely commemorative and unexceptionably laudable. The throwing open of the Victoria Cross to the brave and loyal Indian soldiery, and the immediate expenditure of 50 lakhs for the promotion of "truly popular education," with the promise of further grants on a generous scale, are belated but nonetheless welcome moves in the right direction. It is the territorial redistribution, however, which gives tone and reality to the new policy adumbrated in Lord Hardinge's despatch. The scheme on the whole constitutes and furnishes a masterly study in equipoise. Racial, religious and administrative interests—in many cases conflicting and difficult to reconcile—are made to balance and counter-balance one another with admirable ingenuity and resource. The removal of the seat of Viceregal Government from Calcutta to Delhi, the reversal of the Curzonian policy of "Partition" and the reunion of Bengal under a Governorship-in-Council, the creation of a new Lieutenant-Governorship and a new Chief Commissionership, are the changes proposed to meet the exigencies of the new situation. The restoration of Delhi to its ancient dignity of capitalship was decided upon, we believe, as much on account of its appeal to sentiment and imagination as of substantial considerations of political expediency. The cancelling of the Partition of Bengal must tend not only to redress a great grievance, but to rectify a blunder, which was a blunder because it ruthlessly—and avoidably—sacrificed national sentiment at the altar of administrative efficiency. The explicit assurance given by the Government to safeguard, under the new arrangement, the interests of the eighteen millions of Mahomedans of Eastern Bengal must ensure the smooth working of the Governorship-in-Council. The new Lieutenant-Governorship with Patna as capital, and the relapsing of Assam to a Chief Commissionership, were inevitable corollaries to the main scheme of redistribution, and promise well for the development of local self-government in the future.

I Gather the Limbs of Osiris.

By Ezra Pound.

[Under this heading Mr. Pound will contribute expositions and translations in illustration of the "New Method in Scholarship."—ED.]

VI.

ON VIRTUE.

In an earlier chapter I said that interesting authors were either "symptomatic" or "donative"; permit me new diameters and a new circumscription, even if I seem near to repetition.

As contemporary philosophy has so far resolved itself into a struggle to disagree as to the terms in which we shall define an indefinable something upon which we have previously agreed to agree, I ask the reader to regard what follows not as dogma, but as a metaphor which I find convenient to express certain relations.

The soul of each man is compounded of all the elements of the cosmos of souls, but in each soul there is some one element which predominates, which is in some peculiar and intense way the quality or *virtù* of the individual; in no two souls is this the same. It is by reason of this *virtù* that a given work of art persists. It is by reason of this *virtù* that we have one Catullus, one Villon; by reason of it that no amount of technical cleverness can produce a work having the same charm as the original, not though all progress in art is, in so great degree, a progress through imitation.

This virtue is not a "point of view," nor an "attitude toward life"; nor is it the mental calibre or "a way of thinking," but something more substantial which influences all these. We may as well agree, at this point, that we do not all of us think in at all the same sort of way or by the same sort of implements. Making a rough and incomplete category from personal experience I can say that certain people think with words, certain with, or in, objects; others realise nothing until they have pictured it; others progress by diagrams like those of the geometricians; some think, or construct, in rhythm, or by rhythms and sound; others, the unfortunate, move by words disconnected from the objects to which they might correspond, or more unfortunate still in blocks and *clichés* of words; some, favoured of Apollo, in words that hover above and cling close to the things they mean. And all these different sorts of people have most appalling difficulty in understanding each other.

It is the artist's business to find his own *virtù*. This virtue may be what you will:—

Luteum pede soccum, . . .

Viden ut faces

Splendidas quatunt comas? . . .

Luteumve papauer.

It may be something which draws Catullus to write of scarlet poppies, of orange-yellow slippers, of the shaking, glorious hair of the torches; or Propertius to

Quoscumque smaragdus

Quosve dedit flavo lumine chrysolithos.

—"The honey-coloured light."

Or it may be the so attractive, so nickel-plated neatness which brings Mr. Pope so to the quintessence of the obvious, with:—

"Man is not a fly."

So far as mortal immortality is concerned, the poet need only discover his *virtù* and survive the discovery long enough to write some few scant dozen verses—providing, that is, that he have acquired some reasonable technique, this latter being the matter of a lifetime—or not, according to the individual facility.

Beyond the discovery and expression of his virtue the artist may proceed to the erection of his microcosmos.

"Ego tamquam centrum circuli, quae omnes circum-

ferentiae partes habet equaliter, tu autem non sic"—"I am the centre of a circle which possesseth all parts of its circumference equally, but thou not so," says the angel appearing to Dante ("Vita Nuova," XII).

Having discovered his own virtue the artist will be more likely to discern and allow for a peculiar *virtù* in others. The erection of the microcosmos consists in discriminating these other powers and in holding them in orderly arrangement about one's own. The process is uncommon. Dante, of all men, performed it in the most symmetrical and barefaced manner; yet I would for you—as I have done already for myself—stretch the fabric of my critique upon four great positions.

Among the poets there have been four men in especial virtuous, or, since virtues are so hard to define, let us say they represent four distinct phases of consciousness:

Homer of the *Odyssey*, man conscious of the world outside him; and if we accept the tradition of Homer's blindness, we may find in that blindness the significant cause of his power; for him the outer world would have a place of mystery, of uncertainty, of things severed from their attendant trivialities, of acts, each one cloaked in some glamour of the inexperienced; his work, therefore, a work of imagination and not of observation;

Dante, in the "*Divina Commedia*," man conscious of the world within him;

Chaucer, man conscious of the variety of persons about him, not so much of their acts and the outlines of their acts as of their character, their personalities; with the inception of this sort of interest any epic period comes to its end;

Shakespeare, man conscious of himself in the world about him—as Dante had been conscious of the spaces of the mind, its reach and its perspective.

I doubt not that a person of wider reading could make a better arrangement of names than this is, but I must talk from my corner of the things that I know; at any rate, each of these men constructed some sort of world into which we may plunge ourselves and find a life not glaringly incomplete. Of the last three we know definitely that each of them swept into his work the virtues of many forerunners and contemporaries, and that in no case do these obtrude or disturb the poise of the whole.

I believe sincerely that any man who has read these four authors with attention will find that a great many other works, now accepted as classic, rather bore him; he will understand their beauty, but with this understanding will come the memory of having met the same sort of beauty elsewhere in greater intensity. It will be said, rather, that he understands the books than that the books enlighten him. In the culture of the mind, as in the culture of fields, there is a law of diminishing return. If a book reveal to us something of which we were unconscious, it feeds us with its energy; if it reveal to us nothing but the fact that its author knew something which we knew, it draws energy from us.

Now it is inconceivable that any knowledge of Homer, Dante, Chaucer, and Shakespeare could ever diminish our enjoyment of Sappho, or of Villon, or of Heine, or of the "*Poema del Cid*," or, perhaps, of Leopardi, though we would enjoy him in great part as a commentator, as a friend looking with us toward the classics and seeing, perhaps, into them further than we had seen.

The donative authors, or the real classics, interilluminate each other, and I should define a "classic" as a book our enjoyment of which cannot be diminished by any amount of reading of other books, or even—and this is the fiercer test—by a first-hand knowledge of life.

Any author whose light remains visible in this place where the greater lamps are flashing back and forth upon each other is of no mean importance; of him it can be said without qualification that he has attained his own *virtù*. It is true that the results of Guido Cavalcanti and of Arnaut Daniel are in great measure included in the "*Divina Commedia*," yet there remains over a portion not quite soluble, and in trying at this

late date to reinstate them in our canon, I do nothing that Dante has not done before me; one reads their work, in fact, on his advice ("Purgatorio," XI and XXVI). In each case their virtue is a virtue of precision. In Arnaut, as I have said before, this fineness has its effect in his style, his form, the relation of his words and tune, and in his content.

The Ciconian Women.

By Beatrice Hastings.

THE Immortals thronged the courts of heaven, for Calliope sate in judgment where two queens strove for Adonis. And the Muse gave the youth for one half of each year to the queen of hell and for the rest to laughter-loving Aphrodite; judgment applauded by the impartial gods, but a desolation to the jealous queen of love. She, abandoning Olympus, flew in her chariot towards the unsuspecting earth, and alighted in a valley of the snow-peaked Thracian country, where the Hebrus flows.

There is a grassy wood beside the bank of the Hebrus. Hither Orpheus, that great son of Calliope, was used to come playing upon his lyre, the gift of Mercury, and singing: while the river stayed its flow to listen, and the mountains moved towards him and the fierce beasts of the forest forgot their nature and gambolled, meek beneath the music.

And he sang Eurydice, lost behind the gates of Hades.

Here, to this wood, came Aphrodite; and here came Destiny, numbering her slow paces. And here, since whom Fate seeks, seeks Fate, came a troop of dancing Bacchæ, crowned, and sounding upon cymbals and raising cries of adoration. On a bygone day they had arisen in a far city to be free of the woes of men's service: when the priests of Bacchus fluted in the meads and drew the daughters of men with a song of never returning; and they caught up the song and went out and thenceforth decked the altars of the God until this day of their destiny was come.

Thus, they broke into the forest and with innocent feet came dancing upon the sward where Orpheus sate.

Then Destiny drew nearer; then Aphrodite arose in the bower where she hid her shining form. She appeared, shedding sweet odours, and with her radiance lured those eyes which all day long had seen Bacchus only, enthroned. And when the marvelling Mænads might no more move away or cease to gaze, the goddess went over and stood behind Orpheus—him, fate-blinded—and spread her bright fingers and weaved a purple chaplet, a phantom, about his head; while he played, still dreaming of Eurydice.

Now that bacchante approached, she first stricken by Love, and she murmured sweetly and besought the divine musician. He rising, seeking to retire thence, eluded her soft hands, but he saw grey Fate, and he stood not knowing whither to fly, and he cried upon the gods and upon Calliope.

But furious Love wrought amidst the Bacchæ, and from beseeching turned them to wretched anger; and they poured their pain upon him whom they conceived to have hurt them, and so slew that god-like singer; and he lay broken upon the earth. Only his gifted tongue ceased not to murmur the name of Eurydice.

Then Fate drew away; and Aphrodite ascended to the Graces and was by them anointed and arrayed in fresh robes. But the Mænads sunk upon the ground, for all gods were gone out of them. As women, now, and witless to bear their sin, they cast into the river the limbs and the pale head of Orpheus. And they sunk again as if doomed in that place.

Out to the salt sea the head went floating and it came by the island, Lesbos, where men heard it sighing, and

took it and laid it in a temple. Then to Zeus arose the voices of lamenting mortals. He, thundering, thus men tell, awarded vengeance, and Bacchus descended to earth surrounded by the Furies.

The ivy withered in the wood, and the grapes upon the wands of the Bacchæ went dry, and the eyes of wild beasts threatened through the leaves; and the Bacchæ loosed their strength in grief and terror, wailing, remembering lost days.

"Is it we who lie thus with fettered feet, O Bacchus? Once we were swift. Our tresses, twined with flowers, floated behind us. But now we should fear the thin-footed maids descending the hill of Apollo, whom once we chased to a frenzy of speed, yet by the river Alpheus we caught them. Surely Sleep, that conquers all things, holds us low in the net of a dream, and Thou, coming, shalt awake us with the flute's high summons!"

"Ye dream not, Sisters."

"Gone is the man-voiced Goat that led us. Gone are the fawns that followed us, for the lynx and the tiger gather, waiting for the night. Yet these aforetime we saw dancing together beside thy wheels. Serpents vied with lambs to leap the backs of thy yoked leopards. Lions with elephants capered, and proud bulls linked their horns in the dance. Thy festival filled earth with laughter. Olympus opened its gates and smiled when Thou passedst in the vales, Lord Bacchus."

"Maids, I remember when we knew not Bacchus, but serving war-struck men, trailed the woman's garment, sullenly loosening from our knees these shackling folds; here, wife to this man, and there—of whom the captive? yet so always obeying a master: hating the days, with nought but age as our hope.

"But on a day the north wind blew like breaths of music. Charmed to stillness some of us stood, and some danced, and some ran forth and returned with the cry that a revel was coming, led by goat-like men. While we tightened our girdles the goats were amongst us, bursting grapes upon our lips so that our earth-born senses were reft away: and we saw Bacchus with up-lifted thyrsus. Fair was he, gracious and god-like. We loosed our girdles and cast them by. We sacked our houses of war-won jewels and brought these forth, but Bacchus thrust all aside and gave us gifts: a living wand in our hand and crowns of ivy and vesture from the dappled fawn. And we left the places of men, singing, to return no more.

"Nor shall return.

"Yet trust not any god, for Fate is above all gods.

"That Head I slew nameth me now in Hades. I am drawn hence: long my evil fate to know while yet I breathe."

They, still hearing her, saw her no more; for what was she crept low by the ground beneath the bushes. And another spake, appealing.

"Let that god who made me evil save me now!"

Grey bark grew over her mouth and stopped her voice. Her two feet, as one, clung fast to the ground. Her knees stiffened like knots in a living tree, and each of her piteous arms grew green with leaves, and like a branch hung swaying. Save for her weeping eyes, she seemed no other than an aspen tree. Tears still told her pain when they who saw found their feet held fast and their hair was caught up by the Furies and their arms, in terror upflying, were locked together and could no more be loosed, while rough bark grew about them; and they were still. You would suppose that a grove of poplar trees had long since sprung from seed beneath that soil.

So they passed from the sight of men, spoiled of human limbs and human voice, and were not known from trees; and no sound came from them save when the wind stirred the leaves upon their deep-hid bosoms.

But she who was become an adder crouched, weeping against the day when her head should fall. She came near to the new-formed trees and licked the tough bark, trembling in the silence.

And now, far sounded a flute call. On the light hills Bacchus danced, and the Goats, and a new band gathering there.

Father and Son.

By Alfred Ollivant.

I DROPPED down the hill in the brilliant afternoon and entered the old Moat Croft Garden recently given to the town by the Duke.

Under a weeping ash I sat down. By my side was a sallow woman of forty. Two younger women stood opposite her in talk. From their slightly smarter clothes I guessed that they had been shop-assistants before marriage. Now they were mothers; and their children played about them on the worn grass. All three women clearly came from the same street.

The sallow woman, it seemed, had just been down to Hobby's, the big haberdasher, about a place for her Ivy. The young lady she had seen was nice—so nice—not proud, you know. O, she *was* nice! different from some of them. She had taken down Ivy's name and address, and the girl was to go on Thursday to be interviewed.

Ivy could have had two places last week. Two possible employers wrote, but Alf was against them both. They wanted her to come for one week on trial. Alf saw the post-card and wouldn't have it.

"I think it was the week on trial he didn't like," said the worn mother. "Probably got a rush on—a wedding order or a funeral order. And at the end of the week—'You won't suit.' That's what Alf thought, I expect."

Poor Alf! He had hurt his finger at his work, but he wouldn't give up, though he was in three clubs.

"What's the good of having three clubs if you won't go on one?" I says. But he won't. So he spent a shilling on his finger at the chemist's last night."

His finger was not Alf's only trouble, so it seemed. He had a son of the name of John. And since he had gone to work, John was a "surly little 'aound," according to his mother.

"I don't care what they say," continued the aggrieved mother. "They are nothing but bother when they grow up. Babies are bad enough; but when they begin to bring a bit of money home!"—she raised her hands. "Want more'n half of it back, too!"

John, it seemed, was fifteen and in a hurry to be a man. He earned nine shillings a week, which wasn't bad money, and was learning plumbing; but he was not contented. Young Tom French up the street had just been taken on in the engine-cleaning shed, and one day would drive a locomotive—even an express. And John was jealous.

"That's what I want to be, mum," says he. 'Engine-driver same as Tom French.'

"But you had your choice," I says. "You chose plumbing of your own free will. You can't change now, you're half through your training."

John had another trouble besides a missed career. He could not get up of a morning. He overlaid reg'lar.

"What time's he got to get up?" asked one of the young women.

"Half-past five."

The young woman chuckled.

"I'd overlay if I had to be up by then," she said.

"It's the same for all in the building trade," replied the sensible mother. "And you know where you are. If it's up early, it should be bed early, too."

And that was where the trouble was. John never came home of nights till nearly ten; and then, instead of going to bed, he must sit down like a man and read the "Argus."

"And that's how it is he overlays. You can't do nothing with him of mornings—that h'irritable."

Alf got up at five-thirty every morning and went in to the boy's room to wake him. This morning the father called the lad twice and the mother twice. Then she went down to get them their eggs and tea ready before they started.

Father and son were working on the same building; but the mother always gave the son his tea first because he walked to work, while his father bicycled.

This morning John came scrambling down at the last moment in tears, and said:

"You've let me overlay again. Tell you what it is, you'll get me sacked afore you've done."

The martyred lad refused to have his tea. Said he hadn't time and must do with a cup of cold water.

That was John!

John was the new kind of son; and Alf was the new kind of father.

He encouraged the boy all he could, the mother averred. Gave him that nice navy-blue suit he fancied—to measure, too, and not ready-made.

"'Tisn't many fathers'd do that for a boy of fifteen. And then he speaks to Alf as you wouldn't believe!"

John was the twentieth-century boy—the spoilt boy—who is not peculiar to one class, the boy whose shoulders have never known the wholesome discipline of the strap. But if he had never known it in the flesh, an inherited fear of it still sometimes chastened the lad.

The other day he came home with his boots split.

"Look here, mum," he says. Show'd 'em to me. Wouldn't show 'em to his dad.

"What will dad say?" I answered. "He sat up half last night soling 'em."

John just looked at his feet.

"I can't be seen in these no more," he says.

"And what will you do to-morrow?" I asked him.

"I'm sure I don't know," he said, and goes up to bed.

"Next morning I says to him:

"You'll have to wear your best boots to the works," I says, 'and take the split ones with you and change there.'

"Right you are," he says; and starts off wearing his best boots and carrying the old ones.

"Chance would have it that his dad was working at his end of the building and saw him. Didn't say nothing to the boy. When he came home:

"Got plenty o' twelve-and-sixpences to chuck away on boots!" he says to me.

"What you mean?" I says.

"John standing on his toes in his best glacé kid boots."

"Then, of course, I twigged what he was at.

"Why, he told me he'd change into the old boots at the works," I says.

"Did he?" says Alf. "Well, he told you one thing and done another."

The mother forthwith sent down her little girl to get another pair of rough boots for John at Tukes'. The child brought back two pairs. John tried on the first pair and said they fitted.

"And now he can't wear 'em—too tight. When he plays football of evening must wear his best boots. The other evening, as he was going out, I says:

"Won't you put on your new boots and wear 'em to your feet a bit?" I says.

"No, he couldn't.

"Last Sunday, Alf sees him washing himself.

"I'd put a bit of dubbing on them new boots, John," says he. 'Ease 'em a bit.'

"And John says:

"I wish you'd attend to your own boots and leave mine alone."

"John says that to Alf!

"Alf just got up and walked out to save striking him—no breakfast and nothing."

"That's a nice way to talk to your dad," I says, when Alf was gone.

"Well, what's he want interferin' with me?" says John—surly little 'aound.

"When Alf comes back:

"Soon as he's earning full money, out he goes," says he, 'else he'll be putting you and me out in the street. You go short for 'em, and that's how they serve you.' Never saw Alf take on so!"

The sallow woman was silent.

The young women looked at her.

"He'll be getting a girl soon," said one.

"He does go on the parade, he and Harry," replied the other.

The sallow woman rose.

"Yes, he'll soon have a —, I'll lay," she said, and moved off into the sunshine.

Art and Drama.

By Huntly Carter.

AMERICA is engaging in the work of improving the universe. Its present improving work appears in the form of an attempt to breed noble audiences for noble playhouses. Some one has discovered that the effort to exalt the theatre has begun on the wrong side of the footlights. It is useless to seek to improve the author, producer, actor and call-boy till the spectator has been improved. In other words, it is stupid to improve the theatre till the box-office has been improved.

* * *

So the Drama League of America has been formed to set things right. The league, which was founded by the female gentry of Illinois, has had a pretty mushroom growth. It has rippled all over the States, and even rippled into universities. Learned professors and other law-abiding persons have greeted it with benevolent smiles and formed themselves into little groups of self-appointed censors for the purpose of sampling plays as they are produced, and thereafter handing to the public whatever the censors deem worthy of their superior recommendation.

* * *

The league has in due course rippled to England. Its improving work has the good fortune to meet the approval of Mr. Frederick Whelan and other dramatic enthusiasts. The "Daily News" has opened its columns to it. This, of course, is the highest flattery. The Fleet Street jobbing Press, too, will no doubt make a strong point of it. From the "Daily News" I cull the following bright sample of the league's methods of "educating the public to appreciate and demand the best drama." This bulletin or report was issued to the members of the league by the Macdowell Club of New York on the production of "Strife," and it is a fair example of how the new tradesmen in the dramatic line hold forth for sale to all buyers an article more precious than others of its kind, because it is passed by a committee which differs from other business committees by precisely the fact of the immaturity of its approach and appeal. Here is the report, which is calculated to throw the thoughtful reader into a reverie:—

Author: John Galsworthy.

Theatre: New Theatre, 62D Street and Central Park West.

General idea: Modern realistic drama, involving the primitive passion of greed leading to the over-reaching that kills.

Characterisations: Present-day types of oppressors, rich and poor.

Technique: Masterly.

Plot: Direct and powerful.

Situations: Logically developed and intensely dramatic.

Dialogue: Natural, crisp, and vital.

Production: Much restraint shown: the scenic effect being subordinated to the human interest.

Acting: Admirably cast, the leading parts well taken. Special praise should be given to Mr. Louis Calvert, Mr. Albert Bruning, Mr. William McVay, and Mr. Frederick Gottschalk.

Here is rich material for the jobbing Press. The name of the master-mind who was guilty of this primitive effort is not disclosed. Perhaps Mr. Galsworthy was responsible for it. If so, there should be something on the Statute-book to prevent authors from endeavouring to increase their incomes by publishing their plays in headlines that improve no one—not even the six silliest persons in a community.

* * *

The fallacy of beginning with the public is not new. It arose long ago with the notion that art should be didactic; that it has no significance apart from ethical and social teaching; that it has a mission—namely, to educate. It has been widely upheld, especially by the "new" school of dramatists. Mr. Bernard Shaw and Mr. Zangwill are among those who have derided the mere pursuit of beauty. But the real truth about the matter is that dramatists who support the doctrine that art cannot be separated from ethical and political philosophising are not dramatists in the true sense. One

never hears of a great dramatist setting out to educate his audience. At any rate, he does not write plays that require voluminous prefaces to explain them. Aeschylus was a great dramatist. So was Shakespeare. So was Ibsen. These were concerned with beauty of form, colour, expression. They sought to illuminate, not educate. It is an author's greatness that makes him illuminate his subject, not his forcing his stuff down the public's throat that makes him great.

* * *

The attempt to begin with the theatre, though not without good points, is also to be blamed. Reformers at this side of the footlights have made the glad discovery that, by taking, say, a director, a scenic artist, an actor or two, and the members of the staff and lifting them to the level of artists, the result will be a new theatrical heaven for us. This is very pretty. It is Mr. Gordon Craig's idea, which he has put forward from time to time in the "Mask" and elsewhere. These light dishes he now gathers together in a volume suited to the digestion of gourmets who favour menus of the year 1890 or so.

* * *

In fact, Mr. Craig, "On the Art of the Theatre" (Heinemann, 6s.), reveals that he has made no advance on his position of fifteen years ago. He is still wandering about in his new wonderland, still busy constructing a frame without apparently having anything to put in it. He discusses the ideal this, that, and the other. He discusses his old discovery of scumbling his stage pictures and producing a mystical pudding made from a recipe of Maeterlinck-cum-Whistler-cum-Pryde's. He is an inspired decorator who has taken to the theatre as a duck takes to water, not because it was better than elsewhere, but because it had the makings of a new world and was a change from the old. If only Mr. Craig had seen the real significance of the new world it would have been all right. But being a decorator and not a dramatist, he allowed the vision of the cosmic drama to escape him. In so doing he enabled Max Reinhardt and his astonishing group of co-operators to leave him far behind. To-day there is no comparison between the work of Gordon Craig and Max Reinhardt. The latter has got hold of the vast cosmic idea of intimacy. If he is stuffing it out with popularity and making it protrude as it ought not to it does not matter. It is alive, and in ten years or less, when the coming drama arrives, will assume the proportions of a Greek god. Mr. Craig's book ought to have been published in Whistler's time. It is a book of the last twenty years. We want a book on the art of the theatre of the next twenty years.

* * *

The best that can be said for the present "uplifting" tendency on the right side of the footlights is that it is stirring up thoughtful artists to think inside the theatre, instead of out of it. Thus, Miss Georges Banks has an interesting article on "Stagecraft" from the artist's point of view in the current issue of "Rhythm." She refers to the problem of the sight-line as a new one. But it has already been solved by the Wagner Theatre, where all the seats are on one level. Beyond this and the illustrations the volume has little of interest. Its text, in fact, continues to creep from bad to worse. The editorial note does not improve matters. I take a few lines from this prospectus, which balances an article by the director of the National Portrait Gallery at the other end of the journal: "We believe we have given the world better drawing than has been seen in one magazine before." This is probably a mistake of ignorance. "There may be some who will say that the admission of advertisements is a degradation of an artistic magazine." This is an apology for some advertisements that have crept in. Also an intimation that "Rhythm" is not an organ out for charity. It has to live. "We believe we have something to say that no other magazine has ever said or had the courage to say." This sounds like a passage from a parish magazine after its editor has been presiding over a pea-soup banquet. In other words, it is suburban slosh. "Rhythm" must get an intelligent board of editors.



WHO DID YOU SAY?

FOUR POEMS.

By Louis Umfreville Wilkinson.

AUTUMN IN AMERICA.

THE widespread, ardent, generous sky,
Vast blue which God's own golds inspire,
Dazzles with sense of light and fire
Senses that may not reach so high;
While lips that dare not breathe their praise
Falter to speak the soul's amaze.

The vehement and eager air
Takes its free will of pulse and vein,
That throb and swell and leap and strain,
The splendours of the hour to share.
Exuberant floods of sunlight lavish
Possess the blood they sweep and ravish.

The burning moment, like a lover,
Triumphant and resistless, holds
Body and being, and enfolds,
With strenuous clasp to cling and cover,
Senses and limbs that swoon and yield
To the high lordship here revealed.

The slender trees, with branches thinned,
Give sharp, bright shadows to the ground,
And goodly fields of grasses browned
Bending before the breathing wind;
While colours dulled by time and rain
Quicken to lovely life again.

The strong and spacious land sends back
Her answer to the upper light
With all that lofty dominant might
Enkindling through her virgin track—
And, unsubdued by man, the sod
Gives larger homage up to God.

Lo! now the high elusive veil
Lifts from above us in the skies;
Here, even before our wondering eyes
The far horizons fade and fail;
And past the day's known light between
The universal space is seen.

* * * * *

Lower the eyes and turn the head,
Look back where streets and cities are
Where man has set his hand to mar
And strike the heart of beauty dead,
Changing the holiest love to hate.
From this same country's eastern gate

Manhattan's hard and murderous face
Looks forth, with cruel mouth that shrieks
Over the gold the sharp hand seeks
In guerdon of the feverish race,
As the relentless eyeballs strain,
Unceasing, for the ghastly gain.

Meek Philadelphia endures
A Quaker yet, her blight and blame,
Of civic rottenness and shame,
Dishonour that no honour cures.
And murky Pittsburg tortures still
The children whom her factories kill.

Westward, Chicago reeks and fumes,
And every poisonous day renews
The filth of all her sickening stews,
In stench of blood and slaughterous spumes.
While theft, lust, murder, all fill up
The leprous San Francisco's cup.

And thus, together warring, show
Curses and blessings, worst and best
Cankers against a beauteous breast.
But the heart gladdens yet to know
When transient with eternal strives
The stronger of the twain survives.
New Jersey, U.S.A.

THE SENTIMENTAL ATHEIST.

"Alas!" he cries, "My lot is drear."
And he can weep for light in vain;
His doubts and anguishes appear
To give his soul a dulcet pain.
His brow he upward lifts and down,
And in his spiritual fret
He thinks to don the virile gown,
And counterfeits a bloody sweat.

"Could I believe! Could I believe!
My God!—ah, me, I have no God!"
Then blusters wildly for reprieve—
He *must* be something more than clod!
Such heartreachings, such inward strife,
Of no avail—of no avail!
Death must be death, if life is life;
We cease—a groan; we're born—a wail.

Well may one feel dismay to see
How small the great things can become;
How strangely may deep music be
Transformed by the kettle-drum!
The little instruments of sound,
Attuned to suit their proper quire,
Content the little men around—
But O the jest when they aspire!

MEMORY OF AUGUST.

Though I should sing a hundred lays
More golden than those golden days,
How could I find a word for praise
Of Violet?

No verse her golden charm may share,
No rhyme is gracious as her hair,
No villanelle nor antique air,
Nor Triolet.

Silver of moons and tremulous seas,
Of streams and silver poplar trees,
Of dawns and twilights—what are these
To Guenevere's?

The silver crown she wears by far
Transcends all silver things that are,
All light of cloud or light of star
By lakes or meres.

The golden and the silver child
Made gold and silver reconciled,
When radiant suns and waters smiled,
Less bright than they.

Summer has failed too soon, but yet
These memories I may not forget,
Of Guenevere and Violet,
At Benlech Bay.

ERICA.

Do you see her where she stands
There in white upon the shore?
Shading with her brown, small hands
Grey clear eyes that gaze before,
Heeding ships and sky and sea,
Though they heed not you nor me.

Could she know, and could she share
Half our longing, half our pain,
Would we, do you think it, dare
Even to touch her hand again?
Better thus: that child and free
She should gaze upon the sea.

Could she love us as we love her,
Ah, the loss were hers and ours!
Might she ever then recover
One least bloom of all the flowers
That are childhood's? Nay, let be!
Though she heed not you nor me.

Whispers.

By Richard Curle.

TOWARDS sundown Port Mordaunt began to rouse itself from the lethargy of the tropical afternoon. With the coming of the first coolness a stir of life seemed to run through the place. Groups of negroes, chattering volubly, appeared in the streets, cries resounded in the market, and from the swamp just behind the town there arose a deafening clamour. The work of loading a Boston fruit steamer from lighters, which had been going on feebly all the afternoon, suddenly began to brighten up. The captain came out of his cabin, yawned, wiped the perspiration from his forehead, and looked round him with the eye of a man who is viewing the same scene for the hundredth time.

"This is a nice spot," he remarked bitterly to himself, taking in at one glance the sea sweeping to the horizon with hardly a ripple on it, the bay with its brilliant streaks of colour playing over the shoaling water, the little town nestling on its margin, and the wooded hills rising behind it, dotted on the lower slopes with straggling houses.

"A nice spot," he observed again, and catching sight of the coloured steward who happened to be passing he called out savagely, "Boy, bring me up some tea, sharp; and say, open another tin of milk—that last was rotten."

At the entrance to the Ocean Hotel, which had been built at a cost of \$350,000 by an enterprising Chicago capitalist, and was open only four months in the year, the usual crowd of people had collected. For some reason or other it always collected here at this hour. It was the recognised meeting-place after the quiet of the siesta. This entrance consisted of a broad flight of steps lined with seats. Beneath it ran the sea-coast road, on the other side of which was a grove of palms, with vistas beyond of a white beach and the sparkling waters of the bay. From the top of this flight you could see far off the immense headland which seemed like a dark blot against the sky. Every now and then someone would appear through the folding doors and, after hesitating a moment, would select a group of people and mingle with the throng. They were mostly Americans—pretty girls, tall, supple, and full of life, clean-shaven young men, wearing eyeglasses with invisible rims, old gentlemen in black alpaca suits and fancy waistcoats, with a grey aspect about the face and a slow but emphatic method of talking, elderly ladies with large figures and ample gestures.

In this assembly there mixed a few obviously English types. In one corner two timid, middle-aged ladies were discussing with a cotton broker from New Orleans what they ought to do with Consols when they fell below 80; in another a gloomy man was explaining in a monotonous voice to a youth in a flannel suit and a yellow tie the vain efforts he had been making for twenty-three years to combat an hereditary dyspepsia; whilst just opposite him a charming girl of seventeen was trying to persuade her parents that it was quite proper for her to read "*La Cousine Bette*," which had been recommended to her by an admirer of the novelist. This last conversation was giving pain to a gentleman from the Middle West, who considered that such talk in the mouth of a young lady was evidence of the incurable eccentricity of the English, and was proof, moreover, of a lack of delicacy of feeling. Fortunately for his peace of mind he could not catch all the argument because it was partially drowned by the universal buzz of conversation that animated the crowd.

Just then a man of about thirty came out of the hotel and glanced over the heads of the people on to the road beneath as if he expected something. At his elbow a deliberate, drawling voice was remarking, "No, sir, the Panama Canal is a proposition the magnitude of which has been underestimated. The Nicaraguan route sounded plausible but had no solid backing. I have always maintained that it was essentially a wild-cat scheme. The route chosen was the only admissible one, but the difficulties to be sur-

mounted are superhuman. To begin with, there is the question of the two ocean-levels."

He did not hear any more because at that moment an open carriage with two horses driven by a rakish darkie drove up to the steps with a loud clattering, and everyone turned to stare at it.

"Ah, there you are," he said hastily, and, spinning round, he disappeared into the building. Crossing the shaded hall, which ran through the whole breadth of the house, he came to the staircase, mounted it swiftly, and knocked at a door that opened on to the darkened corridor.

"Come in," said a voice.

He entered. On a wicker-work chair near the window a young woman was sitting. The calm expression of her face was enhanced by the attitude of her folded hands, and the silence which seemed to flow into the room with the fresher breath of the declining day. From this spot only a glimpse of the sea was caught, though it could be heard like something far removed, vibrating through the house as it fell gently upon the sloping sand. But in front there lay the town with its innumerable trees and gardens, with the fields beyond, and the hills covered with rich plantations. The lady was not doing anything, apparently. She sat at one corner of the window, in this position of repose, ready to catch the first breeze of the afternoon. On seeing him enter she looked up and smiled.

"Here's the carriage," he said; "now what do you say? Will you come?"

"No," she answered, "I think not. I'm so happy here. Take care of yourself. You'll find me when you return."

And again she smiled.

For a moment he considered her as if some bizarre idea had suddenly flashed into his mind, and he seemed to be on the point of putting some question to her; but instead of speaking he leant over her chair, kissed her on the neck, and walked to the door. As he was just going out he turned round quickly and glanced at her. Her eyes were fixed on him with a mysterious expression. He stopped as if fascinated, meeting her with a searching stare. She noticed that his whole face had suddenly become extraordinarily grave, as if he were pondering deeply over some obscure and important thought. This attitude did not last for more than a few seconds. He nodded brusquely to her and left the room. In the hearts of both something unquiet seemed to have stirred. The girl moved in her chair, gave a sigh, and, settling herself once more, continued to look out over the hills. The man frowned with tight lips, and, passing slowly down the stairs and across the hall, elbowed his way from step to step to the side of the carriage.

"Where you go?" cried the driver, with a broad grin on his face, which showed his teeth lustrous against the ebony of his skin.

"To the Forest Pool," replied the man, lolling back comfortably on the cushions.

The driver whipped up his horses, gave a kind of yell, and they started off in fine style, exchanging airy farewells with the crowd on the steps, whose eyes were all fastened on them with the weary but inquisitive interest of people who are at a loss for something to do.

A minute afterwards they rounded a corner and the hotel was hidden from sight. They drove down the main street of Port Mordaunt, where, under the shade of trees, the disconsolate sellers of pimento and green chillies fanned the flies from off their open stalls. A negress, carrying on her head a netted basket full of chickens, stood motionless by the side of the road and stared after them with that peculiar vacancy so common amongst her race. Sounds of laughter rang in the street. The cheap stores, stocked with ready-made clothes, patent medicines, and tinned foods, were doing a thriving trade. The dust thrown up by the horses' hoofs danced like a cloud of gold.

Imperceptibly the neat rows of houses changed into an uneven line of wooden huts, luxuriating amidst a thick mass of purple flowers and noisy with the cries of half-naked children and yelping dogs. And further forward, on the right-hand side, the swamp stretched,

with its flat, green spaces, from which issued a tumultuous croaking from the army of frogs that had been lying silent during the heat of the day. Clumps of trees and high undergrowth, with little glittering pools of water and dark recesses, threw over it the glamour of something dangerous, and gave to the houses, sheltered by their flowers and sunshine, a feeling of security it would be difficult to express.

The driver kept cracking his whip and saluting friends who stood at their doors smoking pipes or chewing long pieces of sugar-cane which dangled from their mouths. Suddenly, round another twist of the road, the gleaming sea appeared straight ahead. The smell came to them strongly—the smell of the salt, great sea, the enslaving smell which cannot be forgotten. The man in the carriage experienced a sudden elation. When they got almost abreast of it the track swung round once again, and they began to travel parallel with the ocean, only a few yards from its edge. The tide was at the full, but on that shore it really made very little difference. The ripples hardly murmured as they washed upon the smooth surface of that perfect beach. The iridescent colours of the water reflected clearly its varying depths. Upon its surface were thrown the shadows of rocks, of sandy tracts, and of sea-weeds, whose branches flapped lazily like the tentacles of gigantic animals. A deep red cloud, almost mathematical in its square formation, lay just above the sky-line, and showed against it the smoke of an outward-bound steamer, whose masts alone were visible.

"Cap'n, look over dere," cried the driver, excitedly. "See dat boat—velly far? Tink he go to England? I go to England some day."

"I advise you to stay here," said the other laughing; "better place, I tell you. England bad."

"No, Massa. All de men say plenty good; say plenty rich. Me like 'em." And he cracked his whip.

On the horizon the ribbon of black smoke grew rapidly less and less, as though dissolving away into the mist of the sea. Soon not a flaw was discernible against the even crimson of the sky.

And now the road began to curve round little bays that indented the coast at this point. The beach ended abruptly, giving place to a mangrove swamp that spread seawards with its entangled mass of slimy roots. A decaying odour filled the nostrils, the odour of a corrupt death, the odour of something stagnant and foul. Tiny crabs crawled in and out of the twisted stems, where water collected unclean and noisome like the brackish water of an undrained marsh. Patches of mangrove, gradually issuing into sand dunes, grew also on the right-hand side, and behind, a brake of sugar-cane showed each individual tufted head in the clear glow of the afternoon. After half a mile of this they dashed unexpectedly on to a shingle beach. Steep woods ran down close to the shore—woods tangled with matted undergrowth, with scarlet hybiscus, with exotic trees. A flock of birds, like streaks of fire, flew overhead with discordant screams and plunged inland over the tops of the trees as though seeking refuge in the very depths of the forest. A crooning sound, formidable and low, seemed to rise from the ocean as it slipped over the minute pebbles scattered along its verge, which were rolling over and over with each heave of the tide. And everything appeared full of an inviolable calm, as though it held within itself the high knowledge of the futility of life, of the littleness of man, of the certainty of rest.

"How far are we from the pool now?" demanded the man in the carriage.

"Just round dat corner, sah."

"Well, hurry up! It'll soon be dark."

At the end of the beach they turned inland, and driving through a cutting of the wood saw before them a green expanse of short grass. Seaward was a belt of scrubby trees which barred the coast-line from view, but on the other side of the lawn there lay a pool of blue water. It was about seventy yards long by fifty broad. From three sides of it there rose up the sheer walls of the forest, bending over the water with trailing branches, with festoons of wild vine, with the tendrils

of orchids, and the leaves of palms and dyewoods—dense, impenetrable, full of an ungovernable life and of an everlasting decay. All shades of green were interwoven in this fabric. It had the appearance of a chaotic and stupendous tapestry representing the incomprehensible achievements of a primeval age. The trees were statuesque above the glassy stillness of the pool, which glinted with violet and opal rays. The undulations of the sea, as it trickled over the shallow coral bar which, in the hidden shade of grass, joined this lake to the ocean, were audible like the respirations of a sleeper. The forest, towering skywards, with its ponderous trunks, with its immobility, was reflected far down within the untroubled mirror of the water. It seemed to be staring at its own image with an intense and concentrated gaze as if, in the suspended animation of its growth, it meditated upon some inscrutable idea. All at once the faintest of tremors ran over the face of the pool, the forest gave forth a mournful and sibilant murmur, the leaves shook like the fingers of a palsied man.

"Dis is de place, sah," cried the driver, who had walked his horses down a side track on to the grass; "dat water warm at de top; below, cold—velly deep. See de fish swim at de bottom, all striped; swim amongst de stones. Me stop here. You swim well? Velly deep. Me watch."

"Take care of these clothes, I shan't be long," answered the other; and quickly undressing, he walked gingerly down to the edge and waded in. In a few seconds he was swimming through the unresisting water. The ripples closed round his wake without a sound. His feet moved a cold stratum from below, and in its soft, yielding density there was the feeling of death. The vigour of the sea dwelt here not more strongly than its echo within the convolutions of a shell. Far beneath him, in the lifeless salt gloom, he could see fantastic rocks and schools of fish darting hither and thither. And above him the green of the forest appeared all at once to have grown more sombre; and in the awakened breeze its branches shuddered at him as though he had profaned the secret motive of its worship. And it seemed to await a signal to rid itself for ever of the burden of life, unmoved by the passing of time and by the death of men. He swam quietly through the pool to the further side, where under the banks rotting twigs and leaves and petals were gathered in a frothy scum and where the boughs and creepers hung over him in a motionless turmoil.

Shifting on his side with a sweep of his right arm, he started back. The two horses were cropping the short grass, the driver sat on the box with his body bent forward and a hand on each knee, staring straight in front of him and licking his upper lip with an animal-like movement of the tongue. His old hat was set well back on his head, and his debased hairy forehead was visible above his shining eyes. His appearance had something inaccessible and wild about it, as if the untamed fierceness of his heart had suddenly protruded itself through the veneer of clothes, and manners, and education. He might have howled and rushed back into the bush without exciting surprise. Before the still and massive background of darkening woods, he seemed weighted with the terrors, the superstitions, the beliefs that haunt the minds of savage races. He moved no more than the colossal forest that overshadowed him. In this passive and bewildered attitude he appeared to be listening for a whisper that would explain to him the unrest of his soul, the terror of evil, the fear and fascination of the jungle. As the swimmer drew near the bank the negro started up and flourished his arms.

"Dis bad place," he called in a loud voice. "Go before it get black."

"What—ghosts?"

"Bad place—bad, bad."

"All right, John, we'll be away soon."

"Bad place," muttered the negro.

In a minute or two they were ready for the return journey, and, pulling the horses round, they abandoned the hollow to the shadowless dusk of the tropics. A luminous and deceptive glow filled the air; every outline

stood silhouetted against the light of a sunless heaven; the water was blended with the forest in one indistinguishable shade of ink as though a pall had descended upon the world.

Once back on the road the horses began to trot homeward of their own accord. All energy had departed from the driver, who crouched moodily on his seat and did not even crack his whip as a sign of life. A multitude of stars came out over the sea, and their reflections trembled on the waves and glittered within the rocky pools.

Romance, which is the intangible desire of men, hovered round them with its ardent eyes. The warm night touched their cheeks with its insidious breath—with its breath, fragrant and faint. A flood of vague emotions swept through the swimmer. His body was permeated with an exalted longing. The beauty of the night enveloped him with a profound languor, with a dreamy ecstasy. This spell, corroding the hours of life with a deadly inaction, creates for ever the semblance of wisdom. He sat up in the carriage and called out, "Stop!" The driver obeyed without a word. The remark had been shouted almost unconsciously. He must not let this clarity slip away from him on the jolts of the road. No, it was all-important. What, exactly—romance, romance? Ah, yes! Great civilisation, great savagery, the meeting of them, the contrast. It was that which thrilled you, both in the hearts of people and in the world around. A town of a million inhabitants lying along the shores of a bay in the tropical South, with the culture of Paris, as modern, as rich, as nuancé, full of superb houses and gardens. And behind, the outskirts running up into the valleys of hills, whence at night you look down upon the gleam of the city, upon the exquisite lights riding on the water, upon the deep contrasts of shadow and glare. A subdued muttering swells in the air, clocks strike with the intonation of bells, far off a band plays within the shrouded plaza. And inside it, the barbaric passions, the isolation of thought; and outside it, the vast, unexplored country, solitary, intractable, like the lives of men. Without people there was no romance. Why was that? It was like existence without consciousness. And everyone was an enigma, hopelessly complex, hopelessly—yes, no one could explain, no one could understand. Words—what were they? Sympathy had intuition, not knowledge. No one had knowledge. Perhaps it was as well. At any rate, what did it matter? Life melts away—a few years, a few years—people forget, things alter, nothing remains. The decay, the disillusionment, the oblivion. Life concerns itself with the living, with itself. But life without personality had no purpose; why expect any? Life was simply life; death, death. But then this magnetism of attraction, this power; was all this only a manifestation of the greed of Nature? The compassionate, the faithful, the fiery might of love; did it all pass away in the universal destruction? Life was too short, there was too much sorrow, too little happiness.

Grasp what you can of joy. Life was too fleeting to allow of the inexplicable estrangements of love; too important and too trivial. If the wealth of affection lasted so few years it must not be lost, it must be repaid now; for, in the structure of time, it was supreme and yet transient—the gift precious and fragile. Besides, it *did* matter. Life might not matter, but love mattered. Why should the value of a thing rest on its immortality? Everything might go as long as you loved and were loved—everything. It ached, it ached. How had he been blind to it? How could anyone be blind to it?

"I knew this," he said aloud in a strange voice.

The face of his wife, pale and questioning, had arisen before him as though waiting for him to speak.

"I understood it all the time," he continued softly, closing his eyes. "I love you—listen to me."

"You may drive on," he shouted to the coachman, "on—home."

Shortly after the lights of the town began to show

like a filmy screen above the level plain. Scattered lamps shone upon the ridge of the hill, and, concentrating towards the foot, looked like a torch procession ascending the heights. Over the marsh there hovered a swarm of fireflies, and the noise of a fervent life soared heavenwards with an eager boom.

The man in the carriage could hardly keep still with impatience. The great certainty deafened his ears, flooded his mind.

"Can't you go faster?" he cried.

The brooding figure of the negro did not move.

"Faster!" he shouted in a louder voice.

The driver turned wearily and showed him a blank, troubled face.

"You want go faster?" he stammered.

"Yes, yes, push along!"

"Why you stay so late?" And jerking the reins he called, "Now, you horses, come on, come on! Soon dere," he said over his shoulder, "velly soon."

Another five minutes and they were rattling through the main street of Port Mordaunt. Taking the corner at a hand-gallop they drew up with a wrench at the steps of the Ocean Hotel.

A present of two shillings served to revive slightly the spirits of the darkie. He saluted, grinning, and without a word disappeared with his horses into the keeping of the night.

Left standing at the foot of the steps, the other stopped for an instant to collect his ideas. His heart was beating so loudly that he fancied the whole building must hear. Several old men on the parapet above were smoking cigars and chatting. The quaver of their voices was wafted down to him with the smell of expensive tobacco.

"These men," he said to himself with ironical intensity, "are probably colonels or judges, and they have been talking about themselves for hours. What on earth does it all amount to?" And shrugging his shoulders he ran up the steps and entered the hall.

It was deserted. No doubt everybody was upstairs getting ready for dinner. A tepid puff of wind strayed in from the verandah and stirred the leaves of the crotons planted in pots at either end of the parquet floor. The electric globes encircling the walls burned with a white and steady radiance, and all the empty chairs, scattered with careful negligence throughout the length of the place, looked unaccountably alert as though they realised perfectly that their abandonment would soon be over. He took all this in at a glance as he crossed the hall and began to ascend the staircase.

He had to grope his way by the rod of the banister, not because it was dark, but because he could hardly feel the ground with his feet. A long time—never mind, it had passed, it was the future; for both—one thing that counted. He reached her door, and opening it as quietly as his fumbling hands would let him, stole into the room. It was dim in there; the blue of the night glimmered through the patch of window and, by contrast with the hooded interior, gave a fairy-like transparency to the scene without. Nothing could be heard but the low and regular wash of the sea. The opaque mass of the hill was like a monstrous arm raised threateningly against the mild splendour of the sky.

His wife sat where he had left her. She looked like some great nocturnal moth ready to take flight into the dusk.

"It is you," she said in her calm voice. "Come and speak to me, my dear."

His heart was too full for words. He did not utter a sound, but stepping noiselessly across the room he flung himself down beside her and buried his face in her lap. She was not astonished; she understood all. The intuition of love is unerring. But bending forward as though to protect him from harm she placed her warm and gentle hands upon his forehead.

"My lover," she whispered, "my husband, my lover"; and leaning still closer to him she allowed her head to rest upon his.

The War Gaud.*

By Huntly Carter.

"'THE WAR GOD' is a very great tragedy," "A noble piece of art." Thus spake Mrs. Alice Meynell, poetess, and Dr. William Archer, expert on drama, sponsors to Mr. Zangwill's latest offspring, which now appears in a print dress after a record run of three performances.

"'The War God' is a very great tragedy," chirps the poetess. Without venturing upon definitions, let me consider the nature of this "very great tragedy." The author is a Zionist-pacifist who dreams of universal peace. He has composed his dream into an elaborate discussion-picture of the War-God broken by tears, converted to Peace-God. This implies we are to be present at the process of conversion, and as it is to take the form of a "very great tragedy," we, the spectators, are of course to witness the cancer of pestilential war shaken from the god's horrid soul till pity seizes us too deep for tears. We are, in fact, to witness the initiation of War-God into the mystery of the black lie of his own existence.

How does War-God himself conspire to this implied purpose? In other words, how does Mr. Zangwill posit the "hero" of this "very great tragedy"? War-God rises from the first ten pages labelled variously as "a man of blood and iron," with a "mighty brain" saying things of "steel and flame." Cæsar in all his glory was not arrayed like this. Here we have the highest attributes of War-God, and when he makes his entrance at page eleven we are prepared to receive the supreme leader of legions and legions and legions of whooping and bloodthirsty savages. We greet him with the question, "Well, War-God, are you going to live up to this beautiful reputation and murder peace? Or are you going to let peace murder you?" For reply he stammers that he has a use for peace—

The minx's marriage welds our warring realms
In Christian peace, unites us to expunge
Perfidious Alba from the map of Europe.

War-God is lured by the smell of English blood.

In the following pages he gloats over his cunning in planning the horrible downfall of poor Alba. The proposed invasion is to take place across the cucumber frames sprouting from the cliffs at "Eastport." The frames are to be acquired by a huge "concern" formed for the purpose. Clearly crafty War-God is in the company promoting line. This picture of Germany's War-God out purchasing English cucumber frames is very moving. On top of this comes an agreeable surprise. Osric, the War-God's dear son (who, by the way, favours peace), enters and announces that his father has had, in the past, a dream of an age of poetry, and "He held this war the path to lasting peace." Here's a discovery for you! War-God is not only a physical war-god, but he is by way of becoming a spiritual-physical one. He is really for physical-force peace. His conversion to it dates long prior to the opening of the play, which thus begins at the physical climax—the attainment of his end by means of war. The announcement of this circumstance should start the play. But, alas! it is twenty-five pages old, such is the author's bad habit of talking. Beginning at this point War-God has a straight, swift path before him. He has but to learn gradually the truth of the lie underlying his existence and so attain the spiritual climax in a "very great tragedy" indeed. But though the path is a straight one it is not easy for an author to traverse. It is one of those dramatic paths where fools step in and make a considerable hash of things. The dramatist has, in fact, to take a single great mystery of the human soul, created, we are to suppose, by convention and ignorance. He has gradually to tear aside the veil of centuries and centuries of wrong thinking and doing. He has to reveal the soul pro-

jecting itself in space, growing, changing, developing, becoming fluid and finally harmonising with the great cosmic rhythm of life. Or, on the other hand, narrowing, hardening, crystallising, becoming stagnant. He has, in ordinary terms, to reveal the crucial changes wrought by conduct and circumstance on character. If he proposes to touch both the human understanding and feelings rightly and deeply, he has before him the herculean task of extracting the soul of good from the thing evil.

In the case of War-God, the author has got to face him with two mighty personations, War and Peace; the horrible circumstances of his war soul on the one hand, the lofty circumstances of his peace soul on the other. He has to represent not to the spectator, but to War-God himself as personifying the spectator, the vast conflict between the two, by a grouping of grand and terrible symbols, till its bearing on physical War-God's mind becomes unbearable, almost unthinkable. Finally he has to show this War-God emerging from the fire purged of his old iniquities, transformed, though a War-God still, one on the spiritual plane inspired to mental conflict but only by the loftiness of the object pursued. He has, in short, to prepare a cosmic drama for the cosmic theatre in such a way as to awaken and inspire the cosmic consciousness which lies dormant in every spectator. To do this successfully requires the hand and brain of a giant. Mr. Zangwill has not done it. He has not written a cosmic drama, or a "very great tragedy," as Mrs. Meynell terms it.

Briefly, Mr. Zangwill's War-God goes through no process of evolution, mental or otherwise. He is static from the moment of the son's announcement. He is simply an undersized creature who appears to have dosed himself with several qualities of ether which produce in turns uncontrollable stupidity, mirth, rage and fear. When he is not a jolly old cock, he is a murderous person ready to attend funerals.

Faced with Peace-God, or peace-philosophy, he weighs the pros and cons of war resources. Alone with his gang he conspires to get rid of peace-god. He disappears altogether from the third act, his place being taken by a number of little diseased war-gods—different coloured chips of the old block. These weigh the pros and cons of Peace-philosophy, and conclude by putting him well on the safe side of the bastion of physical force. In short, they settle to murder Peace-philosophy and drag a woman in to do the job. Peace-philosophy, however, goes on working, and War-God's entrance in the fourth act is worked up by the Royal Family. A recent addition to the family is brought in to join in the nursery tea-table talk. The baby's comment on the whole thing is "La-la! Boo-hoo! La-la! Boo-hoo! Boo-he!" Evidently, "my ickle sweetening" is a bit of a critic. His place should be with the Gallery Firstnighters. The baby-scene forms a perfect prelude to the coming of War-God. The latter attempts to disinfect his son who has become badly infected with peace-philosophy, and thus delivers himself:—

Oh, blast your brotherhood! Some wax doll spawned
This puling generation fed on pap. . . .
What! Shall I call a lousy bumpkin brother,
And slobber o'er him in fraternal cuddlings?
That makes me lousy and himself no cleaner.

Such Billingsgate-Miltonics scarcely contributes anything to our knowledge of the true inwardness of titanic War-Gods. But it prepares for the sublime catastrophe in the fifth act. War-God gets the "sack," and he deserves it. "He 'sacks' me as one 'sacks' a thieving valet," he exclaims. The Zangwill climax follows. Little waves of sugary bathos come fondling to your feet and leave you feeling sticky as though your own lap dog had been licking you after a debauch of jam-roll. Though War-God has lost his son in death and is confronted in turn with death itself, there is no attempt to handle the two situations in a big way. There is no thundering with wild-beast foam and fury against invisible Fate. No bursting from the restraint of a million invisible fetters. No sudden and blinding vision of the loss of an ideal which he has fought and

* "The War God." By Israel Zangwill. (Heinemann. 2s. 6d.)

bled and starved for, by which he has been frozen and burnt up, which has made his life one mad, blinding contest with forces around him created by his vast war ambition. His son is dead, the son upon whom all his future hopes are built. Here is an opportunity for striking the finest chords in parental relationship,—to out-Homer Homer's passage in the parting of Hector and Andromache, the deep emotion of the bereaved Constance in "King John," to surpass the poetic handling of the mother's scene in the "Medea" of Euripides. The War-God's son is dead. The War-God says, announcing the fact to the woman whose murderous propensities have killed his son, and would slay him :—

You say I lie—'tis Osric lies—he! he!
You do not see the jest?—within his coffin!

Go to his room—I meant for nuptial chamber—
You'll find *him* lying—(chuckles)—he! he! he!
Not *me*.

An old woman maundering half-drunk over the memory of a prodigal son could not be guilty of a worse example of trying to be comic at all costs. Let both Mrs. Meynell and Mr. William Archer ponder this passage. They will discover in it the key to the real attitude of the author of the War-God. Then let them study Pope's reference to creative might in the following lines :—

He who through vast immensity can pierce,
See worlds on worlds compose one universe,
Observe how system into system runs,
What other planets circle other suns,
What varied beings people every star,
May tell why Heaven has made us as we are.

It may lead them to discover what Mr. Zangwill as a blank-verse dramatist really is, and, moreover, that no amount of foolish praise will ever make him different from what the "War God" proves him to be, namely, the Walter Melville of didactic melodrama.

Present-Day Criticism.

On impartiality. Even God is not impartial, since he inclines to what is good. No doubt, therefore, that impartiality is merely a device invented by the devil in order to get or keep something he has no right to: and much it is loved by his children, the circulationists. How they do round their eyes, these thieves and corrupters, when you pronounce flatly: "Ruffian! thy book should be burnt." But we are very good craftsmen, they will say; surely *some* praise is due to us for that. "Not a breath! The subtler your craft, devoted as it is to drawing money from the sowish multitude, the deeper convicted do you stand of theft from artists. Inventing nothing, creating nothing, you have taken an impression of the moulds that the artists made under the instruction of the Muses, and you pass off the copy like false coiners, and no better." When you see a man with a pen in his hand sneaking through people's bedrooms and noting kailyard and kitchen talk and publishing it thereafter in grammatical English, set him down for a coiner, and, if he quote his model, a most impudent thief. For the men who shaped the English language had their eyes fixed upon a mighty perfection, a speech whereby men's minds might light up the soul; and it would be a pity should we lose their gifts to us through a pack of thieves.

The novel of human manners as an instrument towards lighting up the soul seems to be abhorred of the Muses. Lower and lower it sinks, and darker, in captivity to smaller and smaller men; from Mr. to Miss Corelli. Fancy being impartial where that lot was concerned!—giving them credit for the number of words they know how to spell, and the cunning way they can

place the noun, and their ineffable, sheer, stark, shattering and all-the-rest-of-it manner of laying before you the soul of a cow or a sow or a bow-wow. Thieves all! Pilferers of the tongues of inspired men. There have been more famous pilferers than Mr. and Miss above, but a present-day criticism is not concerned with those. They are dead and damned—if you could go to Paradise you would see that they are not there!

That unclassifiable individual to whom we have once before referred in these columns, whether he or she, perhaps, hishi, that neither artist nor critic but person who writes about both in the third leader of the "Times," is agitating hishifl regarding morality in art, and warns the world not to be too positive about anything, but to be very impartial—namely, to be sure and go to the true moralist for morals and not to the artist who, benighted soul, can only like or dislike! A column or so of shoddy concludes with the following chiffon: "The novelist can describe his strong man bursting through all restraints and triumphantly realising himself. But that strong man is a dangerous guide for those who have not attained to salvation; and as for those who think that they have—they are in a dangerous state altogether." There is a coy thrust! And in the name of metaphysics, we ask from what plane of superior salvation came that Pronouncement.

Los told us a story the other night. It was about ghosts. "Once, I was sitting well on the world side of Acheron," said he; "Sainte-Beuve, then a young man, somewhere about your age, perhaps, sat with me. And we watched a long procession of the newly dead come down to the water. There were butchers and bakers and candle-stick makers and the wives and maiden aunts of every trade, profession and service in the Empire. 'Bon Dieu!' exclaimed Sainte-Beuve, in sudden agitation; 'There goes Mr. Quesqueça's public'—naming an evil circulationist of that day. "He flushed with pity and anger. 'How monstrous!' cried he; 'Monstreux! that these poor people should be sent to hell merely for reading the works of Quesqueça!' 'Monsieur fait erreur,' I replied. 'And do let me beg you not to lament so loudly. These people do not need your pity, and they are not going to hell, but to a compartment reserved for unchristened babes and born imbeciles and such adults as these who never knew and never are to know that they were ever alive.'"

The thrust of the anecdote did not at first reach home, but reflecting on that comparison of Los as to ages, we believed that he really had intended a warning to us not to worry about anyone's influence on the Public: a quite unnecessary warning, and proof that Los had been down in the area talking with some of our less discerning readers.

WEARINESS.

Translated from the Polish of Ludwik Szczepanski by P. Selver.

Ah! somewhere 'midst the fields, pale green
Of hue,

Her sheen

The crystal night around doth strew,
In its wide bounds is quailing

The ocean white,
Bright

Mists my resting-place are veiling.

Within the misty bounds

Of veils that tenderly conceal,
The silvery sounds
Of harps grow silent in a dying peal.

And the array

Of all Life's scenes has taken flight
In dream and died away
Beneath Nirvana's dome that gleameth bright.

Ah! in the haze a stream

Of pearly tears its note doth blend.

I glide, adream,

Into the brightness now has come the end.

A DRAMATIC VIGNETTE.

SCENE: An alcove at a Court Ball.

The King: Unmask!

Death: I wear no mask.

The King: No mask! Then, who or what art thou?

Death: I am thee as thou art.

The King: Darest thou mock thy king?

Death: Mock thee! I am thee.

The King: Thou liest! I see and thou art eyeless. Thy costume flatters thy ingenuity; but 'tis an ill jest.

Death: Ha! Ha!

The King: Begone! lest thy treason choke thee!

Death: Treason, sayest thou! Nay! embrace me, for my love of thee is great.

The King: Stand back! (Draws.)

Death: Thou art churlish! Mayhap thou tremblest in thy bravado! Ah! thy hand is shaking! Would a draught of my blood fire thee with courage? (Offering a glass.)

The King: I fear neither God nor Devil! Away with thee!

Death: Thou lovest me in thy hate!

The King: Take care! lest I test thee with this steel.

Death (approaching the King): My flesh is at the service of thy sword! (Laughing.)

The King: Thou provokest me! (Stabs at Death.)

(The music strikes up.)

Death: Come! let us to the dance. (Encircling the King.)

The King: Oh! Oh! (Dies.)

(As the music begins Death and the King join the throng of dancers.)

C. H. NORMAN.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

THE LAW AND THE WORKERS.

Sir,—Your correspondent, "M. R. R.-L.," has committed himself to the proposition that the State is justified in passing a law by which persons can be sent to long terms of penal servitude for not providing themselves with fireguards, when the probability is (1) that they have never heard of the Act, (2) that they could not pay for the fireguards, assuming they knew of their liability. I can only leave this "qualified solicitor" to the mercy of his conscience.

He asks me, "What on earth have the late Judge Grant-ham's cottages to do with the case?" I do not know. I never mentioned them. This is another example of the recklessness with which your correspondent discusses matters of serious importance.

The Ball case, which I know something of, was a case which demonstrated the extraordinarily oppressive possibilities of the Act. In my view the Ball case was a gross miscarriage of justice.

I know nothing about the Appleby case, nor do I obtain my facts from the "pornographic illustrated weekly Press." I never pretended to be acquainted with every case which has been tried under the Incest Act. But the sentence of seven years' penal servitude supports my contention concerning the savage character of the sentences which are being passed under this Act. From a long experience of the methods of Sir William Grantham in trying cases and sentencing prisoners, I will say that if there were a man in modern England who deserved the tortures of Dante's hell, it was Sir William Grantham. The best news in 1911 for humanity in England was the death of Sir William Grantham.

Your correspondent, Mr. Gilbert Saunders, objected to my act for punishing employers. I answered that an employer who paid his employees such a wage that they were compelled to supplement it by prostitution should be sent to prison, owing to the harm to society flowing from such a procedure. To this, Mr. Saunders replied by giving hypothetical alternatives, which he summed up in the statement, "Half a loaf is better than no bread." That is a terrible delusion, much encouraged by prostitute-producers. Half a loaf is *not* better than no bread, if one cannot live honourably and decently on the half-loaf, but must supplement it by trafficking in one's body or soul. It is the employer who sedulously preaches this doctrine of the pittance wage. It is an economic lie.

The moment employers were made liable to imprisonment if they infringed the provisions of my proposed Act, it would be discovered very soon that there was really no need for the insufficient wages.

Mr. Saunders, as an employer of experience, has admitted that under present conditions girls cannot be paid a living wage, so that where they have no home partially to support them they must resort to prostitution. It is an overwhelming argument for the organisation of industry by the State. It is possible that Mr. Saunders may regard prostitution as a necessity, and he may think that employers should be thanked for preventing women workers securing an economic wage. In which case, I have really nothing to say—except to strengthen the penalties in my Act.

As to domestic service, either Mr. Saunders has not studied the facts, in which event he should have omitted the last paragraph of his letter, or else he is seeking to convey an untrue impression. I should suggest he should read Miss Collet's report on the wages and conditions in domestic service, and then return, if he has the audacity to do so, to the fray. I can understand Mr. Saunders' mistrust of "free evenings." I gather he dislikes freedom (in the case of others) altogether.

C. H. NORMAN.

P.S.—One point I have omitted, and that is the reference to the public. It is regrettable that the public has swallowed the Manchester employers' economic theory of cheapness. But it is unsound economics to suggest that low-priced articles are the product of under-paid labour. The converse is as often true.—C. H. N.

* * *

SOCIALISM AND BANKING REFORM.

Sir,—So far from applauding, I can only note with melancholy interest Mr. Osborn's confession of ignorance of the claims of banking reform. I knew long ago that Fabians were ignorant of the real mechanism of exchange; otherwise I had not laboured to enlighten them. During the past year or so, however, you have permitted me at various times to state the case for banking reform, and I think it might fairly be stated that a perusal of my previous contributions should have removed a considerable portion of Mr. Osborn's ignorance on this subject.

Firstly, I decline to discuss Mr. Osborn's proposal to allot to every person at the age of twenty-one an equal share of the national wealth, irrespective of the individual's record or ability. I decline to discuss this until I receive some stronger assurance than Mr. Osborn's that it is a serious proposal. I simply cannot conceive it as such. Fabians have long since discarded such "dividing-up" schemes. If Mr. Osborn wishes to discuss the ethics of compulsory equality, he should read my letter to THE NEW AGE of March 30 last. Let me bring the subject of banking reform into closer touch with modern Fabianism.

The Socialist who has got deeper into his subject than the mere discussion of abstract equality, perceives that the fundamental cause of the present industrial evil is the tendency for machinery to get into the possession of the few, together with concomitant unemployment. Over-competition amongst employees causes low wages and consequent under-consumption of goods. Obviously then, if the capable among the employees were able to obtain possession of machinery, the demand for labour would be increased, wages would rise, and consumption be increased. Now, the greater part of present industry is set up upon borrowed capital. We perceive our warehouses filled with wealth which its owners are periodically compelled to sacrifice at ruinous prices on account of the lack of those who are able to purchase and consume it in fresh production. This is the real problem, Mr. Osborn. Now lend me your attention. In my article last week, I sketched the history of the evolution of the banker. He began by lending gold to those who were capable of utilising existing wealth as capital. Perfection of mutual confidence, and freedom from directive governmental interference, enabled the banker to substitute the scarce gold token by the elastic paper-promise to pay. Hence he was able to put increasingly large ranges of productive ability in possession of capital (a somewhat sounder method than distributing it indiscriminately among those who arrive at the age of twenty-one). The community circulated the banker's paper when it had confidence that he would only issue to such as were capable of profitably utilising capital. Is it not now obvious that if the banker and the community had been permitted to perfect this system undisturbed by directive State interference, there would gradually have been less involuntary retention of wealth by those who had produced for exchange, and consequently a similar diminution of involuntary idleness on the part of those who were willing to work? Does this bring banking reform into sufficiently close relationship with the social problem?

The land question is obviously a separate one. I discussed it as far as I care some time back in these columns. Let me simply repeat here that nationalisation is neither the sole nor the best remedy for land monopoly.

Mr. Osborn asserts that the tendency of industry is to run in grooves: some employers reaping huge profits, whilst others are only just paying their way. But what maintains the grooves? I have demonstrated that credit restrictions actually prevent the less valuable forms of security from obtaining the capital necessary to enable them to compete, either as individuals or as combines, with the larger aggregations of capital. These restrictions must be removed before Mr. Osborn can assert that the grooves are inevitable. Obviously the possessor of much wealth must secure credit more easily than his less wealthy competitor; but the

present legal restrictions, by confining cheap bank credit to the possessors of gilt-edged security, handicap brains to an enormous extent as compared with wealth, thus perpetuating the "grooves." An examination of the accounts of the Birkbeck Bank some years ago showed that only 5 per cent. of its loans (as distinct from mere short-date commercial discounts) were made upon industrial security unbacked by gilt-edged stocks. This is the central fact which reformers must study.

The huge aggregations of wealth in modern production do not survive on account of the superior brains of their owners—the Socialist will be the last to admit it. They do not survive on account of superior economy of production; every economist has noticed that excessive centralisation produces more loss than profit; I need only refer to a recent authority on American trusts, Norman Hapgood. A more fundamental cause of the survival of trusts is their ability to survive the State-created periods of stagnation of industry. Given the equalisation of demand and supply of commodities established by a rational credit system, and the most economical form of production would survive, its survival being due chiefly to the ability of its entrepreneurs. There would be little to criticise in modern industrialism if every man reaped a reward in proportion to his ability.

Minor fluctuations of demand and supply are likely to have far less harmful effects upon the employee class when the demand for labour is greater than the supply (see my previous letters on this point).

The division between exploiter and exploited will cease to exist when employers are paying as high wages to their employees as they can afford under competition with other employers. This competition between employers is a necessary result of the excess of demand for labour over supply.

It must emphatically be denied that Socialism offers a safe way to industrial salvation. On the contrary, there is no single instalment of nationalisation which does not bring greater evils in its train than those it seeks to remedy. Banking reform touches the root cause of the present deadlock between supply and demand of commodities, and I have shown that it offers reasonable hope of meeting future difficulties. The points raised by your correspondent have necessarily been only briefly touched upon. If he will detail his objections they can be more specifically dealt with.

HENRY MEULEN.

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Sir,—When my friend Henry Meulen told me of his intention to draw the Fabians on the currency question, I ventured the opinion that even if he succeeded, the results would not justify the time expended, for the very same reason that you cannot teach an old dog new tricks. The trouble with the Fabian Society is the same as that with which the Cobden Club and many other political organisations that have outlived their periods of usefulness are afflicted. This trouble is the natural accompaniment of old age—senile decay. It may be a matter of keen regret that "the last scene of all that ends the strange eventful history" of this famous Society, "its second childishness and mere oblivion," should occur so prematurely. But it should excite no surprise among those familiar with its furious and dissipated career. It is with societies as with men: "Violent fires soon burn out themselves." And when after years of rapid living a society settles down to "slipped ease," to live upon the memories of past achievements, impervious to every new idea, we may take it as evidence that senile decay has already commenced. Your Fabian correspondent, F. J. Osborn, is not ashamed at any rate to wear the Fabian motto (which should be inscribed over every Fabian door and at the head of every Fabian tract), "What *we* don't know isn't worth knowing."

But why occupy a whole column of THE NEW AGE in demonstrating the assertion—which is well known to every one familiar with the Fabian writings: "One of the reasons why we (Fabians) do not support free banking is that we do not understand it." Those who attended Mr. Sidney Webb's lectures some winters ago at the London School of Economics on the currency and banking questions, and who have heard one or two utterances from Mr. Bernard Shaw on the same subject, knew of this lamentable ignorance prevailing among Mr. Osborn's associates years ago. But not content with this confession, your correspondent shows (unconsciously) how absolutely incapable he is of understanding other things besides currency and banking.

He says: "We do not understand the London telephone system, and yet we are quite sure that the most radical reconstruction of that system would not bring about any noticeable increase in the birth-rate." "Similarly we can see quite well that no amount of specialist doctoring of the media of exchange will do the things for which we are contending." With this last statement I fully agree. The things for which the Fabians are at present contending are

that their gods, saints and idols are the only ones worth worshipping; that every inch of social advancement made in England during the past twenty-five years is due entirely to the Fabians; that when expounding economic doctrine, Pope Sidney is infallible; that Saint Bernard is superior to the whole of the celestial hierarchy, and that the regeneration of mankind is—thanks to Fabian propaganda—almost un fait accompli.

It need scarcely be said that anyone who is "quite sure that the most radical reconstruction of the telephone system would not bring about any noticeable increase in the birth-rate," would certainly be unable to understand banking and currency. To endeavour to knock into the head of a disciple of the authors of the Minority Report the fact that the marriage and birth rates are both seriously affected by increased facilities for transmitting thoughts and desires as well as by greater efficiency in the production and distribution of wealth (in which processes the telephone, together with the telegraph and postal systems, plays an important part), is as fruitless as attempting to describe the ever-changing colours of a sunset to a man born blind.

Small wonder, too, that Mr. Osborn can see no relation whatever between the currency system and rent, notwithstanding that rents are paid in currency. And my advice to Messrs. Meulen and Isaac is to save their ammunition for a more useful purpose than trying to convert people who "do not understand the currency question and do not intend to understand it." To those who are not Fabians, may I be permitted to say that members of the Banking and Currency Reform League believe that the legal restrictions upon banking (enacted mainly for the purpose of creating a monopoly for the benefit of the shareholders of the Bank of England) have not much to do with the practice of usury. And by usury we mean what it originally implied—"payment for the use of things." We believe usury to be the child of the twin monopolies of land and currency. And even if society succeeds in destroying the land monopoly, it will only find itself in the grip of a far more powerful and more oppressive tyrant—the money power.

"The greatest monopoly in this country," said Dr. Woodrow Wilson, the prospective Democratic candidate for the U.S. Presidency, in a recent speech, "is the money monopoly." Considering that the currency is the agency by which the world's wealth is principally distributed, that to the three former factors in wealth production civilisation and law have added a fourth—viz., money—that the trade of the world is dominated by finance, that the only means we have for converting the actual demand for commodities into an effective demand is through the distribution of general purchasing power expressed by the aid of the currency, to deny its supreme importance as it now exists is to confess to gross ignorance or stupidity. There is not a single social or political problem of importance now occupying the attention of the Press and public, the solution of which is not directly or indirectly related to the currency and banking question.

ARTHUR KITSON,
President of the B. and C. R. League.

* * *

REACTION v. REPUBLICANISM.

Sir,—In the last number of THE NEW AGE there is an article with the above title by Mr. E. Belfort Bax that attacks me and my article "Triumphant Republicanism," published in THE NEW AGE, November 16, 1911.

"I can, of course, quite understand that, owing to family connections or otherwise, the worthy Senhor should feel keenly the death of the late King Carlos. But I submit his private sentiments are hardly sufficient ground for his *not keeping his hair on* [the italics are mine] when professing to discuss the matter objectively," writes Mr. Belfort Bax, influenced, shall we say hypnotised, by inherited Republicanism. If Mr. Belfort Bax's imagination were not of this rapid flight I might be inclined to ask him why he has overlooked the words of the Republican leader, Senhor Brito Camacho, who, in a speech in Parliament condemning the outrage to which an ex-Minister of the Republic was subjected, thought the passions and prejudices of "the people who are in that intellectual state of development when they readily listen to appeals to their worst instincts" ought not to be encouraged. These words, which were quoted by me, contained, I think, the chief and most decisive argument against the Republican Congress passing a motion in honour of the murderers of King Carlos, for such a step on the part of the Republican Congress must fail to alter the masses for the better, especially when Senhor Almeida, the late Minister of the Provisional Government and editor of "A Republica," had boldly declared, "We have done but a negative work, causing revolution and indiscipline everywhere." Forgetting awhile my private opinions, I therefore endeavoured to enter into the view of men who have embarked in the Revolution, but who have found to their cost that they evoked a force which transcends their power of management. Yet Mr.

Belfort Bax exults over the sincerity and unselfish devotion of the murderers who, he thinks, "undoubtedly laid the foundation of the Portuguese Republic," and exclaims that the Republican Congress "should honour their memories"—is "surely a display of courage and honesty which should command our respect, whatever our opinions may be of the policy or act of the regicides." Such is the substance of Mr. Belfort Bax's article, a great part of which is sufficiently confuted by stating it.

But Mr. Belfort Bax is not of a temper to do things by halves. More conversant with phantoms than realities, he remarks that the so-called "reactionary" raises the cry of "Persecution," on the principle, "I may hit you, but if you hit back I am a martyr." Such an observation is extremely useless and unsatisfactory. We learn from it nothing which can give the slightest hint of the nature of Portuguese politics. It may therefore interest Mr. Belfort Bax to know what Senhor Ramalho Ortigao, certainly no reactionary, wrote on the subject of martyrdom at the time of the formation of the Portuguese Republican party: "All we can beg of these gentlemen," wrote the author of "Farpas," "is that they will have the kindness not to air their opinions in such a manner as to disturb society and render police interference a necessity. Above all would we beg of them not to be martyrs, not to offer themselves as victims ready to shed their precious blood for the great cause—not to cherish the old idea of expiring on the barricade, biting the heroic cartridge to the strains of the 'Marseillaise,' amid the shouts of Liberty and Equality, etc." These words, which I have extracted from the "History of Republican Ideas in Portugal," by Professor Braga, were the words of a Portuguese who worked out some of the great practical aims of Portuguese Republicanism, but whose disappointment was so great that he turned away with benevolent disdain from Republican politics.

"I hear from the best-informed sources," says Mr. Belfort Bax, "that the dissensions among the Republican leaders, inexcusable though they may be under the circumstances, do not connote any differences of principle whatever." But it is difficult to reconcile these statements with the Republican fulminations against Republican Portugal. "This is not the Republic of which we dreamed," says Senhor Machado dos Santos, the founder of the Republic, "and it was not with hatred and persecution and anti-patriotic decrees or windy declamations thereof that we wished to regenerate our country." Again, "If the revolution has had no other result than to cause a permanent state of riots," says the Republican leader Senhor Camacho, "it would have been better not to have made it." Not unwilling to be convinced of my errors, if errors they should be proved, I ask, therefore, Mr. Belfort Bax to bring forward his new facts or new principles, which may perhaps lead me to conclusions different from those to which my former inquiries and considerations have conducted me.

V. DE BRAGANCA CUNHA.

* * *

THE BASES OF SELF-GOVERNMENT.

Sir,—In your issue of December 14, Mr. Clifford D. Sharp advances two out of "hundreds of other good reasons" why proportional representation is not a desirable proposal to consider in connection with the coming electoral changes. If it can be shown that the two objections he selects are really applicable to the existing system, and that the proportional method may reasonably be expected to remedy them the remainder are somewhat discredited. Since he requires certain explanations and makes specific reference to the Belgian system, it becomes necessary to examine that method. I will endeavour to do so briefly.

Mr. Sharp is, of course, correct in stating that proportional representation has been in use in Belgium longer than in Tasmania or South Africa. He might have added without exhausting the list that it was at work in Switzerland still earlier, that Sweden, Finland and Japan have adopted it, that British Trades Unionists use it, and that there is every prospect of its shortly becoming law in France. It is just now awakening keen interest in Ireland, to whose peculiar problems it is specially applicable. In fact the principle formulated by Mr. Hare in England some fifty years ago is not only "widely advocated," but world-wide in practice.

The reason, however, for instancing Tasmania and South Africa was that the methods there adopted, as being most suitable to institutions founded on our own, differ materially in method, though not in principle, from the Continental systems. These latter have all grown out of the scrutin de liste, or block vote. The Swiss pioneer, Professor Naville, expressly stated that the system was adopted not as intrinsically better than the original proposal, which he himself preferred, but because it could be adapted with the

least disturbance to the existing practice. The Old Country now has the opportunity of following her well-established custom of considering the results achieved elsewhere and going one better.

In Belgium each constituency returns several members. This, of course, is essential to any proportional scheme, since a single member cannot be divided. The elector is presented with a ballot paper on which the candidates are arranged in definite party lists, the order of the names in each list being determined by the party leaders. The voter can either indicate that he approves the list as it stands or that he prefers any one individual. The seats are allotted to each party in proportion to the number of votes cast for it, the selection by the voter of an individual of course increasing his chance of being included among the successful candidates.

This recognition by law of the existence of specific parties is foreign to English ideas, especially the power accorded the party leaders to decide the order of the names on the ballot paper itself. This latter provision is not without criticism in Belgium. The net tendency is undoubtedly to strengthen the hands of party organisation to some extent, but it certainly does not give them the arbitrary powers of exclusion which the English party caucus implicitly, and sometimes overtly, exercises, and the parties are at any rate in fair proportion to their supporters.

The single transferable vote in multi-member constituencies as advocated in this country works on very different lines. Each elector has his single vote, by which only one man can benefit, and he is entitled to give it to any one candidate on the ballot paper, upon which the names are placed without indication of party. He is also invited to indicate by the figure 2 that in the event of his first choice securing the "quota" (determined, of course, by the number of candidates to be returned) without his vote, or failing to be elected in spite of it, that vote, instead of being wasted, is to go to his second choice; similarly with a third, and so on. If he is indifferent to all the remainder he need not exercise this privilege, and can run the risk (a small one, unless his man fails to obtain his quota) of letting his vote be wasted, as all the votes cast for unsuccessful candidates are wasted to-day.

Mr. Sharp asserts that this will in practice result in a choice between party tickets without any selection being feasible as between individuals. It would appear that he is misled into thinking of the list of names presented on such a ballot paper as though it were a block list. He errs in good company, for Professor Graham Wallas, in his delightful "Human Nature in Politics," does the same thing, failing to make clear the vital distinction between them. Sincere respect for Professor Graham Wallas cannot alter the fact that the two things are fundamentally different. In the one case the voter has to vote, if he votes at all, for a large number of people simultaneously, and doubtless has difficulty in judging them all. On the proportional system as advocated in this country he has but one vote and but one man can benefit by it. He can, as already explained, ignore all names but one if the remainder have unfortunately not made themselves known to him; in so doing he will forgo an option which will surely be valued by the intelligent man not always content to be a blind partisan. If a party man he can ensure the election of any one candidate without the risk of prejudicing the chances of the others by overloading the favourite with an unnecessary number of untransferable votes which might otherwise have gone to them. Presumably Mr. Sharp has no desire to see people prevented from voting for causes and programmes, but to provide so that the voter has a real choice in the man who is to represent them and him. Can he suggest a better method? If not, it is to be remembered that nothing is easier than abstract criticism, and that the practical comparison is between the new proposal and the existing system. Does he really consider it to be choosing a "representative" even if he be on the winning side, to make Hobson's choice between two men, each selected by the party machine on the understanding that they will obey the party whip? Is it not the fact that in other than exceptional cases, the member is to-day in all important matters a puppet worked in favour of various "causes"—and by hands other than his constituents? What would Mr. Sharp call such candidatures except party tickets, and how many others are there?

This brings us to Mr. Sharp's other objection, that proportional methods will give undue influence to special interests. Here again it would seem that he has inverted the correct conclusion. The candidate's course on matters made "party questions" by the executive is laid down for him by the party machine as the condition of his candidature. In smaller matters, however, we are normally treated to the unedifying spectacle of the unfortunate candidate straining his moral elasticity to the utmost and frequently giving reluctant pledges to secure the adherence of quite small special interests without which the votes of the great body

of his supporters are likely to be in vain. Russell Lowell put it in a nutshell when he wrote that—

"A man represents,

Not the fellows that sent him, but them on the fence."

Under proportional representation in, say, a five-member constituency such a body would have to number over one-sixth of the community to secure a representative prepared to put their particular fad before all other questions. If they were as numerous as that they would in fairness be entitled to their spokesman, and the other four members, freed from their shackles, could outvote him in the House. This, it would seem, is reducing such sectional interests to their proportions. When, if ever, there is a sufficient fraction of the electorate so unbalanced as to return more such members than can be kept in order by the remainder it will take more than electoral systems to keep the Old Country on the rails. The electorate is not so fickle as the present system misrepresents them as being. Between 1900 and 1906 over 40 per cent. of the members changed sides in the House, as the result of a change in the vote of only about 10 per cent. of the electorate.

There remains small space in which to thank Mr. Walter Stanton for his support. He is clearly convinced that a change is desirable, and that in the absence of sufficient quick-change artists to work his own highly original scheme, a better proposal than proportional representation is yet to seek.

Outspoken statements like those of Mr. Belloc make painful reading. Without presuming to appraise them, still less to impute blame among able men using the only means available for successful effort, it is surely permissible to inquire whether the system under which they have to work is all it might be.

No one is going to claim that proportional representation will make a new heaven and a new earth, or wise men of the unbalanced individuals whom Mr. Sharp fears. But it offers these latter the educative effect of a large measure of responsible choice while reducing their capacity for harm; and the substitution of a system which encourages sound men to come forward frankly on their merits for one which frequently puts a premium on insincerity is worth consideration among those who care for the dignity of our public men.

The above sentences are an attempt, not, I submit, wholly unsuccessful, to meet Mr. Sharp's stricture, and in no way pretend to be a complete statement of the case.

If I have not already encroached beyond all reason on your space, perhaps you will permit the bare mention of other specific advantages which are claimed for these proposals as a set-off to the "hundreds of good reasons" against them (unspecified) referred to by Mr. Sharp:—

(1) It would encourage a living interest in politics among the thoughtful.

(2) It would content all sections of opinion with the knowledge that they were getting fair play.

(3) The apparent "swing of the pendulum" would be reduced to its proper proportions, and consequently—

(4) The decisions of the House would have greater moral authority at home and abroad.

(5) It would render the member more dependent on his constituents and less dependent on the executive for his re-election, giving him some measure of control over the latter.

(6) It would strengthen the personnel of the House of Commons.

J. W. M. TOPLEY.

RUNES.

Sir,—I beg to salute Mr. A. Hood's witty interpretation of my runes; and I feel blackly ungrateful at having to explain that they were six separate runes, having no connection with each other. Apparently they should have been numbered or marked off somehow. He need not suspect me of pride when I say that I did not suppose these runes would be widely appreciated; and I hasten to add that I do not think their particular sort of obscurity has much merit. The obscurity of the opening lines of "Lycidas" may be a shame to anyone to whom they continue to be obscure; but the obscurity of one or two of my runes could not, as there, be overcome by searching in the history of nations, but only by application to arcana, the which are by no means always a profitable study—one's first consideration being to learn how to live—and are not considered indispensable to a liberal education. I will put Mr. Hood on the track of the runes if so be he choose to look at them again. The first is a fable concerning Purusha, the Soul, Prakriti and Mulaprakriti, respectively, Matter and the Substance of Matter, the divinised spouse of Purusha. "Woman" stands for matter in the Indian doctrine; and the quality of woman is to roll things in mud. The second and third and fourth runes express aspects of the mystical war between Apollo and Dionysus, the anthropomorphised

figures of Form and Energy. The myth represents Form as eternally attempting to capture Energy, Energy to escape capture. Each new mould cast around Energy is broken through; the procession of broken forms is what we moderns call evolution. An old picture represents Apollo and Dionysus as eagle and serpent (worm, I took leave to say) with a huge eye over the two; this represents the Spectator, the prototype of the philosophic man, a lover of wisdom, though not yet wise. In the third rune I have represented the decline of the struggle: decadent Energy trying to enter Form, and be still; pursuing, but now repulsed by equally wearied Form. The fifth rune should scarcely be called a rune; it is a plain statement. The last metricises an Indian myth of the Creation, and is, I should say, familiar to most students of Eastern books.

I am most unwilling that Mr. Hood should believe me to be aiming at poetical Picassoism. I really loathe all that sort of thing—as well show me an abortion or a decayed corpse. While I should be the last to censor, I would be the first to condemn such exhibitions; and any professing poet who approached me with verse so formless would subsequently hear himself called all bad names from an ass to an unscrupulous adventurer. Form may or may not be all of art, but there is no art apart from form.

May I suggest that Mr. Pound's translation of Daniel's "Bona es vida pos joia la mante," is really too feeble? "Bully is living where joy can back it up"—so Mr. Pound renders it. But "Bully is the breath-act where bliss can do the Atlas stunt" is much more faithful to Daniel, so de-civilised as his line betrays him to have been.

B. HASTINGS.

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HENRY CLARENCE KENDALL.

Sir,—In Mr. Shadwell's bibliography of Pater's work he states that the essay on "Æsthetic Poetry" was written in 1868, and first published in "Appreciations" in 1889—so that there is surely no possibility of Kendall being the plagiarist. The work of Pater is even more unlikely to have penetrated the Bush than that of Swinburne. It is, on the other hand, quite possible that Pater knew Kendall's work. Early editions of his poems were sent to the London agents of his publishers, but there was no sale, and they were duly pulped. Swinburne himself owes something to Gordon. No one can read Gordon's "Swimmer" and Swinburne's "Swimmer's Dream," published many years later in the "Astrophel" volume, without seeing the debt of the greater poet.

E. L. ALLHUSEN.

* * *

PICARTERBIN.

Sir,—It was delightful seeing the dear old bogey of photography destroying painting rising up again in an article on Picasso in THE NEW AGE last week.

As if, because photography has reached a high level of mastery, anyone would take less interest, in, say, a still-life by Nicholson or Pryde or Adam; as if there were not the widest gulf fixed for ever between any form of photography and even the sternest pre-Raphaelite. It is the old, old fallacy of imagining that art's business is to "copy" Nature, which one would have thought was finally put out of pain, except in school debating societies, for ever and ever. Let the author of the article try a little elementary Bergson!

ERIC CLOUGH TAYLOR.

* * *

Sir,—I am sorry Mr. Huntly Carter should have misread my original letter three weeks ago, and hasten to assure him, so far from gurgling and deriding, my query was indited in simple good faith, and in the hope that the information asked for would be forthcoming in a similar spirit. I was grievously disappointed. Having been pushed amongst the Jig-Saws by Mr. Carter himself, I guess I shall have to stop there until extricated by him, or until my own indomitable efforts result in my liberation.

There are two very definite points of view put forward in my last which Mr. Carter, in his tactical corkscrew movement, perhaps does well to ignore.

As for Mr. Wake Cook: really, I had no intention of "damning the gentleman," but, if my remarks bear this construction, it appears to me I simply anticipated the general rush. After reading Messrs. Porter and Murry last week I am well content to leave the polishing off to their discretion.

G. F. WHITE.

* * *

Sir,—Mr. Huntly Carter's weekly display of omniscience in THE NEW AGE should not go without some recognition. His bold throwing over of any remains of inconvenient modesty that may have clung to him from an earlier and less all-knowing age also deserves our admiration. To come to his views, it is quite true that some time ago a new art arrived upon this tame old planet, and Mr. Wake Cook will just have to make the best of it.

For some ten years or more, a great deal of sheer experiment in paint has been going on, Paris being, of course, the headquarters of the movement. Any remonstrance on the part of people of the ordinary kind is promptly stopped by the powerful argument that Galileo was also much decried in his own day. Under protection of this all-powerful argument they have been able to do many wonderful and perfect things (I think these adjectives are the right ones!). The thing has gone on till it has come to the point where they actually give us a speaking, life-like portrait of the soul of tables, wine-glasses and other worthy but quite uninteresting utensils. I knew it would have to come to that in the end. Now it has come.

There is nothing new in the terror of the commonplace. It is quite a common condition of the average soul, and Mr. Carter need not make so much fuss about it. We are not *all* unacquainted with the epidemic of Free Art that has been spreading wildly for some time. He does not enough consider the goodly number of his readers who have become incapable of anger, or wonder, or awe in this particular connection. We are not ill through anxiety to hear further ecstatic phrases on the thing—even from Mr. Huntly Carter. What we should like him to do is to give us still further information on science. He has a little “glimpsing” into this subject in a letter this week, and we are charmed. He has evidently never heard, though, of the scientist’s “imponderable, all-pervading ether.” Mendeljeff held it to be some definite form of matter, and its atomic weight to be something like a millionth of that of hydrogen. Perhaps Mr. Carter and Mendeljeff may be right—though very generally ether is held to be imponderable.

He seems to have a repugnance to the atom being broken up! I am afraid it is too late to make the objection. Some twelve or thirteen years ago Le Bon gave very good reasons for holding that the atom (and therefore all matter) was unstable, and was, in fact, subject to disintegration. In recent years the discovery of radium (by the interesting Madame Curie), and also other radio-active substances, has proved the thing beyond a doubt. He (Mr. Carter) also seems to have an objection to the atoms of matter consisting entirely of an aggregation of electrons, or corpuscles, as Sir J. J. Thomson calls them, and particles as Le Bon calls them; (they are also called ions). Now this is hard on the atom, since it probably can’t be constructed in any other way. These particles are constantly leaving and flying from their particular atom. (In radium this fact is very evident.) Radium itself is falling down into quite another element. So the atom can be, and constantly is being, broken down and divided in spite of Mr. Carter’s wish to have it otherwise. This behaviour of the atom is the secret of all the forces of nature. ROBERT FOWLER.

* * *

Sir,—I am glad to hear that Mr. Harold B. Harrison has immortalised himself by composing an ode beginning:—

“Awake!—Victorian Cook—awake!”

but I would make two emendations; it should be: “Awake!—*Victorious* Cook—awake!” And the “awake!” is superfluous—I am rightly named, and it is my *awakeness* which enabled me to get at the true inwardness of the unprecedented situation in the art world, and put me so many years ahead of the Modernity critics who have mistaken Bedlam for the heights of Parnassus! The man who abuses the Victorian age, or art, is like a mole lecturing on astronomy! In that glorious age the art of Turner and Constable culminated. It gave us the great Pre-Raphaelite movement; it saw the bringing to perfection of water-colour painting, of our supreme school of animal painting; and other great developments. I stand for the progressive evolution and steady ascent of that art; not for decadence and anarchy. It is the apotheosis of past art for which I strive. E. WAKE COOK.

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Sir,—I have a short answer for “M. B. Oxon’s” examination of my “commentary.” I do not either suggest that the Herbin picture is “a study in intellectual and emotional statics,” or that it has anything to do with geometrical method, pure or otherwise. If “M. B. Oxon” will consent carefully to read my note he will find I avoid all reference to emotion and refer only to the imaginative intellect, and that I point to the study as both spontaneous and dynamic.

“M. B. Oxon” makes frequent implied reference to the geometrical method; it means only one thing. He is looking at a work of art with the eye of a geometrician, whereas he should examine it with the eye of an artist. The difference in point of view is tremendous. The geometrician sees a cube as a geometrical figure with, say, a line AB parallel to a line CD. The artist sees a cube as a solid or object affected by light. To his highly sensitive vision it is a form moulded by light.

In order that “M. B. Oxon” may comprehend my meaning, let him take a cube of sugar, place it on a white cloth in

an angle of bright light. He will then notice a strange thing has happened. The cube as a cube has disappeared. Three-fourths of it has been obliterated by the light and the white cloth. Its place is now taken by two shapes carved by the shadow on one side of the cube and the shadow cast on the cloth. Beyond this he will notice another strange thing. That whereas the cube was static to the geometrical perception, it has become dynamic as an object of the artistic perception. The play of light has rendered it fluid.

Again, “M. B. Oxon,” in his suggested view, approaches the study from an academical standpoint. This leads him to speak of the “Laws of Chance,” real objects (in italics), and to draw an analogy from the old masters. He fails to perceive that the Herbin is an example of the new conception of rhythmic design, and the application of the Law of Association. Examine it in this light and one discovers that it is clear, simple, reasonable, consistent and true; otherwise treat it as an enigma and let it rest. Do not bury it in the mazes of injustice. It is an injustice to create a comparison between it and a work by an old master who had no conception of rhythmic design. If the latter introduced the faces of unintelligent Cabinet Ministers into a study of a prehistoric idiot pudding, such faces would no doubt compete with the currants for attention. They would distract because, like the old master’s zoological clouds and the rest of the star-turns and attractions (accidental or otherwise) in his picture they are part of a composition having no unity and no continuity to keep the eye moving on. But if one of the new men treated this inspired subject he would not give one an opportunity to linger over each face in turn and ask it uncivil political questions. The idiot pudding and the angel faces would be part of a composition in line having harmony, balance, direction, etc., ordering the eye to march on from point to point till it marches off the canvas into the larger universe beyond. Likewise, if an old man had treated the Herbin subject he would have given the cook-pots and bits of pot a beautiful detachment. There would have been a jug filled with foaming Bass and stamped with the hand that stopped the car, and ready for the critic who has no difficulty in getting the Bass into his notice, to say nothing of into his interior. But Herbin, neither being an old man, nor filled with the old man spirit and Bass, has not been bound by the public-house limit. His bits of pot are the reasonable development of pure rhythmic design. Take the object that resembles a jug. It is conceivable that its two perpendicular and one horizontal lines were evolved by other balancing lines to the left and right and on top. And the curve of the handle is due simply to corresponding curves which are moving not in “one direction,” but in all directions. Take the wonderful square at the top centre of the picture and note how the angles and curves in it begin to flow down the left of the composition and so all over it in a harmony of curves, curvature, and angles.

Finally, “M. B. Oxon’s” real view that the picture is “an actual still-life, drawn under a distorted perspective and with deliberate conventionalisations” is so “ordinary” as to be beyond discussion. It recalls G. K. Chesterton’s amazing attempt to deprive Blake of perspective. M. Herbin has not seen the thing in perspective.

HUNTLY CARTER.

* * *

“JAEGER BOOTS.”

Sir,—In your “Present-Day Criticism” (December 28) you contrast “Workhouse drawers and Jaeger boots” with “frilly underclothes and champagne,” implying that to wear Jaeger boots indicates frumpiness. Now, Jaeger boots and shoes are as smart as any, and much the most pleasant to wear. Will you and the writer of the article spare a minute to look at the enclosed list? And if you would look in at our Charing Cross Depot (456, Strand), or at 126, Regent Street, and examine the actual articles, you would see that they might be worn even with “frilly” underwear.

We have fought successfully against an undeserved reputation for frumpiness; and when a journal of light and leading, such as THE NEW AGE, refers disparagingly to Jaeger boots, we enter a respectful plea for further consideration.

Dr. Jaeger’s Sanitary Woollen System Co., Ltd.

LEWIS R. S. TOMALIN,

Managing Director.

[We willingly accept Messrs. Jaeger’s graceful rebuke of an obsolescent prejudice.—ED. N. A.]

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