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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

In its issue of the 6th inst. the "Spectator" very fairly responds to the invitation of THE NEW AGE to discuss the causes and remedies of low wages. Two causes are found and two remedies are consequently suggested. With the moral cause and cure we have nothing at present to do; but of the economics of the disease the "Spectator" has an interesting diagnosis and remedy. The remedy, it appears, is to increase capital so that capital may compete for labour. "On the economic side," says the "Spectator," "poverty will never be overcome except by the increase of wealth." The rich must be made richer; for with the multiplication of capital its competition for labour becomes keener and the wages of labour will consequently rise. . . . But let us see. In the first place, it is certain that the argument from experience is against the "Spectator's" view. As we said last week, nobody fifty years ago would have anticipated the miraculous multiplication of wealth that has actually taken place during the last half-century. Yet are the working-classes proportionately better off for this vast increase? A million of our population are paupers at this moment. Save for charity—State and private—pauperism to-day would appear no less than the pauperism of fifty years ago. In actual fact it is no less.

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But there is no necessity to go back fifty years beyond the memory of most of our readers. Confining ourselves to our own immediate times, by common admission wealth has been enormously increased within the last ten, five, and two years. This increase has been shown in the returns of the Income Tax, Death Duties, and in a thousand other ways. The import and export trade of the year just closed constitutes a record over a period, too, of ten years' boom. Analysing the accounts of 774 trading companies for the year 1910-11, the "Economist" discovers an increase in profits averaging 8½ per cent. We need not continue the catalogue of proof of what the "Times" calls the unsurpassed material prosperity of the nation as a whole. It is undeniable that capital and wealth have been increased almost beyond the dreams of avarice. Everything, in short, demanded by the "Spectator" as a precedent condition of high wages has been conceded by labour with a lavish hand. But the demonstration is equally familiar that wages have not profited by this gargantuan increase of capital. On the contrary, in their real value wages have declined since 1896 by some fifteen per cent. The assumption, therefore, on which the "Spectator's"

remedy for low wages rests is plainly shown by facts to be unfounded.

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A number of causes conspire to rob labour of its theoretically improved position when capital is multiplied. The most obvious cause lies in the superior mobility of capital over labour. If the increases of capital were bound to find employment in this country, other things being equal, the competition of capitalists would raise wages. But no such limitation of the employment of capital is necessary. While English workers must find employment in England or become paupers, English capital is not restricted to English labour. Hundreds of millions of English capital, indeed, are invested in foreign countries, where, instead of competing for the services of English labour, it positively competes with English labour. Doubtless the foreign trade and exchange so stimulated is an advantage to the nation as a whole, but to the workers who live by the sale of their labour only, competition with the labour market of the world is partly responsible for keeping down their wages. In short, the multiplication of capital affords no guarantee whatever that employment in the country of its creation will be correspondingly increased. Employment in general is increased by the increase of capital, but not necessarily home employment. Indeed, by a *reductio ad absurdum* a state of things can be imagined in which from foreign investments alone the English capitalist classes could live without productively employing British workmen at all.

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Again, it is not merely doubtful, it is almost certain, that what English industry is suffering from is not a defect but an excess of capital—capital in the commercial sense. The "Spectator" should be familiar with the fact known to all business men that the majority of large businesses are over rather than under capitalised. This has its advantages no less than its disadvantages. From the capitalist point of view the advantage of over-capitalisation is the appearance of low rates of return. For example, the railways and the collieries enlist public sympathy by displaying the beggarly return of three or four per cent. on their capital. On such a small return, how can they be expected to raise wages without raising prices? But in the bulk of these cases the nominal capital is twice or thrice the real capital. The real capital has been watered once, twice and again. The true rate of interest should therefore be reckoned as double or treble the rate actually quoted. The returns of profit and interest are thoroughly misleading unless the whole history of the invested capital is

known. But this deliberate disguise of the real rate of commercial interest is, as we say, a defence against high wages. The poor workmen themselves are generously deluded, and more than one railwayman and collier has been heard to say that their masters, after all, ought not to be squeezed below the present quoted rates of return. As a matter of fact, however, capital is seldom employed at a remuneration less than that of the current bank-rate. Below the bank-rate capital has no inducement whatever to expend itself in fostering industry directly. We treat with incredulity any trading company that professes to be philanthropically engaged in employing labour for a return of less than three per cent. In the vast majority of cases the real return, whatever the nominal return may be, is more like ten, twenty, thirty, fifty, or a hundred per cent.

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So long as new worlds of labour exploitation can be called in by foreign investments to redress the balance of wages in our own world, so long will English wages tend to the general world level of wages. Hence the cry of the internationality of labour, remote enough from practical politics at present, but testifying to the dim appreciation of the ultimate extent of the problem. Until it is made impossible (and it never will be) to employ any labour in any part of the world at less than a high minimum rate of wages, wages in general will lead to the subsistence level of the least exigent of labourers in any part of the world. A certain Mr. Dunston, a Durham coalowner, suggested only last week that Japanese workmen should be imported to take the place of English colliers. We should not like the experiment to be tried, for more reasons than one; but the suggestion is significant of the real attitude of capital to labour. Capital naturally seeks profit, and as naturally it seeks profit where it can most easily make it in the largest quantities. Other things being equal, capital is indifferent whether it employs English or Japanese labour. If English wages should be higher than the wages demanded by the Japanese, and the labour of the two indifferent, then if it be politically possible Japanese labour will be employed in preference to English labour. And if not in this country itself, then in Japan. The assumption, therefore, that capital must when multiplied necessarily raise wages in its own country is without any real foundation. When English wages reach a certain height, English labour will cease to be employed.

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We hope our readers will not be wearied by the necessary economic considerations here briefly outlined. Their bearing on the present industrial unrest is as direct as it is disquieting. We have frequently maintained that the sole immediate business of trade unionism is to raise wages. Raise wages, peacefully and politically if you can, but by any means raise wages. The "Spectator" and, we are glad to see, Mr. Bonar Law also agree with us in regarding wages as the index of progress. Recent Liberal legislation they condemn on the same grounds that we condemn it, namely, that it does not tend to raise but to reduce wages. For similar reasons, we are glad to believe, the "Spectator" is not really unsympathetic towards the present revival of the strike. The "Spectator," indeed, suggests a strike we ourselves have never speculated upon, a strike of slum-dwellers against slums. But while we are disposed to support and to encourage at any cost the revival of the strike, the ultimate effect upon wages must not be lost sight of. Let it be granted that wages can be raised by strikes, let it be further granted that owing to the competition of the world market, prices can only temporarily be raised, the conclusion must not be hastily accepted that labour as a whole is any better off. The rates of wages may be actually raised for those who find employment, but at a high minimum of actual wages, the numbers of the rejected and consequently the unemployed will be increased. Students of practical industry know perfectly well that automatic machines exist at the moment which could easily take the place of certain forms of human labour; and, if that labour became a little more costly, would instantly be employed for that purpose. In the desk of a certain railway

manager lies a device which would dispense the railway system from the necessity of employing 7,000 men now in receipt of wages. Nay, it would *pay* commercially to put the device into operation at once. But in the present state of public opinion in favour of high wages, the displacement is not thought to be advisable. Let, however, wages be raised a little more and the dividends on the watered capital drop beyond the inclination of the public to pay higher railway fares, and the mechanical invention will be practically employed with deadly effect, not on the *rate* of wages, but on the total sum paid in wages. In short, the rate of wages may be raised without bettering the condition of labour as a whole. Quite the contrary, indeed.

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We see now that the cry for high wages, while it is a necessary and immediately desirable cry, is nevertheless dangerous unless other demands go with it. Discussing the labour unrest, the "Times" on Friday referred to the disinclination of the English to think in advance as almost a virtue. "The English soil," says the "Times," "has never been good for theories." No, what we usually do is to wait until catastrophe is upon us and then muddle, we fondly believe, through. But are we so certain that we always muddle *through*? In this matter of the prevailing labour unrest, for example, we are by no means confident that the nation will muddle through. Since the advent of the Liberals to office it is clear to demonstration that no single satisfactory settlement of a labour problem has been arrived at. With his infinite capacity for patching up a compromise and donning the laurels of peace, Mr. Lloyd George in particular has left envenomed cicatrices in every labour dispute since the infamous railway settlement of 1907. His slick cavalier opportunism as then displayed gave no hope that labour problems would be approached from a large, far-sighted point of view. On the contrary, he finesses the victory and by so doing sets an example to the men. We are, therefore, all the more disposed to examine the implications of the labour unrest with care since it is certain that unless we and our readers do it, neither the Government nor the men will. Whatever the poverty of the English soil for theories, unless some favourable soil is found among us, our nation is lost, and deservedly lost. England has not in the past been saved by its poverty of ideas, but in spite of it. The "Times" and other journals would do well to examine the intentions and the drift of the new labour movement again, and this time with some care.

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Conceding the statement that the present unrest owes its impulse to the recent decline in real wages, we are faced by two considerations: can wages generally be permanently raised, in view of foreign competition, the substitution of machinery, etc., etc.; and, secondly, what social adjustments would be necessary to maintain them? To the first question our reply must be under the existing circumstances an emphatic negative. While, under a system of developed capitalism such as we have in England, the rate of wages can be raised, the sum of wages cannot possibly be raised proportionately to capital. It therefore follows that the present attempt of labour to raise wages is doomed to be a failure in proportion to its success. The more certainly the agitation raises wages the more certainly will unemployment multiply. So long, in fact, as the monopoly of capital remains, the wages bill must be a relatively decreasing amount rather than a relatively increasing amount. This ultimate collapse of the movement for higher wages being demonstrable (and instinctively perceived by many of the men themselves), we turn to the second consideration. By what means—social, industrial or political—can labour not only raise the individual rate of wages, but raise and maintain the sum total paid to labour as a whole? The reply to this question leads directly to the theory implicitly underlying the industrial movement and establishes some relation between English industrialism, as it is called, and French syndicalism. If trade union leaders were as lucid as they are obscure, their present campaign would be directed to certain definite objects. As it is, they also,

like the "Times," will muddle—and probably not through.

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With the theory of French syndicalism, as we have frequently said, the English theory (what there is articulate of it) of industrialism has little relation. The declared aim of the philosophic minds of French syndicalism is to capture the instruments of production—the working capital—and to administer them through the trade unions; and to bring about this transformation of ownership as between the masters and the men by the coup of a general strike. In England, on the other hand, no such vaulting ambition on the part even of the most ambitious leaders of industrialism exists. In one sense the English workman has a far profounder sense of the State and of society than has his French confrère, whose idea of society is rather patriotic than social. The English trade unions have, therefore, no desire to appropriate the instruments of production to their own exclusive ownership. But, on the other hand, they do protest, no less vigorously than their Continental brethren, against the exclusive possession of these instruments by private capitalists. If the State itself is not prepared to intervene between the employers and the employed and to appropriate to the use of the nation at large the instruments of wealth—if, that is, the State is not yet disposed to socialise capital, land and labour—then the trade unionists declare that the least injustice will be done by compelling the capitalists to recognise the workmen as joint and equal partners in the administration of capital. The whole modern movement of trade unionism in the direction of enforcing "recognition," the admission of their officials to conferences with the masters, the attempted intervention in questions of management as well as wages, has, as its instinctive theory, this desire to participate as partners in industry.

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It will be seen at once that we are here beyond the problem of higher wages as the sole immediate issue. Higher wages for the few can be obtained by trade union action, and even higher wages temporarily for the many; but no security can be guaranteed for this improvement unless the men are as much in control of capital as the masters themselves. To secure this joint control is, therefore, obviously the secondary—as the raising of wages is obviously the primary—object of the present industrialism. This being clear, the question arises: What are the respective courses open to the three present factors of industry—the State, the employers, and the men? With statesmen in control of events one course only would be taken: as fast as industries became the battlefields of capital and labour, the State would step in and nationalise the concerns. The railways, for example, have long ceased to give the public any of the advantages of competition; they are rapidly ceasing to give labour its approximately just proportion of wages. The railways, indeed, having fleeced the public to the best of their ability, are now fiercely engaged in fleecing the men. Under these circumstances, in the interests of the men and the public the railways should certainly be nationalised. The same applies to the coal mines. Short, however, of nationalisation, a compromise can be effected between the contending parties through the medium of the State. It should be the business of the State to insist on the joint and mutual recognition, at least, of the masters and the men. To either and both parties the State should say: You are jointly and severally entrusted with a public service. We, the public, recognise that capital must be rewarded and so also must labour. Since you have not hitherto agreed, we make it a condition of continuing your private licences to engage in trade to recognise each other as joint trustees responsible to the public. The companies must take their unions of men into partnership, administer the industry jointly with them, and, in fact, co-operate in the entire management of the business. We, the State, representing the public, reserve our right to impose conditions jointly on your work and to assume responsible sole ownership at our discretion.

That, we say, would be the second best attitude of the State towards the present dispute: to support the unions in their demand for recognition, and to leave to the joint management of the unions and the masters the subsequent settlement of wages. But it will be said, are not the conferences and agreements now usual between masters and men evidences of the partnership? And since they have proved useless to prevent disputes, what hopes can be entertained save from the intervention of the third and omnipotent factor—namely, the State? Doubtless, we reply, in the long run the intervention of the State will be necessary. As Socialists, we have no hesitation after analysis in declaring that State ownership is the inevitable conclusion of capitalist industry. But in the meanwhile, working agreements can be patched up suitable to the prevalent conceptions of what can or cannot be done. And the joint responsible partnership of employers and workmen is one of these inter-equal devices. The failure of the present system of agreements and conferences between masters and men is not due to the principle of collective bargaining, but to the fact that the two parties to the bargain are unequal in responsibility. At present, it is undoubtedly to the interests of masters to respect an agreement that has been mutually come to; for the nature of that agreement is plainly bound under existing conditions to be in their favour. But it is by no means equally to the interests of the men to respect that agreement. They were forced to accept the agreement as the most that at the moment of signing it they could obtain; but that very compulsion acts as a stimulant to break the agreement at the first favourable opportunity. Only between equals can contracts be duly honoured; between the greater and the lesser power contracts are seldom regarded as more binding than force alone can make them. The use in the recent agreements of force, therefore, robs the breaking of contracts by the men of real moral obliquity. In a similar position we should all be disposed to act similarly.

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The question for the immediate future is whether the masters in the great established industries will recognise this non-parity of contracting powers and amend it. Co-partnership of one kind has already been voluntarily adopted by one or two firms, but it is not the co-partnership we are suggesting or the co-partnership demanded by the labour unions. What is sought is a co-partnership in which not the men as units or as groups are united in management and interest with their employers, but the unions as corporate bodies and guilds are associated in joint responsibility with the owners of capital. Any lesser forms of co-partnership than this will certainly fail, for the unions, having a wider object, will wreck them as they wrecked the co-partnership scheme of Baron Furness. A frank acceptance of the integral character of the unions and their right to an equal share in the responsibility of management in the businesses their members are engaged in is the only concession the masters can make that will solve, for our generation at least, the problem of labour unrest. The unions, on the other hand, thus admitted and recognised in the conduct of their industries, become—what they are not now—responsible bodies, approximating in spirit to the ancient guilds. It should never be forgotten that the guild system was a genuine Saxon invention, as native to our genius as our language. The true line of development of our trade unions is, therefore, most certainly in the direction of the restoration of the essential features of the guild system—the responsibility for skilled work, the discipline of its members, the disposition of its collective forces, and the joint control with their clients (employers in this instance) of the whole range of the industry. We commend this analysis of English industrialism as distinct from French Syndicalism to the attention of practical as well as theoretical students of the modern English labour movement.

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Two disclosures during the week have illuminated the motives of the Conservative party in supporting Mr. Lloyd George's Insurance Bill. Both are bad,

and one of them is a chimera. Almost needless to say, it is Mr. Garvin who has discovered the mare's nest. Nothing less than a mare's nest could have induced him to the assistance of a campaign obviously unpopular and obviously destructive of the scant remnant of the Lords' prestige. Writing in the "Observer" last Sunday, Mr. Garvin explains on high authority that if the Lords had rejected the Insurance Bill as drafted, Mr. Lloyd George had prepared a Bill, non-contributory in character, with a free State medical service, the whole to be paid for by an additional sixpence on the income tax. The credulity that swallowed the threat as serious is only equalled by the stupidity that rejected it as terrifying. Some high authority must surely have been indulging in the easy pleasure of pulling Mr. Garvin's leg. What earthly chance would Mr. Lloyd George have had of passing a Bill of this character? Why, it would have been met by the very difficulties that had no existence for his own Bill. It would have been popular in the country and unpopular in the House of Commons—two conditions that invariably prove fatal to any measure. His own Bill had the rare merit for a representative chamber (see the "Westminster Gazette") of being as much loved in Parliament as hated out of doors. The whole assumption of Mr. Garvin's noisy campaign is therefore proved to have been false. For the third time in succession he has fooled the Tories after having completely fooled himself.

* * *

Mr. Burdett-Coutts, M.P., however, has a more rational explanation of his party's attitude. The Liberals, it appears, hesitated for some weeks whether to make the scheme contributory or non-contributory. The Old Age Pensions Act had established a precedent for non-contribution which the Conservatives feared the Liberals would follow in the case of insurance. This precedent, once fixed, would have bound the Tories in their subsequent legislation as much as the Liberals. What was their relief, then, to discover that Mr. Lloyd George, after all, was not as red as he painted himself. They hailed the contributory character of the Insurance Bill as a concession made to themselves, and tumbled over the Liberals in their eagerness to pass it, lest perchance it should be withdrawn. All this is very illuminating on the subject of politics, the springs of which appear to be as foul as its works are devastating. But the reflection must naturally recur to anybody who has considered the subject of Insurance whether either of these two courses was inevitable. For ourselves we have maintained that neither a contributory nor a non-contributory scheme of insurance was to our liking. At least half a dozen alternative methods might be suggested as possibly superior to either. There was Mr. Webb's suggestion, for example, of the extension of the Ghent system by the provision to friendly and other societies of Grants in Aid. In this scheme the voluntary character of thrift would have been retained and encouraged, the Government would have paid only for work done, and the supervision of the voluntary bodies would have been annual instead of perennial. There was also the suggestion made first in these columns that the State should enter into competition with the existing provident societies, and by foregoing profits and discharging the cost of administration offer advantages to thrift that no private society could possibly offer. But the main approach to the question of sickness and unemployment was, in our view, the economic path of higher wages. Sickness and unemployment are not problems of the wealthy, they are problems of the poor. They owed their urgency to the simple fact that wages had gone down in recent years by 15 per cent. The remedy against them was therefore to regard them as symptoms and to attack their cause, namely, low wages. In leaving wages still declining, the Government has neglected a disease which will produce worse symptoms than pauperised sickness and pauperised unemployment. One of these days, at the present rate of progress, a Bill to Provide Bread will be necessary.

However, we frankly maintain that the Insurance Act, despite its passage and the immense sums already being expended upon it, will not work. We need not hedge prudently with the "Eye-Witness" and say, if the Act works England is doomed. It will not work. The doctors, no doubt, can be placated by the concession of their half-dozen points; but we have never relied upon them. Emphatically they do not know their own business or they would be clamouring not for six points but for one, a State medical service. If the doctors, for the sake of the fees, are prepared to convert professional into club practice for fifteen million of our people their fate as a great public profession is sealed. Their prestige will be gone and the certain remedy of the public will be to create a State service to displace the bounders and bunglers who submit to conditions making their art impossible. The extension of the powers of the existing Public Health Authorities—already, be it remembered, in control of 700 municipal hospitals, all free—will be an easy relief for our poor people from victimisation by doctors still painfully acquiring skill enough to attend the rich. In any event, therefore, we are prepared for the decision of the medical profession. If they decide to bolster up Mr. Lloyd George's rotten scheme by the sacrifice of their honour and the ends of their profession, the public will have its revenge sooner or later. If, however, they decide to kill the Bill, the honour of defeating the worst attempt ever made on English liberties will be theirs and the prestige with it. And for that the nation will know how to be grateful. But suppose they fail us, as we are quite prepared they should! Well, we ask anybody whether in the existing temper of the workmen a compulsory deduction for problematic benefits from the already dwindling sum of weekly wages is likely to be tolerated. Until the recent industrial "unrest" (blessed word!) we ourselves had some doubt whether workmen had not been bulldozed by their precious Parliamentary leaders into submission to anything. But the new spirit now being shown restores our confidence again. No, the pious Mr. Henderson, the jack-in-prospective-office Mr. J. R. MacDonald, the gurgling teetotaller Mr. Thomas (who had the impertinence to inform the railwaymen that he would not lift a finger to raise their wages if they spent the increase in drink), and all the wet-blankets and spoilsports the Labour movement is saddled with cannot now shake our conviction that at the first deduction from wages Mr. Lloyd George's house of cards (all knaves!) will tumble to the ground. Then will the Liberal Cabinet realise the price they have had to pay for his heavenly display. Once more the principle of democratic legislation, that it must be consented to by the people, will be affirmed.

A SONG OF A CHILD'S HAPPINESS.

I AM singing from my heart,
Let me now my muse impart:
Trumpet, be thou still; and lute
To my music be thou mute.

Golden dream and silver sleep
Make my slumbers calm and deep;
All my lifetime God doth bless,
So sing I of happiness.

Fancy peoples plain to me,
Meadow down and hilltop tree;
Wraiths and elves and ladies fair
Fancy places for me there.

Ev'ry thicket, blossom-strewn,
Mantled with the cloak of June,
Harbours fairies day and night,
Puck, and gnome, and flower-sprite.

Even pixy men for me
Live again upon the lea;
These I own, and nothing less,
So sing I of happiness.

RUTH PITTER.

Foreign Affairs.

By S. Verdad.

It was inevitable, as I had the pleasure of saying a few weeks ago, that the Caillaux Cabinet should fall: nothing was in doubt but its manner of falling. The incident was sufficiently dramatic. What it amounted to was that in the course of some queries put by members of the Senate Committee regarding the Morocco Treaty, M. de Selves, the Foreign Minister, was reluctantly compelled to state that his chief, M. Caillaux, had not told the truth on a certain occasion. M. de Selves then left the room, the sitting broke up, and M. Clemenceau, who put all the awkward questions, has had the honour of breaking yet another Cabinet. All sorts of "revelations" have since appeared. M. Jules Roche may as a rule be trusted; but he assures us that he has not told us all he knows. Personally, however, I think further concealment is useless. M. Caillaux has had good friends in France, Germany, and England; and we have shielded him to a sufficient extent.

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I hinted on this page a few weeks ago that M. Caillaux was not precisely a success: that he was negotiating with Germany behind the back of his own Foreign Minister; and that on one occasion he made a reference to a German loan which staggered a good many people who were present. Everyone acquainted with French politics knows that M. Caillaux is an exceedingly clever financier; and he devoted part of his financial talents to the exceedingly unpopular Income Tax Bill, which, if it ever becomes an Act, will become an Act in opposition to the wishes of the majority of the French people. Now, long ago, when it became apparent that Germany was going to make demands on France, M. Caillaux thought of turning the inevitable negotiations to his own advantage: he was, and is, an ambitious man. When he came into power in June last he had the game in his own hands. It was his object to give away part of the Congo in return for what France actually possessed, viz., control over Morocco; and it was his object also to see that the financial schemes in which he was interested did not lose by the transaction.

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It may seem strange to us, perhaps, that a Prime Minister could possibly stoop to what we might be inclined to regard, and rightly, as a somewhat dubious financial transaction. Impecunious Prime Ministers, however, have not been unknown even in this country; but secret party funds are all but unknown in France. If we had a list of Cabinet Ministers and understrappers (British) who have from time to time been "assisted" by doles from our secret party funds we could peruse a document full of what the modern journalist would call human interest. It would, I think, be in the interests of public morality to have such a list published; but our libel laws are carefully drawn up with a view to such a contingency. If a French edition of *THE NEW AGE* ever comes out, however, I can promise a very interesting article on this important topic, with special reference to Pittsburg.

* * *

Well, as American dollars do not flow freely into Paris for the purpose of bolstering up Cabinets and party organisations, and as the national beverage is certainly not cocoa, French Ministers occasionally recoup themselves by helping their financial friends. It thus happens that we have Panama and Congo scandals, apart altogether from innumerable instances of hole-and-corner trickery on a much smaller scale. The present affair is likely to blow over; for I do not think that any of those who participated in it have actually brought themselves within the reach of the law, though I should be glad to find myself disproved on this point. M. Caillaux and his supporters were undoubtedly risking a good deal in acting as they did. In connection with the Congo affair they relied upon Germany more

than they did on England, and this in itself might have brought about serious trouble. For nearly all the other members of the French Cabinet were opposed to giving away so much of the Congo, just as they were bitterly opposed to negotiating under the menace of the cruiser at Agadir.

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I have already referred to the contradictory instructions sent to M. Jules Cambon at Berlin. This information, I think, was known to three London newspapers, but it was first publicly mentioned in these columns; and it was high time. There is another incident which I think may as well be made public now as later on. When it became clear in diplomatic circles that M. Caillaux and his precious followers were sniffing at the Entente Cordiale and angling instead for an alliance with Germany, our Ambassador in Paris, Sir Francis Bertie, lodged a strong protest. I am informed by a friend at the Elysée, on whose word I can rely, that there was a somewhat painful scene, the persons interested being M. Fallières, Sir Francis Bertie, M. Caillaux, and one or two others. Taxed by the President with trying to alter the whole foreign policy of France without consulting more responsible authorities, M. Caillaux became very angry, and in the course of subsequent conversation said: "*Quant à l'entente cordiale, je m'en fiche!*" thereby showing a frame of mind which was not precisely calculated to improve his position. In fact, we can hardly say with strict accuracy that M. Caillaux resigned. M. Fallières, angry at being kept in the dark over the Morocco Treaty and his Prime Minister's financial plans, made up his mind that another Cabinet would have to be formed, and that M. Caillaux should have nothing to do with its formation.

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M. Fallières, I may add, had another motive for coming to this decision. If he had not done so a country which is at present on very friendly terms with France would have been greatly displeased, and would have made it very hot for the Quai d'Orsay in connection with the negotiations now in progress with Madrid over Morocco. An unmistakable intimation to this effect was conveyed verbally to M. Fallières and others likely to be interested.

* * *

Such is the position up to Saturday night, when this article is being written for expectant printers' devils to take away. M. Poincaré has been entrusted with the task of forming a Cabinet; and, as this will in any case be merely a transition Cabinet, he should have no particular difficulty in doing so. Despite the angry feeling in France against Germany, it is recognised on all sides that it will be better in the end to pass the Morocco Agreement, and this will probably be done at an early date unless a political miracle takes place. When the Morocco Treaty is passed it is exceedingly probable that we shall have another Cabinet, headed, perhaps, by M. Aristide Briand, with M. Delcassé as Foreign Minister.

* * *

When speaking of M. Delcassé, it is worth while mentioning an unreported utterance of his regarding the position of the Foreign Minister. He recently expressed the view that the Foreign Minister of a country should be practically a permanent official in order that there might be continuity in the foreign policy. It is gratifying to have this point recognised by a man in M. Delcassé's position; but it has been recognised de facto for years. The foreign policy of nearly every country is influenced to an enormous extent by the permanent officials at the Foreign Offices, and only to a slight—a comparatively slight—degree by the actual Foreign Minister. Just one word more this week: the days of our "splendid isolation" are past for ever—if this is too strong a term, I will say that they are past for an indefinite period; we stand or fall with France. And the foreign policy of Germany will not be influenced by the present Reichstag elections.

Opening a Close Borough.

By Kosmo Wilkinson.

"THE leading journal"; "the representative of the Government in the Press"; "the organ of the City"—all these expressions, during most of the nineteenth century's first half, were universally employed to denote the "Times," which, in every department of national life or interest, foreign as well as domestic, spoke with an authority not even remotely approached by the scribes—clever as many of them were—who then fostered the infancy of the penny Press. With J. I. Delane for editor, Mowbray Morris as manager, and—during the many years before his fall, the commercially omniscient and in matters east of Temple Bar omnipotent—Mr. Samson for its financial spokesman, Printing House Square filled a place among the great powers of the world really comparable with that which the classical antiquity possessed in the Delphic Oracle. Even during some time later than the palmy period now specified the utterances of the "Times," more or less upon every subject, emphatically and invariably upon everything to do with foreign policy, were invested abroad with an official significance. That, indeed, was partly due to other causes than the first-rate brains and rare capacity for effectively instructing or browbeating by turn the public, then domiciled in the editorial rooms of Blackfriars. Our external relations during the most eventful of those years were controlled by the Canningite tradition and the Palmerstonian management; Palmerston, indeed, had also the "Morning Post" for his friend; his most important confidences were always given first, if not exclusively, to the "Times," whose rescripts had, therefore, the weight of Treasury communications.

In the condition of things now described no one ever dreamt of complaining that the taxpayers were kept too much in the dark about their rulers' relations with foreign States. Every contributor to the cost of Imperial administration knew that the intelligent application of his faculties to the study of the one daily print, then practically ubiquitous, would take him as much behind the scenes as if he were a Cabinet Minister; should he ever want more, did not the M.P. for the borough where he lived exist for the purpose of interpellating the Treasury Bench on points of public moment generally, as well as of particular concern to the more important among those who sent him to St. Stephen's? The average M.P. of the earlier Victorian epoch lived much more in the bosom of his constituency than does his twentieth century successor. Any points left doubtful by a Minister's declaration or by the newspapers' communiqué, both elector and elected felt a common interest in clearing up.

Palmerston is very generally, as has been done here, coupled with Delane, but was far from monopolising Delane's attention. "What is your real opinion of Delane?" asked Disraeli of the late Lord Granville. "I think," came the rejoinder, "I would sooner not answer that question till Delane is dead." As a fact, throughout his whole career Disraeli's relations with the powers of Printing House Square were closer than so far even his latest biographer has shown himself aware; at the beginning of his official life he passed his word that the paper which had published his Runnymede letters might always count upon receiving from him the earliest available intelligence. The fulfilment of that promise caused much disgust and bitterness to the accredited Conservative organs, but was maintained loyally to the last. Nor during many years could the penny Press carry its organisation to a point which, in the department of international news, could threaten the Walter agency with serious competition.

When that rivalry had established itself the loss was less to the newspaper than to its readers, and, indeed, the whole public at large. At first and for a long while Printing House Square suffered not the slightest loss of prestige. Indeed, till a comparatively recent date

the most circumstantially sensational of the chief newspapers' announcements were not taken seriously before receiving something like confirmation by "Price Threepence" from Blackfriars. To-day millions of tongues setting forth newspaper knowledge or opinion perplex and deafen rather than instruct. That last they cannot possibly do, because the first object for the journalist is less concerned to record the world's contemporary history than to grind his own axe. Hence, shortly before his death, so level-headed and clearly-seeing a judge as the late Sir Charles Dilke could say: "As things are, the existing development of the penny Press cannot but make it, in all places and at all times, a danger to the peace of nations as well as a misrepresentative of their terms of intercourse and of their mutual feelings."

With a countless host of broadsheets, in their mad or mercenary competition with each other, darkening counsel or perverting knowledge, the public itself at last recognises that, if a closer touch is to be established between itself and those who do its business abroad, the Press must not be taken into account.

Under these circumstances the Prime Minister's promised inquiry into Civil Service promotion cannot but raise hope of some definite satisfactory result, and incidentally should certainly gratify a reasonable wish for details showing whether, as things are, our ambassadorial staffs throughout the world are in every department manned not less effectively than those of our Continental neighbours. A first-rate diplomacy, as the late Sir M. E. Grant-Duff used to say, is as much a need of the time as a double or quadruple first-rate navy. The investigation promised by Mr. Asquith to Mr. Snowden cannot but be preliminary to debates which will draw out, in both Houses, every really relevant particular, as well as the immense amount of practical intimacy with the whole subject-possessed by members of both Houses who themselves, at home and abroad, have gone through every part of the official mill. Managed by men skilled in sifting evidence, resolved on arriving at truth, and themselves at some time or other having in many cases served an apprenticeship to diplomacy, the discussion will reveal from personal instance the social and pecuniary causes of that wastage in official aptitude which Continental Governments manage to avoid and which thus results in every department of their foreign offices being more effectively served than our own at not much more than half the cost.

With us, as matters are, the Secretary of State can, if he will, dispensing with all credentials of fitness, nominate whomsoever he may choose to any position within his province. Practically, of course, public opinion and the limited application of the competitive principle to the department presided over by Sir Edward Grey prevent this being done. Still, in England, diplomacy and all its allied employments do not form to-day, as in France, a career open to all talents. It will be for the pending debate to show whether in England some further step in that direction cannot now be taken and our Foreign Office handicap removed from the best brains and the most severely tested capacity of the Service when they are not backed by considerable private means and historic surname, or by great and pushful connections.

DAWN AND NOON.

THE Dawn, with silver-sandalled feet,
Creeps coyly o'er the hills;
A bird calls sweetly to its mate,
With joyous little trills.
The sound floats softly o'er the battle plain,
Where wounded men gasp out their lives in pain.

The streamlet tinkles through the fields,
The noonday sun's effulgent rays,
Beam down on nodding daffodils—
A bird lifts up its voice in praise. . . .
The song is drowned, ere it is well begun—
The singer shattered by a sportsman's gun.
WILLIAM J. ELLIOTT.

Manifesto on Fabian Policy.

Issued by the Fabian Reform Committee.

THE Labour Movement has recently forced itself in a startling manner upon public attention, and in view of the latest developments in its tactics and principles, all affiliated units of the Labour Party should reconsider their methods and policy. This more especially applies to the Fabian Society, which has hitherto pursued a policy merely adequate to a movement in its early stages.

Thirty years ago there was no Labour Party in this country, and, consequently, various Socialist societies were formed in order to give political expression to the Labour Movement. In the absence of such a party the Fabian Society determined to carry out its programme through the medium of any available political organisation, and, by a process of permeation, educated public opinion, made Liberalism progressive, and assisted in creating a great political Labour Party.

The Labour Party is now created and Fabians must consider whether this process of permeation, which renders rival political parties popular, is assisting or damaging it. In effect, is the Fabian Society now justified in continuing its old policy, which gives an undeserved popularity to Liberalism, in so far as it withdraws support from the Labour Party to which it is affiliated?

The result of this policy has been the introduction by other political parties of semi-Socialist measures, which could have been introduced more effectively by the party which originated their basic ideas.

At the same time, Fabian Socialism must guard against a revulsion from the policy of expediency to one of mere formal consistency. Some Fabians consider they are being of value to the Labour Movement if they stand for "superior Socialism" in all its purity, acting as critics of any party which attempts to make Socialism a matter of practical politics.

Recent events have forced the Labour Movement to take serious counsel with itself. Whilst increased wealth has been accompanied by an increased cost of living and an inadequate rise in wages, Trade Unionism, irritated by the action of the judicial Bench towards its political expression, has adopted such vigorous industrial methods that it is now subject to many threats of limitation of the right to strike.

At this vital moment in its history Trade Unionism has not completely risen to the occasion. The Trade Union Congress has not given that definite lead to the movement which was called for. There are too many unions and too little unity. Indeed, sectionalism is its great weakness.

Lack of discipline has been evident in the sectional miners' strikes, and above all in the Irish railway strike, which, together with the contradictory and unco-ordinated evidence given before the Royal Commission, were largely responsible for the somewhat disappointing nature of the Report that followed.

Meanwhile, the Labour Party in Parliament is considerably hampered by the nature of its composition. It is a physical impossibility to give an adequate attention to national politics and carry out the necessary duties of a Trade Union official at the same time. This means, in some cases, a hesitating policy and lack of force in the party's criticism of legislation.

Intimately connected with the personnel of the Labour Party is the general impression under which the public is at present labouring that Socialism is a working-class affair. It will not be possible to convert all classes in this country to a belief in Socialist principles if the Labour Party which, after all, is the chief vehicle of Socialist achievement, is allowed to remain simply an expression of working-class discontent. The Labour Party would be greatly benefited by the inclusion in its midst of individuals with a fresh outlook, a broader vision, a different education, and a greater sense of proportion.

As a matter of fact, Fabianism has been gradually getting more and more out of touch with Trade Union-

ism, just at the moment when these industrial organisations need all the assistance and friendly criticism that they can secure. It would probably be true to say that Fabianism is a more negligible quantity in the Labour Movement now than ever before.

There is a large number of middle-class Socialists in this country, but with the exception of a few who have joined the I.L.P. and a very few who have joined the Fabian Society, they have never been secured as active participants in the Labour and Socialist Movement. This class, if it were organised, might be able to contribute to the Labour Party those very characteristics which it at present needs, and, if included as an integral part of that party, could assist in removing the idea that Labour is entirely a class movement.

It is equally important that the rapidly-growing Socialist opinion in the universities, which will shortly find expression in an Inter-University Federation, should be directed to the definite support of the Labour Party. Industrial labour will benefit by the broader outlook of the university Socialist, whilst academic labour will gain in force and reality by an intimate knowledge with the problems of Trade Unionism.

Labour has been unsuccessful both in Kilmarnock and Keighley, and the reason is not far to seek. There is some force at work in the Liberal Party which is allowing it to achieve a spurious popularity amongst the progressive forces of the country, with the result that actual adherents of the Labour Party, in order to avoid the return of the Tory candidate, will reject their own representative and support Liberals. This means that Labour will have the utmost difficulty in winning any new seats, and will be in danger of stagnating.

There are many people in the Liberal Party with Radical or Socialist tendencies who, as we have said, have given the party the appearance of adequate sympathy with the workers of the country. They assist that party to introduce semi-Socialist measures upon an individualistic basis, and deprive the Labour Party of much of its driving power by enabling the Liberals to carry out many of its proposals in a debased form.

The attitude of the Liberals during the recent strikes has served to reveal their real position. Like the Conservatives, they are only sympathetic with the workers so long as they can retain the fundamental principles of individualism in society and industry. Their measures, which are merely concerned with the effects of our industrial system, and not with the causes of social ills, have done little to benefit the worker, owing to the increased cost of living.

If the influence wielded by Fabians inside and outside Parliament, which in large measure has inspired the Parliamentary efforts and consequent electoral success of Liberalism, had been devoted entirely to the Labour Party, the size, the personnel, the ability, and the legislative value of that party would have been improved and increased.

The policy of permeation which has characterised the Fabian Society was worthy of unqualified praise during the early years of the Socialist Movement. It is now worse than useless—indeed, it is harmful to the Labour Party which the society helped to create. The following are the outstanding defects in its present policy:—

- (a) By permitting Fabians to assist and belong to other political bodies the Labour Movement is deprived of a new ability, education, and breadth of outlook.
- (b) The society is supposed to represent middle-class Socialism, but, because it is content to work by permeating other parties, middle-class Socialists have not realised the necessity of breaking with the Liberal Party.
- (c) It is responsible for the unmerited popularity of Liberalism, and has produced the non-Socialist industrial measures of recent years.
- (d) In so far as the society's support of the Labour Party remains half-hearted, it neglects valuable opportunities of correcting the prevalent misconception that the aim of that party is a purely working-class concern, and is largely responsible for such hesitation as caused the loss of Kilmarnock and Keighley.

- (e) The advice which it gives to the Labour Party lacks such conviction as would come from an affiliated unit of that organisation pursuing a straightforward policy. The Labour Party has not given the slightest attention to its advice upon the Insurance Bill. If the Fabian Society would only become an integral part of the party, instead of lecturing it from above, and if there were no question about the consistency of its actions and policy, Labour executives would give more consideration to its suggestions.

We therefore recommend that :—

- (1) So far as political action is concerned, the Fabian Society should admit to its membership only supporters of the Labour Party, to which it is affiliated, and so place at its disposal the ability, the characteristics and ideas which Fabians now distribute broadcast.
- (2) It should cease to appear exclusive, and so make a great effort to attract middle-class Socialists into that party.
- (3) It should, at the same time, continue to encourage that body of expert opinion which is its main glory at the present time.
- (4) It should, by its undivided support, gain the adherence of the Labour Party to a broader, more Socialist, and more rapid policy.
- (5) It should expose the hollowness of Liberal democracy, and so remove all possibility of doubt as to the duty of Labour supporters at three-cornered elections.
- (6) It should smash the idea of class in the Labour Movement.
- (7) It should encourage a closer alliance between the I.L.P. and the Fabian Society by the creation of joint committees wherever possible.
- (8) It should refuse to assist Liberalism publicly, even when there is little prospect of three-cornered elections, for this refusal will force the creation of local Labour Parties.

We issue this manifesto hoping that it will receive the serious consideration of every member of the Fabian Society. We have found already that many of the Fabian Societies have given support to this new policy, and we should be glad to send a speaker wherever possible to open a discussion on the subject.

In view of the fact that the Labour Party is the only party which has given a complete support to the struggle of women for economic and political liberty, any attempt to bring about a closer alliance between the society and the Labour Party should meet with the strong approval of the society.

The following resolution is to be moved at the Labour Party Conference in January, and it is essential that the Fabian Society should be prepared to carry it out if passed : "That this conference is of opinion that, in view of recent events, any Socialist organisation affiliated to the Labour Party should make every effort to secure that its members support that party and no other political party."

Only by the policy outlined above do we believe that the Fabian Society can maintain and increase its value to Socialism in this country. There should never be the least question or suspicion about Fabian tactics and policy. It should not be possible for Socialists to abstain from declaring themselves merely because they believe that they can carry out the objects of Socialism by the process of permeation in the Liberal Party.

For the Socialist Movement has now achieved so great an importance that its future progress depends upon a national appeal to all classes by a party composed of all classes. It is only by such a policy that Socialism can be made more attractive and more intelligent, and the Labour Party better able to cope with the ability of other political parties and to keep ahead of them. The old idea that a Fabian must be one who stood for the policy of "getting something done *somehow*" through any party in power, must give way to the policy of "getting something done *properly*" through the Labour Party. The old policy is a hindrance to the progress of the party, which needs vigorous support

and complete confidence if it is ever to "get anything done at all."

We have our great National Party; it is our duty to help to make it worthy of the contest upon which it must enter.

On behalf of the Fabian Reform Committee : Henry H. Schloesser (chairman); Ethel Bentham (vice-chairman); Marion Phillips (vice-chairman); Boyd Dawson (treasurer); W. C. Burns; Christine Challenger; F. E. Dawson; Lenora M. Ervine; St. John Ervine; Aline Fermor; Jack Gibson; Alwyn Lloyd; F. James Matheson; F. J. Osborn; J. Pointer, M.P.; Margaret Schloesser; Egerton Swann; Clifford Allen (hon. secretary), 41, Yale Court, West Hampstead, N.W.

The following members of the Labour Party have written expressing their approval of the scheme : J. Keir Hardie, M.P.; F. W. Jowett, M.P.; J. Pointer, M.P.; Philip Snowden, M.P.

November 28, 1911.

The Peril of Large Organisations.

By Arthur J. Penty.

II.

IN my first article I analysed the evils of large organisations as they are found in limited liability companies. This week I intend to show how parallel evils exist in bureaucratic departments. For it matters little whether large organisations are owned privately or by the community : so long as they are large similar evils tend inevitably to develop. It is true that the limited liability company exists solely for profit, whereas with public departments profit is not the primary consideration. Nevertheless a public department must show a satisfactory balance-sheet, and all kinds of sacrifices may have to be made to do this. However, I am willing to grant for the sake of argument that the motive of profit would disappear were our large industries nationalised; though the fact that every proposal in national and municipal administration must first be endorsed by financial experts would lead one to believe otherwise. That would be a gain, but it would not get rid of the muddle-headedness which results from ignorance. And there is no reason to suppose that a public body would be less muddle-headed than a private company if it controlled an industry. A public body consists of men who are elected primarily because they are glib talkers. They may or may not have any special knowledge of any industry which they profess to manage. As a rule they have not, and so the policy of muddle runs through all they do. All the evils which are found among the employers of limited companies have their counterpart in bureaucratic departments. Just to the extent that promotion goes by attracting attention rather than by seniority, the motives of jealousy and pandering to those in authority enter the public service, while in so far as promotion goes by seniority a certain slackness is inevitable. I am not now saying that there are not conscientious men in the public service. I know there are plenty. But as I pointed out last week, there are in all large organisations men who make personal success their primary consideration in life, and who are willing to sacrifice everything to it. These men are the danger, for they are extraordinarily successful. What is apparent to everyone of their co-workers is not at all apparent to those who control them. And so the public interest tends to get sacrificed. It is the rock on which Collectivism must flounder. A theory of social reform which leaves the best elements of human nature out of account as a disturbing factor in organisation pays the necessary penalty of finding itself at the mercy of the worst elements.

Like all evils which are organic, this particular one is not very easy to combat, and just as private companies have had recourse to "speeding up" to check the evils consequent upon organisation on a false and inhuman basis, so public bodies in order to retain control over their too cumbersome organisations have had

recourse to what is termed "efficiency," which reduced to practice means that endless forms are filled up on every conceivable detail—a system which occupies half the time of their staff, while allowing things to go on very much as before. Nay, it actually increases the evils which it set out to remedy, for it puts public bodies more and more in the hands of men who are bureaucratic by temperament. If "efficiency" really meant anything, it should mean vitalising of the machine, but "efficiency" in practice demoralises all who have to bear it. It is a kind of creeping paralysis which foreshadows senility. How could it be otherwise? The only way to get the best work out of men is, as I have already pointed out, to select the right men, give them responsibility, and trust them. Our public bodies go on the opposite assumption. In order to safeguard themselves against possible corruption they divide and sub-divide responsibility. It is thus they destroy initiative and turn all who could help them into mere time-servers. The fact is that large departments find themselves between the devil and the deep blue sea. Red tape or corruption—this is the choice with which public bodies are faced. It does not need much insight to see that something is wrong fundamentally. It is a dilemma from which there is no escape.

Higher salaries will avail nothing. It is customary nowadays for reformers to attempt to prove their magnanimity (*à la* Webb) by advocating larger salaries for officials, especially for those who are already enjoying fairly fat ones. They argue that if the public service is to command the best ability public bodies must be prepared to pay salaries sufficiently high to attract the best brains in the community. A greater error was never promulgated. It sounds plausible, but it is not true. There is one way and one way only to attract the best men—and that is to recognise them when you meet them. There are always plenty of capable men who would be glad of the salaries which public bodies pay. Only they do not apply for public positions. Experience has taught them that public bodies prefer men who are bureaucrats by temperament—and men who are interested in realities loathe bureaucracy. It is impossible to remedy the evils of bureaucracy by getting bigger bureaucrats.

I said that the choice of public bodies is between red tape and corruption. If rumour is to be credited red tape of itself breeds a new form of corruption. In this way certain heads of departments, having discovered that their own standing and consequently their salary is dependent upon the number of assistants they control, set out by every means in their power to increase the number of their assistants by increasing the amount of unnecessary work to be done. It is an impossible thing to prove, but as the rumour is so persistent I think there must be something in it.

And this brings me to the greatest evil of bureaucracy—its tendency to get out of touch with the national life. In Germany I am told that in architecture the student must make up his mind at the commencement of his career whether he looks forward to private practice or to entering the public service; for two different trainings obtain. If he intends to enter the public service he must make it his first concern to decorate himself with degrees and certificates. These have a strong appeal for public bodies, but no practitioner will look at him. If, on the other hand, he qualifies for private practice he ignores all these, and then public bodies will not recognise him. We are rapidly moving in the same direction. A gulf is growing up between the public service and the world outside which yearly becomes more difficult to bridge. Men in the public service tend to become a class apart. Everywhere in-breeding is encouraged by public bodies. They are so afraid of making mistakes that appointments are rarely given to any but those who have been trained within the system. It is well known that our best public departments are those which are the newest. This is the explanation. Unless a constant stream of new blood is being brought into the public service from outside a steady degeneration is inevitable. It is the only way to guard against fossilisation. But our public bodies

encourage this process of fossilisation. They call it "efficiency."

I may here take the opportunity of controverting the opinion of Mr. Bernard Shaw, given in a lecture recently to the Fabian Society, as to the reason why bureaucracy was unpopular. Mr. Shaw gave it as his opinion that bureaucracy was unpopular because the official acted uncivilly as a superior person—a defect, he argued, which would disappear in proportion as we could succeed in establishing social equality. I don't think Mr. Shaw could have had many dealings with public officials or he would not have made such a statement. My own experience is just the reverse. All my life I have been brought into close relations with officials—it comes as part of one's occupation, and I can say that I have always found officials extremely obliging. Nevertheless, I hate bureaucracy. I hate it because of the feeling of helplessness when one comes into contact with it. When one deals with a public official one feels that one is not dealing with a man who is responsible for his actions, but with an invisible and intangible tyranny which ruthlessly disregards circumstances. The public official, when a case is put before him, will as often as not take a reasonable view of things, but he will add, the regulation is so-and-so. "You can make an application for exemption, if you like," he will say; but experience teaches you it is hopeless, and you submit with mixed feelings of anger and despair. An experience of mine sums up the situation.

A little time ago I was consulted respecting the purchase of a site upon which it was proposed to erect a certain building. I discovered that the particular requirements of this building could only be met by violating the letter though not the spirit of a certain bye-law. I therefore approached the L.C.C. to find out whether it would be possible to obtain exemption from this regulation. The official I saw—Mr. Smith, let us call him—advised me to make an application for exemption to the Council. "How long shall I have to wait for a decision?" I asked. "Three or four months," was the reply. I told him that that would not meet the case as the option on the site was only for a month. "Very well," he said, "you go into the next office and ask to see Mr. Jones. If he agrees to it it will be all right; but don't tell him I sent you." I saw Mr. Jones and he in turn sent me on to Mr. Brown with similar instructions not to say he sent me. I then saw Mr. Brown, and he sent me back to Mr. Smith with exactly the same instructions, adding, in turn, "Don't tell him I sent you." I had completed the circle. All three agreed that the request was a reasonable one, and yet not one dared to take the responsibility. They were all afraid lest their decision should be over-ruled. It is this kind of thing which is so detestable about bureaucracy, and when Mr. Webb tells us that under Socialism every man will be an official, one can only exclaim, "God help us."

Mention has been made of the loss of personal identity which comes about through the growth of large organisations. In this connection attention should be drawn to the large element of luck which determines the lives of those whose lives are spent in them. The mere accident of the particular office or department in which a youth is first placed will determine his whole future. The location means everything. Should he be fortunate and find himself in close proximity to his chief he will probably rise rapidly. If, on the other hand, he is placed in a subordinate department he will get lost sight of and only crawl along—no matter how much ability he may possess. I am well aware that this kind of thing happens all through life. The point is, that larger organisations increase the difficulty, for in large organisations a man is bound to the machine. Closely allied with the foregoing problem, which presents itself to the individual owing to his loss of identity, is the opposite evil of the sudden emergence into a position of importance of some individual altogether unfitted for the responsibilities which are thrust upon him. When any new development takes place it not infrequently happens that the "man on the spot," as he is called, finds himself gradually floated up into some very

important position for which he has no real qualifications, and would never have been appointed had the development been foreseen. It was to counteract dangers of this sort that the "Holmes circular" was issued. Some local teacher with no wide grip of education becomes by accident a local inspector. The system grows, and he becomes chief inspector with a whole army of men under him. Many provincial towns are cursed with bad traditions which have originated in this way.

The same kind of thing is always happening when official architects are appointed. Surveyors, instead of architects, get appointed, and bad traditions get established in consequence. It came about in this way. There is a borough surveyor who looks after the roadmaking, drainage, etc. Little buildings are put into his hands to save expense, it is supposed. He always does it badly; but then, as nearly all public work is badly designed, and his is no worse than the rest, it escapes criticism. Little by little an architectural department with bad traditions grows up under him. Some assistant who has worked in this department is made city architect—though his whole training is that of a surveyor. The same thing happens nearly everywhere—where architects' departments are created. Sometimes a stray assistant who understands the art finds his way into such offices, and better work is turned out. But it is quite exceptional. This is the danger which lies ahead of town planning. The surveyor-become-architect will get the work to do, and the result will be as ugly as ever.

In all these things we see the growth of bureaucracy, the growth of vested interests in things wrong and bad and which continue in spite of opposition or criticism. A private office which turns out bad work exists only for a time; but a department with a bad tradition in it is a permanent institution. In a matter of this kind the difficulty of reform is manifest. Clearly no one but an architect would know what is wrong and could carry through a reform. The tragedy of the situation is that he alone of the public would never be allowed his say. He stands disqualified as an interested person.

I Gather the Limbs of Osiris.

By Ezra Pound.

VIII.

CANZON: OF THE TRADES AND LOVE.

Manning, in his "Scenes and Portraits," compares Dante's similes, similes like those of the arsenal at Venice, or of the hoar frost, to the illuminated capital letters in mediæval manuscript. Daniel in the following canzon has produced the same effect, and solely by suggestion, by metaphor that is scarce metaphor, by suggestive verbs; thus in stanza I he makes his vignette in the shop of the joiner and finisher, in II the metal-worker's shop with a glimpse through the open window; in III the church, and in the last lines of it: "I love her more than one who should give me Lucerne," he puts in perhaps a woman, with the light of the altar candles about her, paying dues to the ecclesiastical suzerain; in IV the low-lying fields, where the grain is fostered by the river-flush; in V Rome, of the church and empire; in VI the suggestion is fainter, though it may be of a farm hand working in a grey, barren stretch of field. I have translated it badly even if my idiom does mean about the same as the Provençal.

The last line on "Moncli n'Audierna" has given rise to a good deal of fruitless conjecture. Obviously Arnaut cites them as a pair of famous lovers, just as he cites Paris and Helen in his third canzon, but no such lovers are to be found either in classical myth or in romance tradition.

Turning, however, to Virgil's ninth eclogue I find the following lines:—

Line 10.—*Omnia carminibus vestrum servasse Menalcæan.*

M. Audieras, et fama fuit; sed carminia tantum, etc.
and line 44:

*Quid, quæ te pura solum sub nocte canentem
Audieram?*

Given these lines in modern print, one would advance scarce further; Arnaut had been, however, to a monastic school: he knew some Latin; he knew not only of Paris and Helen but of Atalanta and Meleagar, though only one of their names is given in Ovid's account of the hunting through Caledon. His Latin was, let us say, no better than mine—learning for learning's sake had not appealed to him. His Latin text was not only in miniscule manuscript but it was full of all manner of abbreviations, and in the matter of unusual proper names—like *Menalcas*—the scribe would have been more than usually prone to go wrong.

This eclogue is not over easy to read. "*Menalcas*" appears in three different case forms—"an," "as," "a." The content of the eclogue is very like that of a Provençal canzon; parts of it are almost pure Provençal in the matter of vocabulary. It would have charmed by being not too unfamiliar. One more detail: the "M" in line 11, which stands for the speaker, *Moeris*, is not unlike the "N" which is Provençal for "*donna*," or "*lady*." The parts of the verb *audio*, in lines 11 and 45, both begin with capital letters; in both places the final consonant, "s" or "m," would or might have been written above the "a," with nothing to indicate whether it fell before or after. Translating on this hypothesis without too much regard to the Latin syntax, with which Arnaut would have been much less familiar than he was with the Latin vocabulary, we get, in the first case, something like this: "*Monalca*, or *Menacla* (or some such person), served with songs (all, yours, his, in all things), the lady *Audierna* or *Audieras*"; and in the second: "What, thou alone 'neath the clear night singing, *Audierna*." "*Audiart*" is, of course, perfectly good Provençal; de Born and others mention a lady of that name, so that if Arnaut had seen the first part of the name he might easily have mistaken it for a Latin form or variation; in any case, even supposing he had read it correctly and forgotten the spelling in the book, the transition was not beyond the bounds of the possible. At least, it is no worse a mistake than that by which "*Sir Sagamore* the unbridled" becomes "*Sir Sagamour* the desirous." I make the suggestion for what it is worth. The song is as follows:—

I.

Though this measure quaint confine me,
And I chip out words and plane them,
They shall yet be true and clear
When I finally have filed them.
Love glosses and gilds them knowing
That my song has for its start
One who is worth's hold and warrant.

II.

Each day finer I refine me
And my cult and service strain them
Toward the world's best, as ye hear,
"Hers" my root and tip have styled them.
And though bitter winds come blowing,
The love that rains down in my heart
Warmeth me when frost's abhorrent.

III.

To long masses I resign me,
Give wax-lights and lamps, maintain them
That God win me issue here.
Tricks of fence? Her charm's beguiled them.
Rather see her, brown hair glowing;
And her body fine, frail art,
Than to gain *Lucerna* for rent!

IV.

Round her my desires twine me
'Till I fear lest she disdain them.
Nay, need firm love ever fear?
Craft and wine, I have exiled them.

Yet her high heart's overflowing
Leaves my heart no parchèd part;
Lo, new verse sprouts in the current.

V.

If they'd th' empire assign me
Or the Pope's chair, I'd not deign them
If I could not have her near.
My heart's flames have so high piled them,
If she'll not, ere th' old year's going
Kiss away their deadly smart,
Dead am I and damned, I warrant.

VI.

Though these great pains so malign me
I'd not have love's powers restrain them
—Though she turn my whole life drear—
See, my songs have beamed and tiled them.
Yes, love's work is worse than mowing,
And ne'er pains like mine did dart
Through Monclis for Audierent.

VII.

I, Arnaut, love the wind, doing
My hare-hunts on an ox-cart,
And I swim against the torrent.

Art and Drama.

By Huntly Carter.

"In Greece at one time," says Professor Stanley Hall, "the drama was a form of religion, the theatre a temple. At the Dionysia and the Panathenia tragedy trod the heights of Olympus. The dramatists wrote of the gods, the actors spoke of themselves as the survivors of the gods, and adorned the temple with their masks after each performance. Homer, Hesiod, Æschylus ascended supreme heights in search of the ideal and of truth. The Greek theatre performed the highest function of the theatre, it held up heroic examples to mankind. It revealed man's struggle with destiny, but it was a Titanic struggle."

* * *

There are many persons to-day who would welcome in the English playgoer the stern, unbending, reverent attitude of the Greek audience during this finest period of the Greek drama. Such an attitude is to be attained by the re-introduction of the lyrical element into drama and the poetic treatment of the cosmic theme expressed in the great symbolic character such as the "Master Builder," or in a number of characters making their effect in a dynamic group, such as "Rosmersholm." I do not contend that in doing this we must return to the Greeks and help ourselves to Greek traditions. I maintain, to the contrary, that we have no use whatever for the cumbersome machinery of the Greeks, just as we have none for the elementary makeshifts of the Tudor writers, metaphysical or other. Our age has produced one dramatist, at least, who has prepared the ground for an entirely new start. Ibsen has refashioned the drama and brought it to proportions undreamt of by the Greeks—while retaining many of those qualities which the Greeks prized. Probably Mr. Gilbert Murray (himself a professor of Greek) felt this when he predicted there is a generation coming which will approach Ibsen with a fresh mind, and feel anew the amazing power of his strange dramas, so idealistic within, so encased in prose and so bursting with pent-up poetry. He may have been aware that the plays of Ibsen are the work of a master contemplative, instinct with life at its intensest, and requiring a contemplative mood to follow and understand them. This is the mood that has to be created in the new generation. In order to foster this mood a new theatre is required.

* * *

Hitherto the plan for modern theatres has been largely influenced by two considerations—the box-office and public safety. For one or the other or both of these considerations the horse-shoe shape has prevailed, and the

embryonic three-sided stage, with its canvas scenery and false lighting, has flourished exceedingly. The plan I desire to see adopted is that of the circular theatre. This theatre may be any size you like, but the smaller the better, say with a seating capacity of five hundred persons. It may be constructed of any material you like—wood, stone, or steel. As no one is to see the interior of the theatre after the curtain has risen on the first act of the play, the interior may be as bare as you like. I would, however, stipulate that, where there are no interior decorations, the interior be all in black so treated as to produce a mood of contemplative expectancy.

* * *

The system I would adopt for seating the spectators is not the old-fashioned one of circles and galleries one above the other, but the new form of amphitheatre in which the spectators are massed together on the floor of the house, grouped, in this case, round the stage. The stage thus would occupy the centre of the interior, forming, as it were, an inner shell. This stage would be set round with transparent scenery decorated according to the new idea to add essential wideness of expression, lit entirely from the top by a new system of lighting. By means of this system the light would be thrown down in such a way that the scenery nearest the spectator would be rendered transparent, while that farthest from him would be made opaque. Thus the light would make for each spectator an aperture or window-like opening. To form a clear conception of this arrangement imagine passing down a very dark avenue and pausing to look into a room flooded with intense light. As the stage is meant to be symbolic, the scene will be symbolic. There will be just one or two or three symbols for each separate scene. If a garden, a tree centre; if a desert, a well centre; or if a bedroom, a bed centre. In this way the scenic or domestic symbol takes the centre of the stage, displacing the human symbol, who takes the rest. Everything and everybody in the scene would be related by the use of line and colour.

* * *

The stage would be made to descend so as to allow the scenes to be set below. The further advantages of this arrangement would be to do away with the use of the drop curtain, to remove the scene in its entirety at the close of the act, and so prevent the eminent persons who are supposed to be dead coming to life and simpering to the big drum. The scene and all it contains would disappear, and nothing would be left to the audience but the sound of the music issuing from the sunken orchestra to continue the action. The dressing-rooms would be either underneath the auditorium or running round the space behind it, and reached from the stage by an underground passage.

* * *

This, then, is the suggestion for the new theatre. The fundamental idea is to provide a simple organic structure (1) that will serve to foster the mood created by the drama, and so make the audience move in the same spiritual world as the actor; (2) that will develop the drama and be developed by the drama; (3) that will lead professionals to regard the actor's craft as an exalted mystery, by completely enclosing them in the stage-cell and giving them that cloistral seclusion which the conventional stage denies them; (4) that can be erected and run at a small cost, and could be, if necessary, as plentiful as pubs and picture-palaces; (5) that can be supported as the Church is supported, and so put on an economic level with that institution, and made free and democratic. When once the theatre is free as in the time of the Greeks it will be in sight of its divinity.

* * *

If the plan I suggest is generally adopted it will serve practically to sweep away the existing theatre and its horrors, leaving only such theatrical institutions standing as are necessary for the representation of plays illustrating the old theories of the drama—Greek, Roman, Mediæval, Renaissance, Restoration, and so on. It is as well to provide some early doors and emergency exits for history and archæology.



THE COMB.

Present-Day Criticism.

THERE are not many moods of Art. Admiration is one, hope is one, satire is one, humour is one; and, whenever a passion rules, there is a mood of art. Love is not one. Love is a phase of temperament, more or less ephemeral—it has no relation to truth; a man in love admires what he loves, though it be unadmirable, his hopes with regard to the object are no surer founded than a madman's, he is solemn as animals are solemn, and, if he regain humour, it is bitter according to the intensity of his former delusion. In a world that has degraded the word passion to describe the sexual whimsies of human beings, it is almost misleading to speak of a ruling passion as matter for art. But we shall not be misunderstood when we instance what is undoubtedly the ruling passion of the English people, their search for truth. The stock of the English is hardened by their desire for the truth. That they are credulous is inevitable, the defect of the truthful character.

* * *

The devil's advocate might plausibly claim for the realists in English fiction that they, having discovered certain lies, have sickened at these lies and would heal themselves and others by what they conceive to be the truth behind the lie. The reply is that these men prove themselves merely to have turned from lies, to be near to truth, and, still startled thereby, prove, by the very persons they choose to represent, that they are no guides to truth but raw learners of truth and liable themselves still to be deceived. It would be difficult to name a single contemporary realist who has achieved the creation of a true character; who has known how to develop a man or woman from the centre. The developments in modern realist novels are always fortuitous—apparently whatever the novelist happened to think of at the moment of writing. If we were to accuse these writers of deliberately planning their plots, that would be to imply that they were mad. They are not mad, but they are incompetent, they are learners of truth, not masters.

* * *

In Mr. Hardy's "Jude the Obscure" we are shown not characters but the whimsies of two persons; whimsies give way to new whimsies at the least external touch; the bidding of a platitude is sufficient to dictate the action of Mr. Hardy's Sue, and his Jude obeys every prompting but that of his own alleged temperament. They are not people at all, but a congeries of moods. The action seems to be invented from day to day in order to exhibit some fresh mood.

* * *

In Mr. Conrad's "Lord Jim" this contingency of the action is equally remarkable. Disbelieve Mr. Conrad, as one justifiably may, that the memory of that especial shipwreck cropped up in every city, village, settlement, and wherever the luckless Jim set foot, and the whole tale goes to pieces. Jim did not break up from self-contempt, but from morbid desperation brought about by the accidental circumstance of that precious yarn following him everywhere for years and years and years. We know that in real life it would have dropped. Jim, if he had failed to commit suicide instantly, would have lived the story down like any other man.

* * *

Mr. Wells' "Ann Veronica" caught fewer of the critics than the two books mentioned above. The atmosphere, as hectic, was less sustained. Mr. Wells cannot be, even in imaginative moods, a melancholy

man. He should not attempt to create a hectic atmosphere, related as that is to melancholy. Perhaps he meant to produce an air the reverse of hectic, something very vital, momentous. What he intended no two people agree about. But the result of his efforts to show life in the raw, as Mr. Douglas would say, is to give us an irritable and rampagious young lunatic whose actions, like those of the lachrymose Sue, depend upon the last remark addressed to her, or the last "advanced" platitude she has read. We move in such a whirl of feverish moods as leave us certain of nothing but that a living Ann would be tied up, married, or set to other hard work to keep her out of mischief. In fact, the solution was right—to marry her off: only Mr. Wells scarcely seized that solution in the way parents seize it, as a relief from and for a temporarily deranged young female.

* * *

The latest addition to the gallery of inconsequents, "Hilda Lessways," is also the most tiresome. This figure has no more character than a badly-fixed weather-vane. Its gyrations do not even follow the action invented for it by its creator—as when Mr. Bennett makes Hilda run out at midnight to question Clayhanger about the virtue of belief instead of the "thrill that ran downwards over her whole body": Ann Veroncia would have obeyed the obvious guidance of her author's pen. The fact is that Mr. Bennett's public, at their present stage, would not "stand for" more than a hint at what might have happened. Thrill, but go no further! is the mandate of the provincial libraries, and even sterner so of the American ones. So we get a figure that falsifies every calculation, even that of its author: as false as Hildas are in the flesh.

* * *

Yes, we do not deny that the prototypes of all these fictional characters may possibly be found in the flesh. We deny that they are persons, all the same. Very little more human than spooks, they tend to run to madness, violent or melancholy. They are untrue to human nature, and unworthy of any man's pen. To set them out as realistic representations of men and women is simply silly. The world would be one Bedlam if these morbid egotists were representative.

* * *

We need now in realist fiction men with psychic knowledge, in whom truth is settled, with whom truth is the ruling passion, upon whom everything that is untrue palls. If they deal with untruth, their treatment of it will detect it, and untruth detected is dead from that moment, though its glamour persist still awhile. Such realists as these may write nothing but romances; they will not, in any case, describe furniture like tradesmen, scenery like drunkards, moral and mental changelings like quacks, and toss us that for Realism.

* * *

We note with interest the "Times" review of Sir Hubert Parry's new book. We hope that the "Times" will in future practise its own teaching. "Good-natured tolerance of what is (or ought to be) known to be bad is the crying sin of much of English musical (THE NEW AGE adds—literary) life. We may be as catholic as we like within the limits of the good, but somewhere or other it is our duty to put our foot down; and the stamp and the strong language with which Sir Hubert puts his down deserve the widest imitation. Righteous anger is none too common a virtue; but criticism without it is often apt to be mere 'leather and prunella,' mere fashionable time-serving. It is one of the finest features of a very fine book that it stands, definitely, for an attitude of moral sternness in face of artistic degradation: may it lead not only to more thought but to more action."

* * *

Ourselves, well aware that continued neglect of the moral judgment in art will end in a Puritan revival, do not mince words in dealing with the pandarins who are provoking that Nemesis.

Echo.

By Beatrice Hastings.

[Argument: Echo, a nymph, the confidant of Zeus, incurs the anger of Juno, who deprives her of voluntary speech. She, perceiving Narcissus adoring his own image in a pool, falls in love with the beautiful youth, and, being despised by him, pines away and is relieved of life by the Fates, who change her into a resonant stone.]

SATE Juno winnowing her purple veil
To shake the sea-sand thence that gemmed the fringe,

Like atoms from Pactolus' bed. All pale
And vexed, she sate beside a rock whose hinge
Shut fast a sea-queen's cave beneath the swinge
Of fluctuant tides. ('Twas here, aforetime, stood
The Nereids guarding when that lusty twinge
Took Zeus for shell-crowned Dione—the flood
Thrice rose and fell about the rock; and still they bode.

And now the child of heav'n and sea is born.
Gold Aphrodite ranges through the world
Of mortals, and her rose with cruel thorn
Plants in each heart. The lip upcurled
Of manhood doth she tease; till flat unfurled,
Pride signals, blindly craving lovelike aid—
And in a blemish sees a brow empearled.
Nor may the gods impulsive Love evade:
While Juno sulks, Zeus with fair Helice is strayed.)

So Juno shook her veil upon the rock,
And vexed her mind how there her lord did burn
On coral couch with strange buds hung—sea-stock,
Sea-rosemary, sea-lilies, and the fern
Culled i' the ocean groves. "For such, to spurn
The dittany and poppy, mine own charms!
Ah! did these oft-offended eyes discern
Whose bosom holds thee, whose aspiring arms,
She had hot cause as Semele to heed alarms.

"Ye mountains, do ye shield my lord? Ye streams,
Plait ye your feath'ry reeds to screen his bed,
Where, in some crystal grot, the Naiad dreams
Beside his heart, and mocks at Juno wed?
See what false-coloured clouds the land o'erspread!
I'd venture Zeus some mincing she befools."
A pale, frail nymph, grey-robed, with bird-like tread,
Ran down the sands and skipped the beamy pools,
And pertly echoed: "Zeus some mincing she befools."

Dark eyes, now sharp, now sombre, small, dark mouth,
And meagre, claw-like hands she showed. She smiled
So merry and so foolish—to be wroth
Majestic Juno deigned not: oft had whiled
An idle hour with Echo; the quaint child
Told the world's sins so artless eloquent!
Proud-plumed experience, by a chit beguiled,
Put by its guard, and mused aloud what meant
The cloud upon the woods: "Say, witless innocent!"

"Ah! is not Echo witless? Erring Zeus
Told Juno's charms to Juno's devotees—
A day-long catalogue!—but bade us use
No word to reconcile her, or appease.
'Deny,' he said—'your mistress much 'twill please—
'That Zeus for cruel comely Juno's vexed.'
The rest obeyed; but witless I, my knees
A-shake, my sense astray, my tongue perplexed,
Affirmed it: 'Zeus for cruel, comely Juno's vexed.'"

Less placid lay the fish in shallow pool
Hearing the booming current, and secure
Of coming rush of waters, fresh and cool,
Than museful Juno, while the nymph with lure
Of flatt'ring words her mistress did assure

How the god loved his lawful queen. More sly
A pandar Venus' self might scarce procure.
Yet whiles the queen grew calm, the pigmy spy
Amid her caper scanned the cloud with restless eye.

For lo! the tide began to turn; the sands
Behind the rock shrunk 'neath the foamy swell.
Still that complacent queen, with folded hands,
Heard over all the tales she knew right well:
How this, her rival, wore a heifer's bell,
And that, for stolen love, was made a deer.
The griefs of Danae did Echo tell,
Alcmena's travail, woeful Leto's fear—
And still of chained Antiope must Juno hear.

At length the wavelets rippled round her feet.
Then up she rose; but rearward Echo hung,
Driven, twixt dread and drowning, to complete
What oft she'd tried—to stay her twattling tongue.
That stubborn cloud upon the woodland clung:—
And well knew Echo all it might disclose,
And well she wotted Juno's anger stung.
Nought was to do but creep on cringing toes—
When, as they gained the land, the saffron mist uprose.

Behold great Zeus! his curled locks awry,
His arm round Lycon's daughter; she not stays
The burst of Juno's fury, but doth fly
To hide her shamed head down the forest ways.
Oh! then such scenes as mortal bards erase
—These being puissant gods—from music's store.
Such thunder crashes, such wild lightning plays,
Such flames leap forth, such floods, such tempests
roar—
You would conclude that Chaos claimed the earth once more.

Ill-fated Echo, doomed Inquisitive,
Alarmed to death—for life cannot desert
The scene. Like insect round a smoking hive
She inly, outly darts though each new spurt
Of wrath celestial bodes her some new hurt:
Nor fails to mimic that portentous strife
With monstrous dainty thunders, lightnings pert:—
Till, weariful, the queen with tears is rife,
And dismal moans: "Alas! Poor Juno's but a wife."

At that the breathless god doth much rejoice.
He meditates his tactics—when a sound
Shrills, as some bat or cricket had took voice.
"Poor Juno's but a wife," it mocks. The ground
Quakes at the very glance of Juno round.
"Thou—witless"; thus the goddess. "Art still there?—
"Yet not this tale improving shalt be found.
"Mock on, till Juno be not Juno! Bear
"In silence thine own thoughts, heart's love and heart's despair!"

* * *

But once the willow waves at evening breeze,
Then rises full the honied harvest-moon.
Each tree, each bough, each leaf its image sees
Clear in the pool beneath; as though broad noon,
That lures the ram to sleep, and stills the croon
Of wistful doves, ruled in the zenith blue.
All day One leaned above the brim, no boon
Of slumber seized—nor heard the dove subdue
Her plaint—nor minded ought save his own image true.

Narcissus droops his lovely head, whose eyes
Like amber stars look forth from lids endowed
With every wonder that the gods devise
To silence eager men and leave youth proud.
Few—rash, insistent mortals—had avowed,
Obstructing, how they coveted the grace
Attending that sweet head, forever bowed.
Who dared—made haste their wishes to transplace:
They saw so direful love reflected in his face.

He loved himself : himself might never win—
 Himself pursued : might nowise overtake—
 His race, ne'er finished ever did begin—
 Dreamed of himself and, dreaming, would awake
 With longing his own lips to kiss; to slake
 Within his bosom his perpetual thirst
 For beauties in that bosom hid; to make
 A second to himself who still was first;
 Himself to soothe the sighs that forth his own heart
 burst.

Now westward sinks the moon and shadow dark
 Blots the bright image from the pool. "Farewell,
 "Farewell!" the sad Narcissus murmurs. Hark!
 Beside the brink one echoes : "*—well, farewell!*"
 "Return, beloved, when Dawn with golden bell,
 Wakes the grey-pinioned clouds and bids them flee
 'Fore Helios' climbing chariot. 'Tis the knell
 Of shadows, but the chime for thee and me."
 "And me." He hears : he gazes deep; but nought can
 see.

While all the night is black, the bulrush hides,
 But comes the hour it blacker shows than night—
 And night is passing : steep, the water glides
 That late was sunk from vision, and the light
 Seems greyer than that mirror glimm'ring white.
 And now, across the pool, white, starry flow'rs
 Open their dewy leaves. The east grows bright
 With crimson fire. The sunbeams seek green
 bow'rs;
 And chirping birds break, singing, forth their verdant
 tow'rs.

Narcissus' eyes beseech the imaged eyes.
 "Thou comest—yet, no nearer—I adore;
 Thou dost adore—I bend; and thou dost rise—
 I cleave the water, clasp thee; thou, no more
 Art there : yet, as I weep and spurn the shore,
 Again thou comest, weeping, and thy heart
 Heaves as my heart. Thy faithful, mimic lore
 Wins me, sweet echo!" "*Echo!*" In wild
 start
 He lifts, to see a wraith-like nymph the rushes part.

He from his bank frowns full—she frowneth, too.
 He motions her begone—she waveth, then.
 He cries : "No nymph I woo." She pipes : "I
 woo."
 "Wilt plague no other men?" "No other men."
 He quits the bank. She leaves her reedy den.
 His arms abhor her—hers, outflung, them clasp.
 He ruffles, chick-like—she, like brooding hen.
 He grips her shoulders—she, his waist doth grasp.
 Down i' the dew they drop—with rage, with love,
 a-gasp.

To spy's unseemly; and no soul would choose
 To see a lady worsted. To the reeds
 She's beaten, black and blue, one rueful bruise—
 You would suppose her stained with morus seeds!
 Narcissus bends above the pool, nor heeds
 Her sobs and other signs of love's ado.
 The sweat upon his forehead shines like beads :
 He shudders, dips and dainty 'gins shampoo.
 The image in the water laves its forehead too.

List! ere this story end, the moral of it,
 For art without a moral's but the slave
 Of nature. 'Tis for me, who tell, to profit—
 Though ye, who hear, such natural wit may have
 As no more wit to wish! Not to behave
 Like sly and lewd, loquacious Echo, tost
 A prey to love that was its own love's grave :
 Nor ever pay for earthly prize the cost
 Of peace of mind : since all's illusion—won, or lost.

Morn wore to noon, and noon to evening shade.
 The moon rode high and set her silver lance.
 And still the youth besieged : and still the maid.
 She tried all ways her influence to enhance;

Wept when he wept, and sighed as if by chance;
 Stared at his rigid eyes till hers were sore :
 He never raised his in a single glance.
 So favoured rival, maids may ne'er deplore—
 When Man, than them, loves his own Shadow more.

Came Sleep the conqueror—with gift
 To those he willed, beyond love's liveliest boon.
 The wary birds their eyelids ceased to lift;
 And Echo bowed : the winds, the stars, the moon,
 And, last, Narcissus. Less in sleep than swoon
 He fell. And pity took the gods : they spake.
 Where late he grieved, white buds the bank
 festoon;
 At dawn, in glistening, petalled stars they break,
 Gold-eyed : and these, too, seek their image in the lake.

Sleep, sleep, wan Echo! Bend, ye gentle reeds!
 With white plume roof the sunbeams from her
 eyes.
 She breathes too pitiful to merit deeds
 Of vengeance,—least, a goddess to devise
 Her woe. 'Tis ended. The just Fates revise
 Juno's inclemency. The nymph has grown
 Colder than that cold brim, more still than lies
 The limpet on the stone. She is a stone!
 Nor feels that joy and pain she echoes : nor her own.

Through the Gates of Ether.

By S. G. Hobson.

THE rain dashed against the window of my taxi-cab
 with the ribald cynicism of a Paris boulevardier. Out-
 side I saw men and women hurrying and scurrying, yet
 enticingly instinct with life, whilst I felt as though in
 the custody of death. An uncanny sense of remoteness
 from reality obsessed my semi-numbed faculties : I was
 bound for a far-off country, where time is counted by
 pain-throbs; where night and day merge into a grey
 monotone unknown to sun or moon or clock. Behind
 lay my life, maimed and incomplete; before me, nothing
 but a black note of interrogation, a blind oracle, pitiless,
 tantalising.

"Keep the change," I impatiently tell the driver, as I
 hear the bell clang in the hall. In a minute I find
 myself in the cosy parlour of the "Sister." Yes; she
 knows all about it. The doctor had told her. Was I
 very tired? Above all, what had I eaten? Yes, yes,
 bed was the place for me, and the sooner the better. I
 look round. "It's all right, your luggage has gone up."
 "Just like an hotel," I remark with a laugh. "We
 entertain many strange travellers," she smilingly replies.
 "This is not the bourne whence no traveller returns?"
 I ask with a touch of anxiety. "Tut! tut! We send
 them all away laughing and happy." Thus in an atmo-
 sphere of badinage I am whisked off to my room.

A fire burning brightly lures me to the armchair
 beside it. I collapse into it. Across the floor is the bed
 with my night-suit already laid out. If only I could
 jump into it without the labour of undressing! A sense
 of fatigue chains me to the chair. I must make an
 effort, I suppose. All right! by and by. The door opens
 and a nurse softly steps in. She understands. Instantly
 she is kneeling before me, and in a flash my shoes are
 off. "Now your coat," she brightly orders. "Come,
 stand up! I'll help you."

At last! The cool linen in a measure revives me,
 but—if that confounded pain would only cease—I must
 sleep. I look lazily around. The bare walls (pictures
 carry dirt, you know), the spotless cleanliness of every-
 thing, the electric light, the narrow bed—it all reminds
 me vaguely of a state-room on a liner. The fancy seizes
 me. Of course, I am just off on a voyage and there's
 going to be a storm, an ordeal to be passed through.
 I see the flash of the nurse's grey dress, I hear the click
 of the electric switch and—save for the friendly fire
 dancing in the grate—all is in darkness. Yes; we have
 weighed anchor, earth is lost on the receding horizon.
 I can almost hear the night-watch : "All's well and the
 lights are burning brightly." The sea is smooth, and

how deliciously silent are the engines! Good, good. . .

A hand lightly touches my shoulder. The night-nurse stands beside me with a phial in her hand. "Sister says you must drink this." And, oh! ye gods! she speaks with an Irish brogue. My thoughts rush back to early days. I think of the old country, mother of both of us, of ragged beggars, of priests, of laughter-loving boys and girls, of the slopes of the mountains falling away into Carlingford Lough, of a bitter cold and misty morning when we brought the dead Parnell into Kingstown Harbour and there was mourning on the walls and, most truly, mourning in the hearts of a stricken people. I feel a restriction of my throat and my eyes are suddenly sore. "You're from God's own country!" "Shure," says she, "but Sister says you must drink this." "I will drink it not for Sister's sake, but for Ireland's," I solemnly tell her.

"Don't be an ass; drink it like a man." The horrid physis disappears. "Sister says you may have an egg for breakfast."

"Hang Sister! Bring me up six sausages and a pot of marmalade."

"Let me tell you," says she, "that you're mighty lucky to get the egg."

"All right, nuff said. What's the time?"

"Seven o'clock."

"Why, I've only just got into bed."

"I've mended your fire five times and you were snoring like a porker!"

After breakfast I ask for a cigarette.

"Sister wouldn't allow it."

"The first touch of discipline, eh?"

And so, innocent of smoke, I lie back and stretch myself in a mood of sweet lassitude. "Nothing but sleep to-day, thank goodness!" My eyes droop and I am sinking into a reverie, when in trips my day-nurse. Dark-haired, dark-eyed, trim and alert, I can easily see that more than one nation has gone into her making. She carries a large can of hot-water. "Now you must wash," she says briskly. "I had a bath last month and washing always gives me a cold," I gravely inform her. "Then I'll close the window." "No, no; I submit." In a twinkling, a sponge is swiftly passing over my body. Now she produces a razor and begins to beat up a peculiar kind of lather. "Turned barber?" I ask. "Yes." "Not my beautiful beard?"

I lie back on my pillows, and soon the razor is busy. Then a brush and bottle of iodine looms up before me, and in due course I am painted red. I am bound round with a dressing and the nurse has completed her task. I ask if the lamb is now ready for the sacrifice.

All day I lie and wait for the inevitable and yet again night closes in upon me.

On the morning of the second day, my doctor enters. "Ready, eh?" "Yes, quite," I answer; "the surgeon is a good man?" "The most brilliant of the younger men. Had him for my own wife." "Well, if I don't like him I won't have him." In a few minutes the arbiter of my fate enters. He walks up to my bed, puts his arm round my shoulder and speaks softly. "Where is the pain?" "Just there." His slim fingers touch the spot with magical precision, every movement a caress. I smile contentedly. Doctor and surgeon disappear, the nurse enters. She, too, speaks softly as though in a church. "Now put on your dressing gown and come with me." I pass into the operating room, full of strange furniture. I notice in an ante-chamber a fire-range with saucepans full of boiling water and various surgical instruments are stuck in the water. No microbes for them! I lean up against the iron table and look round. Gracious! The place seems full of doctors and nurses. My own doctor, the anæsthetist, the surgeon, looking confident and debonair. A nurse gently removes my dressing gown. "Up here, Mr. Hobson." I move up on the table. "How old are you?" "Young enough to live and old enough to die!" I laugh nervously at my little joke, and am even a little proud of it. The surgeon twinkles. "Journalist, I think?" I nod an affirmative. "Judging by the vagueness of your reply, I imagine you must excel as a leader-writer!" . . .

"Is your head comfortable?"

"A little higher. Thanks."

"Breathe deeply and close your eyes."

I strive my utmost to inhale the gas.

"Good chap! breathe deeper yet."

"Heavens! I am still conscious. I hope he will wait. There is a noise in my ears as of the rushing of many waters and the sound of the wind blowing through trees. Vaguely I think of a majestic passage in the Bible: "He made darkness his secret place; his pavilions round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the sky." I feel a hand lift my eye-lid. I want to tell the doctor that I am still conscious, but my thoughts rove through the spaces of the night. Then I feel a faint tap upon my forehead. Somebody wants to know if I am in. No, not at home; my oak is sported; it grows dark—very dark—black—inky black. . . .

I cannot understand it; in some strange way I am switchbacking up and down the mountainous clouds, ethereal levitation without a jolt. The air is heavy and thundery. I must try to open my eyes. Yes; but better wait until we reach the bottom of this steep incline—time then to take breath and watch the journey open-eyed. I hear voices murmuring in the distance. A curtain seems drawn aside and my eyes open a little. Yes; it is the Sister and two nurses busy as a family of Marthas. "Hello!" I cry as from a sepulchre, "what time is it?"

"Two o'clock; now go to sleep."

Two o'clock! Three hours cut clean out of my consciousness; three hours since I shut my door in darkness! Impossible! The surgeon is still waiting. No, he is gone.

"How did it go off?" I ask.

"Splendidly; do go to sleep."

I feel a prick in my wrist. Morphia. Again the darkness. . . .

After I had passed through the gates of ether, I sojourned for three days in the land of nightmare. Pain sometimes transfigured into agony—an horrific kaleidoscope of distress and misery. At length the surgeon! He sits beside my bed, his hand gently soothes my wrist. I draw from his cool and confident touch strength and hope.

"Was it worth while?"

"Yes, yes, my dear fellow, well worth while."

"But the pain is still here."

"I will drive it away for ever. Never fear."

Gradually I achieve some measure of comfort. The burning fiery furnace is damped down and I can take stock of things. Food also is given to me and I feel more human. Now I perceive that values in the sick-room are *au fond* different from those of the outside world. I am reading the paper when the Sister enters. She takes up my chart. I remark that Parliament has risen. "Yes," she says, "your temperature is normal—not a trace of fever." "Why should I have fever?" I remark sharply. "I'm not a Liberal." "Do Liberals suffer from fever?" "If I were a Liberal I'd be in a constant fever." "Health, not politics," she says in a tone of finality. "Sister, I think I must be a Tory." "Why?" "Because I have cold feet." Instantly she is on the alert. "Let me feel them. Ah! Nurse, a hot-water bottle at once." I ask her if she is a disciple of Samuel Butler.

A week or two later. Nurse enters. Again I am reading the paper. "Have you noticed," I ask, "that Lloyd George has been telling the churches that they must move?" "The important question is not the moving of the churches."

At long last comes my release, the kindly prison walls fall down and the outside world beckons me. A taxicab draws up at the door. The street is covered with straw. Death, the eternal vulture, hovers near this little kingdom of pain; yet, at the back, a barrel organ brutally jingles. I am whirled away from it. My mind goes back fifteen years when once before for six long weeks nurses were my daily companions. There is a difference between the earlier and the later ones. What

can it be? The younger school is certainly more scientific, more precise and systematic. But the difference is more subtle. What can it be? Old conversations with my former nurses come back to my memory. Of course I see it now. Not once, directly or indirectly, had the younger nurses ever made the most distant reference to Marie Corelli.

Recent Verse.

By Jack Collings Squire.

"Songs of Joy and Others." By W. H. Davies. (Fifield.)
 "Poems." By Rupert Brooke. (Sidgwick and Jackson.)
 "Poems." By Gerald Gould. (Sidgwick and Jackson.)
 "Poems." By Charles Granville. (Stephen Swift.)

THERE exists among present-day critics a lazy fashion of using the names of dead authors as labels for living ones. If they come across a novel which is long and discursive they say that the author reminds them of Thackeray; if one which deals placidly with ordinary uneventful lives, Jane Austen is brought out for a comparison. It is inevitable that this should be done to some extent; comparisons and contrasts are useful. But it should not be done too loosely. Thus it has been customary, for instance, to observe that Mr. W. H. Davies' poems "might have been written" by Blake or Wordsworth, and again that he is Herrick reincarnate. The process that leads to these judgments is not difficult to follow. On the face of Mr. Davies' work there is something that puts one in mind of each of these poets in turn. His delicately amorous lyrics have the quaint turns and charming naïvety which one finds in Herrick; and the Blake of the Songs of Innocence comes to mind again and again as one reads the nature poems and those about children. But it is unfair to Mr. Davies, one of the few genuine poets now writing, to suggest that he walks about in dead men's shoes. As a matter of fact, in his best poems he is most individual, most himself, and most a man of his time. Where his superficial resemblance to some other poet is at its strongest—where, in fact, he is consciously imitative—he is at his worst.

In this book, as in his last, he varies greatly. As he swings from an emotional basis to an intellectual one he swings from the exquisitely beautiful to the bathetic. Nothing could well be worse than his attempt at ironic argument in "War." He points out to Liberals and Conservatives that

When pigs are stuck we save their blood
 And make black puddings for our food,
 The sweetest and the cheapest meat;
 And many a woman, man and boy
 Have ate those puddings with great joy,
 And oft-times in the open street.

Let's not have war till we can make,
 Of this sweet life we lose or take,
 Some kind of pudding of man's gore;
 So that the clergy in each parish
 May save the lives of those who famish
 Because meat's dear and times are poor.

This produces as one reads it a bitter struggle between shaking sides and a rising gorge.

But the Davies of the sincere delight in nature, the Davies who has travelled the world and lived in the slums of great cities with the refuse of humanity, and enjoys the quiet and beauty of the spring woods and the summer meadows with an added intensity because of it, sometimes reaches perfection. In his best poems there is little conscious artifice, no straining after unusual effects by word or metaphor; he speaks in his natural tongue of the joys of the eye and the heart, and sometimes in his naturalness falls across a perfect

phrase that no amount of hard thinking could have produced. I will quote one whole poem rather than fragments of many; but "The Example," "Days that have Been" (which is wonderfully musical and poignant without the slightest straining), "Days too Short," "The Happy Child," and others all have the high magic of inspiration about them. This is "In May":

Yes, I will spend the livelong day
 With nature in this month of May;
 And sit beneath the trees and share
 My bread with birds whose homes are there;
 While cows lie down to eat, and sheep
 Stand to their necks in grass so deep;
 While birds do sing with all their might,
 As though they felt the earth in flight.
 This is the hour I dreamt of when
 I sat surrounded by poor men;
 And thought of how the Arab sat
 Alone at evening, gazing at
 The stars that bubbled in clear skies.

And of young dreamers, when their eyes
 Enjoyed, methought, a precious boon
 In the adventures of the Moon
 Whose light, behind the Clouds' dark bars,
 Searched for her stolen flocks of stars.

When I, hemmed in by wrecks of men,
 Thought of some lonely cottage then,
 Full of sweet books; and miles of sea.
 With passing ships in front of me;
 And having, on the other hand,
 A flowery green, bird-singing land.

Mr. Rupert Brooke's conscientious craftsmanship, his frequent felicity of phrase, and his great rhythmical skill compel respect. But his book puzzles one, and the likeliest explanation is that it puzzled him. He seems not yet to have found his natural method of expressing himself; a battle between the head and the heart and between opposing tendencies within the head leaves him unco-ordinated. One gets the impression of a man of fine intellect and impeccable tastes who has not made up his mind whether his vocation is that of the unflinching realist, ironist, or the solemn and sentimental enthusiast. Whatever he may be he certainly is not the latter—not at present, at all events. In the poems where he attempts to express an abandonment of passion or natural beauty he fails. The failure is not due to any technical deficiency, although the language is occasionally screwed up too high. But these poems, even the most skilful of them, leave the reader unmoved. There is something frigid and unreal about them; something, if I may use the word in a qualified sense, of the fake. The finest poem in the book stands quite by itself in manner. It is called "Dining-room Tea," and begins:

When you were there, and you and you,
 Happiness crowned the night; I too,
 Laughing and looking, one of all,
 I watched the quivering lamplight fall
 On plate and flower and pouring tea
 And cup and cloth; and they and we
 Flung all the dancing moments by
 With jest and glitter.

There are conversation and laughter, faces moving naturally and as of wont. Suddenly a trick of spiritual vision suspends the whole scene; motion gives place to fixity and immobility.

... Lifted clear and still and strange
 From the dark woven flow of change
 Under a vast and starless sky
 I saw the immortal moment lie.
 One instant I, an instant knew
 As God knows all. And it and you
 I, above Time, oh, blind! could see
 In witless immortality.
 I saw the marble cup; the tea,
 Hung on the air, an amber stream;
 I saw the fire's unglittering gleam,
 The painted flame, the frozen smoke.
 No more the flooding lamplight broke
 On flying eyes and lips and hair;
 But lay, but slept unbroken there,

On stiller flesh, the body breathless,
And lips and laughter stayed and deathless,
And words on which no silence grew.
Light was more alive than you.

The poem proceeds harmoniously and falls to a perfect close.

But, generally speaking, Mr. Brooke is at his best in his more sardonic lighter poems, such as the introductory sonnet, the verses about unpleasant Germans who sat opposite him in a train, much to his disgust, and "The One Before the Last." Sometimes the sardonic touch is overdone, and the grease, slime, spittle, and so on which he imputes to his subjects serve rather to repel one from the descriptions of them. The appalling narrative of a cross-Channel voyage should never have been included in the volume. It spreads its aroma all around. But the Menelaus and Helen sonnets are admirable. The first shows the king crashing through burning Troy to kill Helen, and falling at her feet overwhelmed by her serene beauty. Here is the second:—

So far the poet. How should he behold
That journey home, the long connubial years?
He does not tell you how white Helen bears
Child on legitimate child, becomes a scold,
Haggard with virtue. Menelaus bold
Waxed garrulous, and sacked a hundred Troys
'Twixt noon and supper. And her golden voice
Got shrill as he grew deafer. And both were old.

Often he wonders why on earth he went
Troyward, or why poor Paris ever came.
Oft she weeps, gummy-eyed and impotent;
Her dry shanks twitch at Paris' mumbled name.
So Menelaus nagged; and Helen cried;
And Paris slept on by Scamander side.

The last line is admirable. Mr. Brooke's deliberate nature and thrice pumice-stoned style are more suited to this than to windy hills and amorous raptures.

The rocks of sentimentality and commonplaceness have always been visible from Mr. Gerald Gould's lookout, and now he has run aground on both, his bows high and dry on the one and his stern stove in by the other. Most of the poems in his new book have love or a child for subject-matter. There is no harm in that; such things have gone to the making of much good verse. But Carlo Dolci painted Madonnas as well as Jan Van Eyck. Mr. Gould patently has his heart in the right place, dislikes evil, and would not hurt a fly; but in this volume he exhibits the defects of his qualities. The thought is invertebrate, the expression now tenuous and now gushing. It is a pity to see a man who has in the past established some claim to be considered a real poet lapsing into such magazine triviality as this:—

If you have me for sweetheart and I have you for dear
There's little left for longing and little left for fear.

It is difficult also to understand how he can have committed himself to such an obvious echo as is heard in the beginning of the following lines:—

If we met no more,
Having parted,
Would things be as before
For the broken-hearted?
Would the rain fall?
Would the sun shine?
Would anything at all
Be yours or mine?

Here and there one sees glimpses of better things; but as a whole the book is grievously lacking in both freshness and force.

Mr. Charles Granville's new book is, with the exception of some half a dozen poems, made up of selections from his previous books of verse. It is very quiet and soothing, free from grave flaws and occasionally happy in phraseology. The "get-up" is sumptuous, though the blue of the cover is a little too arresting.

The Soul of the Whirled.

By Huntly Carter.

THE publication of such a play as Mrs. Percy Dearmer's "The Soul of the World" is a direct challenge to consider present dramatic tendencies.

Where are we drifting, dramatically? A short time ago the theatre was threatened with a new disease. Certain dramatists, hypnotised by the latest pronouncements of science, promised to invade the theatre with them. The late John Davidson, for instance, was obsessed by the old-new theory that man is a microcosm—a tabloid universe of atoms—and sought to present him as a shell loaded with whirling atoms performing strange cosmic dances, thus impelling it to antics of which it may be proud or ashamed, and to indulge in little explosions by which the electrons are fired out for the praise and blame of other suffering shells. It was not to be expected that dramatists would long be content with Mr. Davidson's conception of drama. Though the latter's new idea of tragedy—the soul of the whirled defying Humanity as a conglomeration of fatalistic atoms—was well meant: in effect it meant nothing. It was unworkable. The greatest dramatic genius could not take the elements of which, according to physical science and Mr. Davidson, man consists and set them going in a convincing dramatic way. Imagine a soul conflict between items of oxygen, carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, calcium, phosphorus, sulphur, with comic interludes supplied by manganese, copper, silicium, iron and lead, the whole illuminated by emanations of radium. You cannot do it, at least not with any claim to sanity. Besides being impossible to realise on the stage, Mr. Davidson's theory came too late. Science had broken down in the attempt to explain the material world, and men's minds were already turning to a new conception of man and the universe. There was a re-awakening sense of the abstract or divine man, of man's cosmic place in the universe, of Man as a Will capable of shaping his destiny within the limits of his intuition and knowledge. Hereby man was obviously being lifted above the level of mere atoms, whether electric or otherwise. Herefrom has gradually arisen a new theory of drama which is the antithesis of that underlying the molecule play, the offshoot of the Viewsy drama of which the tradition is to be carried on by the newly-formed Repertory Association. The Viewsy drama prides itself on its independence of the Cosmos. It concerns itself with the part, not with the whole; with cases, not with Cosmic Man or Humanity. It has abstracted innumerable Micawbers from the great environment and attempted to prove that they are capable of standing alone, like the units of a box of wooden soldiers all made to stand up. In so doing the Viewsytes have clearly overlooked the fact that characters thus detached from the main rhythm of life cannot possibly feel and express the great things contained in that rhythm. They are not the people, in fact, to whom great things are likely to happen. When the Repertory Theatre movement becomes less concerned with cases and more with humanity as a whole, as Ibsen was; when it takes the Stockmanns and presents the spectacle of brave and determined men defying fate or the forces of human nature represented by human ignorance and cowardice; when it has risen to contemplative heights—then it will get on the true and only dramatic level. It will then be in line with the traditions of all great and significant drama.

The Repertory Theatre must take part in the search for the Cosmic or Heroic Man which has really begun, and which promises the arrival of the theatre wherein both Man and Cosmos may come on and make their bow. The search is carrying one party of explorers to the starting point of drama in its journey in time. In the early Greek drama they are rediscovering the crudities of ancient methods set to work to express

something which is certainly the ancient and central motive of the world of drama. The oldest thing in drama is the Man-God in conflict with his material self. Another party of explorers, with less courage and insight, have only arrived at the half-way house of drama. In the mediæval morality and miracle play they are unearthing rusty methods employed to express something which was the motive of the drama in a more or less degenerate form. This thing is the Man-God idea transformed to the God-Man idea. According to this, God Almighty himself took the stage for the purpose of explaining his system of metaphysics, physics and morality for governing the world. Thus he explained the working scheme of Heaven and Hell and divine theories of good and evil, what time the Devil explained the attractions of his own department. All this was worked out further in scenes telling the story of the Creation, the Temptation and Fall, the Deluge, the doings of the Patriarchs and Moses, and so on. Many of these old scenes were presented on a three-tiered stage. On the top shelf was God, made up like General Booth and talking loudly like Mr. G. B. Shaw—about himself. God would be supported by Doré angels looking dreadfully bored. They knew, poor things, that when the God of the old Moralities got to work talking there was no stopping him. He went on like a clockwork Teddy Bear—for ever. On the middle shelf was Man, wondering what on earth the din overhead was about. On the lower shelf was the Devil, with a goodly number of cooks preparing to receive contributions to the stock-pot.

The Morality Play Society and the committee of clerical enthusiasts interested in the revival of morality plays express the new tendency towards the Cosmic drama in its half-way house form. One play has been produced which may be said to dramatise this tendency. The first fruit is Mrs. Percy Dearmer's "Soul of the World," which was recently produced before an audience obviously interested in resurrected deities and devils. The play itself is a fossil and falls far below the standard of serious consideration. Mrs. Dearmer has got hold of the big idea but has not the originality or strength to develop it. She has taken the Christ myth of the first century and illustrated it against a background of first-century realism. She has, in fact, given us a realistic illuminated text, whereas we are asking for a modern interpretation of the life history of Jesus the Man and Christ the God. We want this life treated symbolically as a climax towards which history is always working. At every point we see the new desire being born for which antecedent history has paved the way. The Jesus of the first century was the man strong in the belief of the regeneration of the world through faith and love. The Jesus of the twentieth century would be the man strong in the belief of the supremacy of the will and its power to redeem mankind. To-day men are growing sick of the flabbiness and inertia of their fellow creatures, and we are preparing for the supreme sacrifice of the great hero that shall come fighting for the new conception of salvation, opposing himself to the modern devil and his attendant forces of evil. But Mrs. Dearmer's play is concerned with none of this. The play opens with a prophetic prologue in which we find Time and Eternity balanced in space discussing the pregnancy of the world which Eternity is juggling from hand to hand. Then follows Nazareth, where we meet the stock characters of a more or less comic type, whose business it is to bring the idea of the prologue to earth and materialise it in the form of "The Annunciation." So we learn, "A maid in travail will bring forth a son." The act culminates in the appearance of Gabriel (made up as a red-headed angel), who enters with a "Hail, Mary! Thou art favoured by thy God. The Lord is with thee now. Among all women art thou now blessed." This is an implication that the crown has been set upon Mary in God's work of creation. After this we trot off to Bethlehem, where things begin to put on a Maskelyne and Cook appearance. Angelic voices are about, and Simeon the garrulous and an Innkeeper the bibulous are doing great things, explaining to each other that it

is the "wind trying to say something." The wind ought to know better than play pranks. This prepares for the episode of the coming of the Three Kings. As soon as the first is sighted in the offing the event is noted in suitable terms. Says Abihu, "Hullo, there—Innkeeper! There is a King hurrying towards the inn." Can it be near closing time? After this enter the Shepherds. Some lively dialogue concerning portents follows, and the red-headed angel slides out of a barn up stage centre to muddle their wits still further. After the Shepherds the Kings. These come on with several lusty "Hails!" and thereafter fall to discussing whether they see stars or not. It sounds as though they are at a music-hall, at least all except one who informs us that "both Heaven and earth I left to follow an unknown beacon." Clearly he is off the earth. Unfortunately the play is not. It continues in this stupid fashion; and after witnessing an adoration, the worst on record, we jog on to Calvary. Here we find all the harrowing conventions of a scene depicting the crucifixion. The Kings fire off some more "Hails!" and one of them concludes it is time to "go home and die." We agree. The two Marys are as lugubrious as they can possibly be under the tearful circumstances. A light shines from the suddenly disclosed angelic choir, all dressed in red, and looking like a glorious company of red bats. Then comes the closing scene—more talk between Time and Eternity. It ought to be the combustion of the world. The play, helped out in the representation by mixed music and muddled effects and much darkness, does not require an audience of supermen to follow it. It may be all right for what it is—contemporary drama by Hall Caine of the first century. But we do not want this sort of morality—2,000 years out of date. We want our own morality drama of present conduct and circumstance, and, moreover, treated by mystics with some illumination. The sooner the new morality play societies understand this the better. Then they will cease to patronise plays that are almost blasphemous in their crudity.

MODERNISM.

It was very like life to find all the swell restaurants in Capetown crowded, the Imperial, the Ritz, Lyons' Pop. and Romano's—all crammed to where the puddings boiled, and none with an electric fan. "Fan I must have," said I; and I dragged him into a side street.

Here there was a fan, and no one in it except ourselves.

Delicious coolness! The chairs extremely antique and highly polished, and the sideboard. The cloth was fresh. All the same, I decided to be careful. "Let me see the visitors' book," I said to the waiter who held a starched and shining serviette.

He brought the book. "Sure you take everyone's name?" I asked. "One does like to know who one's lunching after."

"Yes, madam," he replied, and showed me two names signed in full: "Mr. and Mrs. Cranford." "Very nice people," said the waiter; "often lunch here." "Oh," I exclaimed, "is Mrs. Gaskell with them?" "No, ma'am." "Oh, then, it's not the same Cranfords."

He was stout, of course, but not otherwise. "The Blake Institute?" I cried, as we returned to Piccadilly, keeping on the side away from the sea; "that must be a new building." "Not very," he replied; "Queen Anne, about." He grew suddenly emotional. "You-outh, O Mystical Rose!" he exclaimed, stretching his arms: "I knew that building-a when Jenny Lind sang there-a!" "How *In-teresting!*" I said; "but compose yourself. All is not lost." The Jew shed slow, reproachful tears: "When I saw Jenny Lind descending that sta-hair-case-a, she shimmered like a ro-oose!"

"But even in youth," I said, "even in youth one has to select experience. One cannot have everything. Some things, perforce, must be left undone. So why not make a virtue of it when one is old?"

"Parlez-vous français," said he. "I must—my ancestors were French."

"I can a little," I replied. "Assez pour la rue"—I translated, "enough to go out in the road with, ou magazin, or into a shop, mais pas en philosophe, not like a philosopher."

"Ah, good! I see we shall get on very well."

"So you're going to the Riviera," I exclaimed. "I see the flat's all upside down."

"It's been a trial rummaging all round the Dress

Agencies, but I've got a fair haul, enough to last me over my appendicitis."

I didn't care much for the white brocade with cornflowers. "Those deep black cloth scollops round the hem are too heavy," I suggested; "but try it on."

"Oh, I never try things on," said Valerie, holding the dress against her to show the train. "What's the good—they never fit."

It took us a fortnight to get ready. Mrs. Bates scrubbed the whole flat out every day. "She used to live in the country," Valerie told me. "Oh, Miss," she says, "the 'oneysuckle!'"

"Why cross the Channel," I suggested, "when we have the Riviera in Cornwall?" So we went to Brighton.

I was surprised, but I had been to school with her, and the new poet asked me to and seemed dazzled by the sight of a girl seriously interested, but I couldn't make out why the river stopped off sharp. I thought they always *slowed* off into bogs. But there was the mud. The referee stood between two rocks like Scylla or Charybdis, I forget which, and they had to land there. The first man in sent his boat right on shore and was awfully pleased, but the second boat had two men in, so there was a double disappointment. I had simply to *run* before the provision shops closed, and I sat on the high stool by the counter and he read it aloud, though the naphtha glittered green.

I knew he was rather taken with me and he came right to the door and upstairs. Polly was quite huffy in a genteel way, but the house was comfortable, even very, and I said, "I always supposed the drawing-room *couldn't* be on the ground floor." We knew she was an heiress at school, but not how much.

"Come and hear the poems," I said to her; "this Greek God is just down from Oxford and is mad on poetry, always writes every morning, wet or fine."

When it was too late for him to go home we went out to see the wreck. Everybody else was out except Polly. Her dress was very dark and plain, high to the ears.

"I had to take a hat-shop to keep my little boy," she explained; "it was something for him to do minding it when I was out. We had a non-fume-gas-stove, but I spent hundreds of pounds and got bored with it."

"If you had it now," I said, "I could heat this tin of herrings."

Suddenly she rushed to me: "Pops is coming over the water. Oh, do you think he'll get safe to land?" I looked out and saw the abbot rowing like mad, his gown flying all over the boat. He looked quite safe and jolly. Patty blushed. "I call him Pops," she said—"I rather—love him." So I understood at last. ALICE MORNING.

THE DIPLOMAT.

Said Asquith to his troubled self,
Things are so rotten here:
There's chaos in our Parliament,
Up North the outlook's drear,
And what with Anti-Home-Rule fools,
I stand between too many stools—
I think I'd better clear,
The "gloomy Dean" shall come with me
To sunny France across the sea,
He'll cheer me up with Nietzschean wit,
And we'll return when England's fit.

ARTHUR F. THORN.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

AGAINST A GENERAL STRIKE OF MINERS.

Sir,—Now there is not the smallest reason why this demand should not be granted." Thus the writer of "Notes of the Week" in THE NEW AGE of January 4 airily comments on the demand of the miners for a fixed minimum wage of seven shillings per day. His comment is on a par with that of many other Socialists, who have been telling the miners that all they have to do in order to secure their minimum wage is to show a united front to the coalowners, who will then give in to the miners' demands.

People who talk like this don't know what they are talking about. Were the coalowners to give in to the men's demands it would mean a transference of at least ten million pounds per year from coalowners' profits, or from the pockets of the public, to miners' wages. Such generosity on the part of the coalowners or public is unusual, and we are not likely to see any evidence of it in our time. We may take it, then, that if this yearly ten millions is transferred, it will be forcibly transferred, either by means of the strike or by nationalising the mines; and the time is not yet ripe for the use of either successfully, it being fairly obvious to the student of politics that public opinion

is not yet sufficiently educated to demand public ownership of the mines, as it is also obvious to the same student that a national strike of miners in mid-winter is bound to be a colossal failure because of the opposition of the public, who are sure to howl if their supply of industrial and domestic fuel is scarced and increased in price because of a strike.

A general strike of miners in mid-winter would do more hurt to the poor of this country in three days than is otherwise effected in a year. A strike of miners declared, what stocks of coal would be on hand would at once go up in price beyond the purchasing power of the poor, who would thus be prevented from using that commodity which is the source of whatever domestic comfort they have. The poor, outwith mining circles, thus deprived of house fuel, would have to cry for the termination of the strike, however sympathetic they might be otherwise to the miners' demand for a minimum wage. The miners themselves, with their dependents, would suffer unnecessary hardship, as their domestic fuel would also be cut off. And those who have any knowledge of miners' homes know that a miner's house, minus a fire in mid-winter, is not a home to be envied or to live in.

For this reason, however anxious the miner might be to continue the strike, the piteous plight of his wife and children would force him back to work, in spite of his own economic desires.

As Socialists we have to consider these things from a social standpoint; and doing so we must come to the conclusion that a strike of miners in mid-winter, entailing as it would much suffering and hardship upon the very classes we wish to benefit, is not a thing we can advocate lightly, if at all.

This being so, when should the miners strike for their just wage of seven shillings per day? The answer is plain. The miners should strike when they are most likely to be successful, and when their strike would not affect the domestic comfort of themselves and fellow-poor. That would be in mid-summer, and a strike then would affect the coalowners and capitalists generally as much as in winter. A summer strike might affect the former more, for the simple reason that in summer more coal is exported than at any other time of the year; and the capitalists would also be affected because their industries require coal as much in summer as in winter.

The workers, among whom I include miners, can do without coal during summer for house purposes, and therefore would be better able to hold out than would be the case in winter.

Apart from these reasons the miners are not prepared for a general strike, which, to be successful, must be sudden, well-organised, and timed. The miners have been threatening to strike for six months—August, 1911, to January, 1912—and even if the two-thirds majority necessary for a strike be secured this week, another month must elapse before effect can be given to it. The coalowners have taken advantage of this delay (as have also the big industrial concerns) to lay up big stocks of coal in readiness for a strike. As a matter of fact the miners of Scotland, supposed to be preparing for a strike, have actually been working on their weekly idle day for the past five weeks, thus giving the men they are going to fight the big advantage of a week's production of coal to begin with! Leaders and men who allow this to go on don't know how to fight; and therefore should not be allowed to fight, bearing in mind that it is the trained fighter who invariably wins the boxing match.

Further, the miners' funds are not too plentiful—those of the Scots miners will not afford strike pay for more than two weeks—and I have reason to believe that the English and Welsh miners are no better off. At any rate the miners have not the funds at their disposal necessary to carry on a prolonged struggle during the winter even if the Government would allow a general strike of miners to continue for a month.

Apart from this the strike would be ineffectual for securing a true minimum wage so long as the mines are privately owned. The miners can only get their wages advanced truly by a corresponding reduction of coalowners' profits. Therefore, to quote from "Notes of the Week" again, the true remedy is "for the community to take possession of the mines" and work them in the dual interest of the miners and the community. This will be brought about by political, and not by industrial, action. The miners' organisations, comprising as they do almost a million and a quarter workers, can do much to bring about nationalisation of mines, by educating their own members and the public as to the benefits likely to accrue to all by the community owning the mines.

The miners' officials do not make any attempt to educate the miners, and so far as I know no great public demonstration of Scots, English or Welsh miners has yet been held in furtherance of the minimum-wage agitation. As a

further evidence of the ineptitude of the officials in this matter, it need only be mentioned that there is no paper published for miners despite the fact that there are a million and a quarter people engaged in the mining industry. In every country but this the miners have their own paper, and in consequence are much more advanced collectively than are our miners.

This however, is a digression. What I wish to emphasise is: that the time has now arrived when Socialists and Trade Unionists combined should begin an agitation for the nationalisation of the mines as the only true remedy for the ills which the miners and the public wish to see remedied.

In every country in the world, excepting Britain and America, coal is the property of the State. That fact reiterated often enough should help to convert Britons to the nationalisation of the mines.

P. J. DOLLAN.

* * *

THE EIGHT HOURS DAY.

Sir,—In "Notes of the Week" for January 11 you refer to the efforts recently made by the Government to repeal the Eight-Hour Day of the Thames shipbuilding industry.

May I draw the attention of your readers to the recent action of the Postmaster-General by which he is introducing blackleg labour into the ranks of an already underpaid section of Post Office workers, viz., Post Office women clerks?

Just before Christmas a tentative scheme was introduced into the Money Order Department by which a certain number of fully grown women were taught work the bulk of which is at present being done by women clerks working seven hours a day, earning from £65 to £110 per year, and entitled to twenty-seven days' annual leave, excluding Bank Holidays. The new recruits, who are to be called assistant women clerks, are working eight hours a day, their salary is from 18s. to 34s. per week, and they have two weeks' holiday annually for the first six years' service, and three weeks subsequently.

In reply to questions in the House the P.M.G. stated that he knew nothing of the hours and holidays of the new grade, and that they were only doing the portion of the work of women clerks which was too elementary for such highly paid women.

To say nothing of the fact that the Government ought to pay all its workers a living wage, and that 18s. can hardly be so called, the Association of Post office Women Clerks is protesting vigorously against this proposal on two broad grounds. The first reason is, of course, that as workers we realise that any lowering of the standard of wages means a decrease all round, and things are bad enough already, in all conscience. In the second place, the Hobhouse Committee, which reported in 1907, fixed the rate of wages to be paid for the class of work now being done by women clerks in the Post Office, and we feel that the P.M.G. has been guilty of a breach of faith in introducing this ill-paid class of workers after the report of that Committee, and immediately preceding the public inquiry promised by Mr. Asquith this coming session. We feel that if the Department is of opinion that this work is too elementary for us highly paid women, they should put their case before the Committee of Inquiry, when we should put the case from our point of view.

A great part of the work in question has been done in the past by girl clerks earning less than £65 per year, who automatically became women clerks after two years' service. The new grade will never be able to earn more than 34s. per week as against the maximum of women clerks, which is something over £2 per week.

The Association of Women Clerks has taken the matter up most vigorously, and we hope to succeed in getting the withdrawal of the scheme pending the Inquiry of next session.

In the meantime the matter must be made as public as possible, and a sufficiently strong public opinion created to let the Government see that the people are not going to stand quietly by while permanent officials lower the standard of wages and hours of the servants of the public.

A CIVIL SERVANT.

* * *

THE LAW AND THE WORKERS.

Sir,—Mr. Gilbert Saunders opened this correspondence by criticising a Bill, drafted in specific terms, advocating the imprisonment of employers convicted by a jury under the sections contained in that Bill. There were no "vague penalties"; they were definite proposals. I never referred to a Women Workers' Minimum Wage Bill.

As to personalities, Mr. Saunders gave me a lecture on the neglect of my duties because, in his hypothetical case, I refused to continue a factory when I could not pay the employees a living wage. I retorted that "the half-loaf is better than no bread" argument was "an economic lie encouraged by prostitute producers." If the cap has fitted, it is not my fault; Mr. Saunders introduced the personalities.

C. H. NORMAN.

* * *

"MIDDLE-CLASS" SOCIALISM.

Sir,—True believers in S. Verdad, whose lamb-like faith may have survived the inopportune materialisation of the Portuguese Republic, must be rubbing their eyes this week. For what does our Solomon (presumably that his is *praenomen*) now see fit to tell us but the following:—

(1) "Our own Labour Party, like the German Social Democratic Party, is merely a lower-middle-class organisation."

(2) "Germany, let it be remembered, is not yet an industrial country."

(3) "The aim of the Social Democrats is not so much to improve the lot of the workmen as to improve the lot of the middle-classes."

Will S. Verdad favour his worshippers with evidence on these three points? The second of them he should surely tell to the Tariff Reformers, who so shrilly assure us that Germany nowadays is a much more thriving industrial country than England, and with whom I had hitherto assumed him to be in general agreement. As to the first and third—which are the more glaring howlers—will he explain why, if the Labour and Socialist Parties in both countries are so devoted to the middle classes, the middle classes are so ungrateful as nearly always to plump for anybody who will only beat the anti-Socialist drum loud enough—usually an Imperialist of the type S. Verdad may be assumed to approve?

A. H. M. ROBERTSON.

* * *

MR. BELLOC AND CATHOLICISM.

Sir,—Your correspondent, Mr. Warren, having announced his discovery of the obvious, proceeds to demonstrate how Mr. Belloc's hostility to Socialism can be explained away. The argument merely amounts to this, that Mr. Belloc's crusade against the Socialist theory is consistent with his philosophy. If the same cannot be said for Mr. Warren's political activity—of which I know nothing—I tremble for his philosophy.

The further implication that because Mr. Belloc does not hold one view as a political propagandist, and the contrary of that view as a religious believer—which is a highly modernist attitude—therefore his religion is a thing of unreasoning prejudice, is of course a gratuitous assumption.

If your correspondent will but recall the catholicity of Catholicism, all of whose adherents hold certain principles without equivocation or condition, and will then go to review what is left of the other Christian populations of the world, with their various positive and negative fundamental doctrines cancelling each other out, and with no ascertainable common basis whatever, he will perhaps admit that to say that Catholics cut themselves apart from the rest of humanity is much the same thing as saying that a tree exhibits a parochial spirit in having nothing to do with some revolting branches, or that a general strike is an attack on society. At the best this is "Pall Mall Gazette" logic.

ANDROS.

* * *

"NEW AGE" NOVEL CRITICISMS.

Sir,—What have I, with your consent, been all the while seeking in novels without finding it? Certainly not grounds for mere abuse or material for epigram. If I have condemned them—disappointment has been mine before it was your correspondent's. Replying to his challenge, I will try to define my attitude towards novels; and in return I challenge him to *prove* any serious inconsistency between my views and my reviews. In the first place, I have no contempt for the novel as a form of art. It would be ridiculous to make light altogether of a form that has been used by respectable literary men and women. At the same time, and without any contempt, per se, implied, I regard the novel as the lowest legitimate form of the art of prose. Its peculiar province is, as everybody recognises, contemporary manners, morals, customs and persons. It is, more than any other form, a contemporary form: I mean that it approaches journalism in its direct contact with contemporary life. No contradiction will be discovered between this definition and the admission of the so-called historic novel

into the category. For the historic novel itself is at its best a successful attempt to represent a past condition of things from a contemporary point of view. The intrusion of modern criticism into a historic novel is an anachronism and bad art.

Dealing, then, with contemporary facts and representing them with the intention of illuminating them, the novel has a legitimate place in the art of literature; but it has also a low place by reason of the faculties necessary to its creation. You can rank the forms of art in the order of their rarity of achievement. Scarcely a dozen men have ever lived who could write a great lyrical play like the "Tempest," for example. Also, be it noted, that while a rare and difficult feat, it is also easily detected when it fails. As a matter of fact, few writers have the hardihood to attempt a lyrical drama. The novel—to come down to the bottom of the order of prose forms—is so easy that, in one sense, anybody can write a novel. At least five hundred of your readers, I should think, have tried their hands at it, perhaps not unsuccessfully. The form is so elastic, the material so abundant, the qualities of mind required so common, that it is no wonder that the number of novelists is greater than the numbers of all the other prose writers put together.

In this overcrowded state of the novel form, lovers of the novel are obviously bound to appear severe. Of a good novel we are entitled to demand such excellencies as would *very nearly* make an imaginative writer. We do not ask novelists to compare themselves with Cervantes or Sterne or Borrow or Malory or Homer or the great imaginative creators of literature; but we do demand that they shall not fall below the standard of the best of their class. Yet for saying that the vast majority of contemporary novelists are not, *as novelists*, as good as their own models, your correspondent takes me to task. I will repeat, therefore, my deliberate judgment, based on a comparison of practically all the novels of which any reader has heard: No living English novelist (with the possible exception of Mr. Thomas Hardy) approaches in perfection of the novel as a form of art such writers as Richardson, Fielding, the Brontës, Dickens or Thackeray. Some of your readers, no doubt, may regard this as the usual decrying by critics of their own times. Let me then offer at least one reason why I regard the contemporary novel as necessarily inferior to its prototype. Until the Victorian period the subject of sex—with which nearly all novels deal more or less—was treated either idealistically or humorously; and both or either from a masculine point of view! The novel in its palmy days, in fact, was written by masculine minds for masculine minds. The characteristic of the masculine mind (in whichever sex it appears) is that sex for it must either be poetised and metamorphosed or satirised. The one thing that the masculine mind cannot do is to take sex in the abstract seriously. Now it happens—I state it as a psychological fact—that both the mood of poeticising or fancy and the mood of satire are moods of art. In other words, an art form could result from either of the attitudes towards sex. With the Victorian epoch, however, as everybody knows, both these attitudes towards sex became unfashionable. To treat sex fancifully was regarded as silly innocence; to treat it humorously was to degrade it. Sex became, indeed, a "serious" subject (the Lord forgive us!), a subject neither for gaiety nor for fun, but a subject for sentiment. Out of this mood no art could possibly come.

If your correspondent has followed my somewhat lengthy explanation, he will now be able to gather my replies to his questions. I admit the novel is an art form, though a low one. I admit the existence of novels of the form wrought when its main subject matter was artistically (that is, fancifully or humorously) viewed. I deny that the modern novel is as good as its prototype; and I deny that it can be till novelists and their readers resume the ancient and sane view of sex. Until they do, I trust that THE NEW AGE will continue to laugh at novelists for taking au grand sérieux a human relation which has only one natural justification, namely, necessity, and to deny them the name of artist even in their chosen form. I seek first stability in a novelist, the "masculine" view; without this his opinions about anything are so much wind.

YOUR NOVEL REVIEWER.

* * *

PICARTERBIN.

Sir,—Mr. Huntly Carter was asked if he could not drop art for a little and talk to us more about science. He has kindly obliged. He has also effectively "sat upon" me and corrected me, and "put me right" as he so mildly puts it. But he should not go so far as to say I am Paleolithic. My father was Paleolithic by profession, and was often sorry about it, and said he had only wasted his time, and told me to have nothing to do with it. So I am Neolithic, and have been so from a very early age.

Mr. Carter also says he has "unearthed" some of my pictures. I know he has done that. He unearthed a whole exhibition of them in a well-known public gallery in London about a year ago, and, moreover, advised other people, in THE NEW AGE, to go and unearth them also. But he should see some of my Post-Impressionistic pictures! They are, and all good "Posties" should be, quite Neolithic—though not so much so, perhaps, as some of his friends' work. His friends' pictures are more positively pre-Paleolithic, perhaps, than mine, in their drawing, etc. But my Neoliths are sweet things, and a small group of them are at present showing in one of the great international exhibitions on the Continent. Sad to relate, some poor souls, from the after effects of influenza or something, have gone and taken them quite seriously—ah, "there is many a true jest done in fun" that doesn't come off.

I note what he says as to the printer inadvertently omitting to put the exact thought he (Mr. Carter) had in his mind all the time. These printer's errors are most reprehensible, and are becoming quite frequent of late in the communications of great men; and Lloyd George himself had to correct one only the other day. (But I don't count Lloyd George as a really great man—do you, Mr. Editor?)

Introducing the Leicester meeting of the British Association is rather ancient history, is it not—rather "Paleolithic," Mr. Carter, eh? However, it is a valuable reminder that while "Kelvin continued to regard the atom as the ultimate unit of matter, and the electron as an electric atom, the younger men agreed to divide it." These young men were most discourteous to Lord Kelvin, and as to the electron, it amounted to something very near rudeness! The haughty young bloods!

Still, there is much to admire in the reckless courage of these young men: a note of defiance which ought to appeal to Mr. Carter himself, who knows better than to agree with anybody on anything if he possibly can help it. But science is all a question of taste and opinion—just like art—and one must settle these questions according to one's own conscience as best one can.

The men of science he saw in a dim light must have been a "ratty" lot—and a very weird lot into the bargain, for Mr. Carter tells us about their eyes—peering ones—"standing on the threshold." Ugh! I'm glad I don't know any of these strange creatures. Their eyes must be as funny as Thackeray's grapes, for he speaks about "peasants with their grapes singing in the boats," etc.

Lastly, Mr. Editor, put me down as a fraud if I have given the impression that I know more of science than an ordinary intelligent man should know of such things. I know Mr. Carter is not taken in, for he plainly puts to me this question—If men who live for science and by science are such fools (or words to that effect), what is to be expected from one like myself, who is only a painter, and a bad one at that? (or words to that effect). However, I am humble, and ready to accept any information on science that Mr. Carter can bestow. I prefer it to be personal though, and not merely what one may find in books or on looking up recent reports of the various societies of science, etc. Personality is such an interesting thing!

ROBERT FOWLER.

* * *

Sir,—This is to be a pæan of thanks! First I want to thank Mr. Harold B. Harrison for his lovely poetical portrait of me—so like nature that he must have sat before a mirror to have drawn those long ears so truly! Yes, my ears are long enough to catch the music of the spheres, and the voice of futurity a decade before the belated Modernity critics.

I also want to thank Mr. Frederick H. Evans for unintentionally doing me a rare service by the quotations he gave from Mr. Walter Sickert's article in the "English Review." When I saw that article announced I thought it would be the usual topsy-turvy muddle-headedness against which I have been so long fighting; but those extracts astonished me by the sane and skilful way he exposed the true inwardness of the Matisse-Picasso "spoof," and the delicious way he touched off the peculiarities of Mr. Roger Fry and Mr. Lewis Hind. I at once got the magazine and read every word of the article with delight; and he says some things about etching which badly needed saying. His remarks about lithography were equally good; but there is one question I should like to ask him, as being a contributor of yours he may reply. As a student I had some practical experience of lithography. My dear old master was an accomplished lithographer who had mastered the technique of the greatest of landscape-ists on stone, Calame. He got qualities which could only be got on the stone; by working into the tint with the needle, and by rubbing with the side of it he obtained a velvety quality impossible with the point of the chalk, and too delicate to transfer from paper to the stone. And I believe we shall never get the full develop-

ment of that art except by working directly on the stone instead of on transfer paper. Is it not so? It was also refreshing to see Mr. Sickert daring to differ from one of Whistler's clique, who so foolishly acclaimed him "a great master of lithography," whereas he was the veriest amateur in the mysteries of that art.

But my delight was not to end there; Mr. Sickert's admirable article is followed by one even more delightful to me: "The Puritan and the Theatre," by one of my dearest enemies, Mr. Haldane Macfall! I have always admired his style, even when he was attacking me personally with a pettiness unworthy of a man of his inches. But I have no personal enemies—only pen enemies made in fighting for national sanity and justice to our national art and artists; and I am delighted to welcome every return to sanity, and every effort to lift criticism to a higher plane. Mr. Macfall's article is a noble exposition of those deeper views of the real purpose of art which I have been so long proclaiming; and for which I have had only abuse. Mr. Macfall develops and enriches those views, and carries them into fields I did not venture in; and his treatment of Puritanism, seeing its good and its bad sides, is masterly. Let me begem my letter with one quotation from among its many fine thoughts: "Even the mightiest poet can at best but write a poem; it is the birthright of every man to live one." If such brilliant writers are going to express with such courage and insight these larger and sounder views on art, then my task is done, and I can pass on to the higher ones awaiting me. And in wishing them good luck I shall be glad for them to get all the ha'pence while I got all the kicks!

E. WAKE COOK.

* * *

Sir,—Mr. Wroblewski is in tears because Herbin's study does not "come under any established rule of art works." It is a terrible blow to Mr. Wroblewski, who is accustomed to classify works of art in the following manner: (1) Purely emotional; (2) thought pictures; (3) dreamy; (4) visionary; (5) symbolical or allegorical; (6) natural; (7) decorative or applied art. This reads like the list of an abandoned prehistoric Royal Academician. Dry your tears, Mr. Wroblewski. If Herbin is sending you distracted, Picasso will restore the balance. You Picassed me quite cleverly, and in so doing your caricature coined a new verb. To Picass, meaning to make famous.

"M. B. Oxon's" letter serves to strengthen my previous opinion. It proves that the writer's attitude towards art is that of a genial clubman who estimates art from the standpoint of a geometrician, not from that of an artist. Examine his letter carefully and we shall find there is not the slightest evidence that the writer favours art as such, or is qualified to deal with the subject.

Would or could an artist write such a letter? Examine the terms; note the command over the artistic figures of speech; analyse the sentences. Emotional statics, geometrical method, "spots" the portrait, the whole thing shall be working in the same direction, unfree-willed dynamics, connotation, curious unconscious magic, unco-ordinated, free-flowing boundless dream, crockery, pots, basins, kitchen matter dance through this letter and the former one in a maze of metaphorical confusion. Examine this sentence: "If you look at a piece of sugar it disappears and only the essentials remain; therefore, if you look at the essentials of nature they disappear and only crockery remains." What right has any person to discuss art who argues in this fashion from a perfectly reasonable point of view of an object affected by light? None whatever. Then examine the attitude towards art expressed in the following paragraph:—

"The whole question is really whether the artist is working for himself or others. If for others, then he must study their point of view if he wishes to convey his meaning and secure their applause. If he will not trouble to do this he is working for himself, and must be content to be understood by the very few, and have as his crowd of followers those who prefer to hold second-hand opinions."

This puts the whole question in a nutshell. It expresses the true attitude not only of "M. B. Oxon," but of so many correspondents who have come forward in the defence of the academic. It contains the creed of the painter without capacity, of the poet without inspiration, of the writer without imagination. The artist must work down to the public. Even though passionate intensity of vision and passionate power of expression urge him to mount heights inaccessible to the mob, yet he must resist them. Even though Herbin and Picasso would rise on the agile wings of creation, yet they must remain damned in the blood of the horizon. The artist must come down to the public. This is the balm "M. B. Oxon" offers to many an artistic heart that is breaking in the insidious net of public recognition, and to artists

who are fast ceasing to be artists because they have ceased to work for themselves. The artist must capture the public. The torture of this sort of unbearable rubbish would not be so bad if only one felt the writer did not believe it. But he does believe what he says, every word of it, and he puts it forward in a really serious attempt to discredit advanced forms of art, and to disturb the peace of those who ever regard such obstructionist practices as the gloomy companions of an inartistic imagination.

Finally there is the writer's tendency to substitute words and twist meanings to be considered. Finding that he was wrong in placing the word emotion in my mouth he now goes off in another direction, and attempts to work up a discussion on art and emotion. "M. B. Oxon" must really try to be more ingenious.

Mr. Harold B. Harrison's attitude towards Picasso may be gathered from the following elegant and highly artistic expression. "The longer I look (at the Picasso) myself, the more the picture dissolves itself into a mass of butter, stuck all over with black hairpins and licked into holes and hollows by the domestic cat." Mr. Harrison presumes that he requires "a little brain Force." You certainly do, Mr. Harrison. Make it Quaker Oats and coax your digestion. Or if that fails to do the business try the gin and simpers they give one at the "Cri."

I now come to Mr. Frederick H. Evans. This gentleman, having no opinion of his own, has sought to extract one from that cave of Adullam, the "English Review," and in so doing has extracted his death warrant. In order that he may not escape his doom he further provides himself with an imaginary devil's advocate who talks exceedingly like the celebrated Mr. Jennaway, that figment of Mr. Lewis Hind's colossal brain, and who says in an incompetent way all he can in support of Mr. Evans' extermination. In thus inducing the kind in heart to tumble over one another in order to bestow critical blows on Mr. Evans' behalf, Mr. Evans reveals a naivety worthy of the Clapham Commoner named Higgins. No other person would dream of cutting Mr. Sickert adrift from his old mooring in order to collide in mid-stream with new and stronger craft. We all knew beforehand, when Mr. Evans first appeared clamouring for Mr. Sickert's aid, what Mr. Sickert would say about Picasso; just as we know what a Leighton would say about Van Gogh, or Lloyd George about Balfour, or the Pope about Bradlaugh, or Picasso about Mr. Evans (it would be an indifferent "Anglais! Good Heavens!" and a shrug). Mr. Sickert has said it all along in his work and he now repeats it. He has no use for Picasso, just as Picasso has no use for Mr. Evans. Neither has Mr. Sickert any use for Matisse. In fact, so indifferent is he to their individual claims that he ties Picasso and Matisse together, preferring to extinguish them in this way rather than betray that he has any discrimination and can be generous enough to declare it. Had Mr. Sickert been wise he would not have allowed Mr. Evans to egg him on to destroy his judgment in this foolish fashion. Picasso and Matisse are not in the same world. The Post-Matisse, as I pointed out long ago in these columns, is but an artificial star who has risen to heights on the shekels of the Steins—gifted persons who began life speculating in pork or rails, and are now closing their commercial career by speculating on Matisse. The strong men of Paris have long ceased to discuss this Matisse. It is different with Picasso, who is generally accepted in Paris as the biggest painter. If he is a derivate (whatever this may mean) as the unknown "distinguished critic and painter" maintains, so are all great painters "derivatives." The fact is Picasso sees, to speak plainly, essential curves and angles in objects themselves, whereas the unintelligent artist and critic see only curves and angles in Picasso. That is why they make the common mistake of confusing Picasso with his vision. Picasso thus justifies the suggestion of Mr. Evans' protégé: that admission to shows ought to be exclusive. Admission to Picasso's shows ought certainly to be limited to Picassos. I doubt whether Picasso himself would willingly throw open his doors to persons with such a limited perception that they have nothing but evil or foolish intentions towards his personal form of art. He certainly would exclude Mr. Evans and those he stands for, "the enormous majority of picture-gallery frequenters." Or if forced to include one or the other, he would much prefer the inertia of the public to the Sickertia of Mr. Evans.

HUNTLY CARTER.

* * *

TIME, TIME.

Sir,—May I protest against Mr. Robert Loraine's use of the phrase "for a short run only" in his advertisement of "Man and Superman"? After a financial success of several months it seems unnecessary.

C. E. BECHHÖFER.



MR. REGINALD McKENNA.

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