

# THE NEW AGE

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART.

No. 1126] NEW SERIES. Vol. XIV. No. 23. THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 1914. [Registered at G.P.O. as a Newspaper.] **SIXPENCE.**

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## NOTES OF THE WEEK.

ACCORDING to the Unionists the Government is suffering now for what it failed to believe about Ulster a year ago. But what shall be said when next November not the Government alone but the country still more is suffering for failing to believe what they have just been told about the Railwaymen? With the greatest assurance and with manifest meaning we are told that unless satisfaction is given the Railwaymen will strike at the end of the year, and not for nothing this time or with only half their strength, but for something and with all of it. It will be useless then for the Government to pretend that they have been taken by surprise; and, unless we are greatly mistaken, it will be impossible so soon after the events of last week for the Government to employ the Army. Illogical it may be to confuse the resistance of Ulster on a political matter with the possible rioting of a Trade Union on an economic matter; but these things are not weighed by the public in fine scales. As surely as the Army is called out to support the civil authorities in a strike so solemnly announced as the Railway strike will have been, so surely will the Government, whichever party is in, be reminded of the occurrences at the Curragh Camp. We think, indeed, that the Army for some time is out of action in strikes no less than in civil disputes. All the more reason, therefore, why the threatened Railway strike should be considered with intelligence at once. Now and not next November is the moment for publicists as well as politicians to offer the country their advice. Before the catastrophe and not after it the wise should speak. What has Mr. Wells to say—that prescient genius who scans the skies to read the events of coming centuries? Or the rest of his "Daily Mail" colleagues, so loquacious on Labour Unrest? What! all silent until afterwards?

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The position of the men is very different to-day from what it was on the occasion of the last two great

strikes. Of the 360,000 wage-slaves eligible for membership of the National Union of Railwaymen, only one in three was a member of the Union in the strike of 1907, and no more than one in two in the strike of 1911. But in the strike now announced for the beginning of winter as many as five out of six of the potential will be actual members of the Union. This means, as everybody can see for himself, a practically blackleg-proof Union, the first of its kind, and certainly the greatest numerically ever known; for it is a fact that at the same time that the N.U.R. is the largest trade union in the world it is also the most nearly complete of any. But our readers will remember that we have promised on our honour as practical economists that to the first black-leg proof Union formed offers will come rolling in from the employers of the industry from the moment that its membership is threatening to become complete. Has our promise been kept by events or has it not? We invite the world to note that within a day or two—no waiting for weeks, mark you—within a day or two of the announcement by the men's officials that their Union is now practically blackleg-proof, the Companies for the first time in their history have approached the Union through its Executive with an offer of conference! There can surely be no doubt now that our promise was no mere guess in the dark, no rhetorical generosity, no lie; but a scientific deduction that experiment could not fail to justify. The recognition sought by the Unions and refused by the Companies for years, urged on the latter by the Union, by the public and even by the Government, and urged until now in vain, was conceded last week without a struggle and without a qualm on the publication of the statistics alone. Who will dare henceforward to deny that to a blackleg-proof Union all things are possible? Who will venture ever again to pretend that economic action, when it is thorough, is not more powerful than political action? The evidence at last is under our eyes. To the blackleg-proof Union that the N.U.R. now is, the Companies which have hitherto refused anything are now preparing to offer everything.

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But if one part of our analytic forecast has come true (and to the astonishment, we may add, of the men's

leaders) we claim that by so much the rest of it should gain in credibility and general acceptance. It would surely be monstrous when we have proved to have been right on one point, with all the world against us, that the same opposition and distrust should have to be encountered in the acceptance of the points that remain. Yet it would seem that though no less than an apparently miraculous confirmation of our prophecy has been witnessed on one head, on the further heads of our forecast the Union officials are in as much doubt as they were about the first. For what is it that they propose to demand with their blackleg-proof Union behind them and the Companies, cap in hand, in front of them? Nothing more, we gather, than a little more wages all round and a general reduction of the hours of their labour! But was it for this that we advised and urged the creation of a blackleg-proof Union? Was it for more beer and skittles simply that the gigantic effort of the Trade Union movement has been brought to the point of forming a Union complete almost to the last man? Not only, we say, was it not simply for more wages or more leisure that the Trade Union movement was impelled into existence; but the very demand, at the same time that it indicates a pauperised imagination, is incapable of satisfaction without involving as much loss to one part of the proletariat as gain to another. Where, if the wages of railwaymen are raised next November, will the burden of their advantage fall? Will it fall upon the railway shareholders, the owners of capital of our railways? It will not, and a moment's consideration should convince even the railwaymen's leaders that it will not. We are prepared to wager the sum of our losses that railway shares will rise in value from the moment that it is known that an agreement has been come to with the Union, even though it should involve a considerable rise in wages all round. On whom, then, will it fall—for it is equally unthinkable that it should fall upon the traders whose goods are transported for no other object than profit from one end of the country to the other. Their profit they must have, and since they have between them a monopoly of their trade, their profit is secure whatever the rates of carriage may be. There remains only the consumer, whose other name in the mass is the proletariat. On these in the end the higher wages of the railwaymen will fall; and what will have been accomplished by the N.U.R. then? Why, no more than the robbing of Peter to pay their own Pauls.

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While it is the most gross, however, of the objections to the policy announced by the N.U.R., it is by no means the most formidable. We have in mind, indeed, rank behind rank a series of objections each awaiting its turn to come into the discussion if the simpler and more comprehensible objections fail to stop the surge of the Railwaymen's short-sighted greed. There is, for example, the civic objection, so eloquently urged on irrelevant occasions by the Railwaymen's leaders themselves. Who was more eager than Mr. Thomas only a few days ago to denounce the Army for its opposition to the "will of the people" or to threaten that its resistance should be overcome? But neither the Army, even in Mr. Thomas's nightmare vision of it, nor Ulster in all its ignominy, professes to have no other object than the material welfare of its constituents. Mistakenly, as we think, stupidly, as we think, both the Army and Ulster have been moved by considerations far beyond the reach of personal gain or material comfort. But look now at Mr. Thomas's own army which he and his colleagues have organised, disciplined and brought to a blackleg-proof perfection—what is its object, as avowed by its leaders? Is there a particle of public spirit in it? Has its declared policy any touch of public advantage to recommend it? Will its leaders pretend that they are acting in any sense in any public interest? But, they will tell us, the 300,000 men comprising the Union are members of the community also, and by the same measure that their wages and conditions are improved, the well-being of society at large will be im-

proved as well. The argument, however, is, as we have seen, fallacious in fact as it is also disingenuous in intention. The wages of the proletariat as a whole will not be raised by the raising of the wages of a single Union. Moreover, no publicly benevolent intention can be credited to men whose demand, when at last they are able to hold up society, is no more than additional wages for themselves.

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What, then, we may ask, ought the Railwaymen to demand? On the assumption that their Union is something more than a mere trust of labour, organised to raise the wages of its members at no matter whose expense, the demand of the first blackleg-proof Union on a grand scale that the world has seen, ought surely to be for an advantage in which the whole class of the proletariat may hope to share. Not to secure an advantage over its fellows, but to secure an advantage for its class should be the aim of such a Union; for it is also true, as we very well know, that though the material improvement of one part of the proletariat may be at the cost of another part, an improvement in *status* of one section is instantly shared by all. The demand of the Railwaymen ought to be, in fact, the pioneer demand of the whole Labour movement which, unless we misconceive it, is less material than moral and human advancement. For, again, it is not the case that the Railwaymen owe their blackleg-proof Union to themselves alone. There have gone to the making of it the efforts and the sacrifices of thousands, nay, of millions of their fellow-workmen. Where would the Railwaymen's Union stand to-day if the base of the long years of common Trade Union action were taken away? As surely as they are the first to reach the summit of Trade Union position, so surely they owe it as much to their class as to themselves. But it follows that not only would their present demand be ruinous, as we have shown, to their fellows in and out of other Unions, but as well it is a kind of treacherous ingratitude. And we repeat that it was not for this end that they have been placed in their position. For what end then? To present, we say, the real demand of the proletariat and to be the first to make a breach in the wall of wage-slavery that now separates the proletariat from every other class in the community. And the demand, coming from a blackleg-proof Union, is as likely to be satisfied as the demand for more wages simply. Let there be no mistake about that! It may seem, on the surface, that a request from the Union to share in management would be more strenuously opposed than a request for higher wages. But, in the first place, as Mr. Thomas has said, the Companies are in no case offering concessions for his beautiful eyes; they are offering no more than they think they can get off with! In the second place, we leave it to the imagination of our readers whether a strange demand, like this for status instead of wages, would not itself produce a moral effect upon the public and the railway directors, such that to resist the appeal would appear almost immoral. Finally, from the depths of our economic certainty, we affirm that not only is the demand for status the first condition of a material improvement of the proletariat, but, provided that the status so obtained is real, it can be had for the asking.

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What is here meant by real? That the Union, on condition of partnership with the Companies, should be prepared to accept responsibilities corresponding to its new privileges. On the assumption that no more than higher wages are demanded and obtained next November, what public justification can the railwaymen offer for their action? They will not have undertaken to do more than they did before; or to be in any way more responsible either to the public or to their employers. They will, in fact, have been proved guilty of the thoroughly servile, effeminate and cowardly conduct of combining to extract more material advantage for themselves while leaving all the responsibility still on the shoulders of their employers. On the other assump-

tion, however, that they demand and obtain—as why should they not?—the privilege of co-management and joint control with the Companies, they must obviously in justice be prepared to join in the responsibilities attaching to their industry. Are the men's leaders prepared for this? Are the men themselves? If they are, we believe that their course is not only clear, but smooth; for we are almost certain that, should the existing Companies decline (and, being for the most part fools they may) to close with such an offer and to take the Union into partnership with themselves, the State, happily for the public, will take the place of the Companies and the first National Guild in history will have been formed. Perhaps when Mr. Thomas has finished denouncing Army officers he may consider whether the policy we have just outlined is not the wise one both for his Union and for society.

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It might be thought that the example of the Railwaymen in bringing their employers to reason by economic or trade union means alone would have taught the rest of the Unions the value of economic action and the comparative valuelessness of political action. But so bent still are the men's officials generally on having M.P. stuck to their names, or on pottering importantly in the lobbies at Westminster, that most of the Unions are passing resolutions at this moment to "strengthen their political force" as they call it. At the Easter Conference of the National Union of Teachers, a body that presumably possesses more brains than all the other Unions put together, an executive resolution which is certain to be passed calls for a mandate to run more teachers' candidates for Parliament. As if at least nine out of ten of the actual membership of the Union were not fully aware that Parliament, be it ever so minded, can do next to nothing for education but pay for it! Here, again, the Teachers like the Railwaymen are seeking the privileges of a monopoly of labour without incurring its responsibilities. Ready enough to vote money to return candidates to watch over their financial interests, they have not the public or private spirit to demand the right themselves as a profession to control education directly and responsibly in the national interests. The conference at Lowestoft interests us no more than a conference of meat-producers contemplating the means of raising prices! And what means, too! It will be remembered that the Joint Executive of the Postal Unions decided at Christmas to forgo their strike (and Christmas-boxes!) and to employ Parliamentary action when the session should open and, of course, to run more candidates. Of Mr. Stuart's wild-goose chase for a seat we have not said and shall not say a word. But look at the Parliamentary action that came off last week. On Wednesday Sir Ninian Crichton-Stuart found the House of Commons counted out against him when he raised the question on behalf of the Postal Unions of the Holt Report. Fewer than forty Members could be induced to be present, though the Labour Party itself is of that number. There's Parliamentary action for you!

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We have frequently analysed the case for political action as doubtless it presents itself to the mind of Mr. J. R. MacDonald. Setting aside the impossibility which everybody now admits of a Labour majority in Parliament soon or at any time, the case for the Labour Party's present policy is plausible, though unsound. What reason, for example, is offered for the alliance of the Labour Party at this moment with the Liberal Party but the promise of the speedy removal of outstanding political issues from the field of social and economic reforms? And what reason could be better if only it could bear inspection? But it assumes too much that can be suspected and too much that we know to be untrue. In the first place, what ground is there to suppose that the Liberal, any more than the Unionist Party, desires to clear the way for economic reform? Why, these delays and obstacles are the very things

they will cherish for as long as they are permitted! And in the second place, what ground is there for concluding that Home Rule is the last great political issue between the Labour Party and its own economic programme? Are there not, as we have often said, as good red-herrings in the sea as ever came out of it? Yes, and already we can name some of them. There is Federalism, for example, which Sir Edward Grey last week commended to a six years' discussion between the passing of the Home Rule Bill and the final pacification of Ulster. Think, Mr. MacDonald, what is upon that bone and for how long, if encouraged, the country will be prepared to gnaw upon it to the oblivion of economic reform. Then there is the Army and its "democratisation." Only last week, again, at the instigation of Mr. John Ward, the Liberal Party was ready to hunt this snark, and the Labour Party to follow yapping behind them. And if the two main parties have thought it wise to draw off from that scent for the moment, it is certainly not because the Labour Party was not willing to be diverted by it from its own direction. Again, there is Mr. Lloyd George's Land Campaign—not dead yet, by any means, but labouring to be born—will Mr. MacDonald convince himself, when Mr. George's programme is on the Liberal platform, that once more the Labour eggs are in the Liberal basket? To be sure he will! Then there is Women's Suffrage, the largest red-herring of them all! Speaking at Manchester last week, Sir John Simon assured his audience that when Mr. Asquith was out of the way the Liberal Party would take up the Suffrage and make a leading plank of it. And what a diversion will be there from economic reform! For as surely as the subject of Woman's Suffrage approaches practical politics, so surely will the Labour Party be both diverted from its course by it, and split in halves as well. Yet even these issues, visibly threatening to intervene between the Labour Party and its future independence, are not all that could be named. There are literally thousands more. We may say, indeed, that as long as the Labour Party are prepared to spin ropes of sand, the sand will be forthcoming. Never, never will it be possible for Mr. MacDonald to say "the political questions that bind us to the Liberals are now settled; henceforward we can be independent." A party that does not begin with independence will certainly never end with it.

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And while these false issues are being pursued, not only is the main track of economic reform deserted, but economic events of the greatest importance are neglected. We have already seen that the momentous announcement by the Railwaymen of their approaching strike provoked not a single word in Parliament even from the Labour Party. The Postal officials' Holt Report was purposely boycotted in discussion, and it was with difficulty that a House was maintained for the discussion of Mr. Jowett's Bill on Housing. As for the debate on the South African deportees it is enough at this moment to note Lord Hugh Cecil's complaint that for such a subject the House was "lamentably thin." So much for economic issues in Parliament itself! But outside of Parliament the neglect is no less apparent. What, for example, are the *historic* economic events of the last few weeks? Are they not the strikes of agricultural labourers—the most pleasing feature in the Labour movement for many years—the lock-out of the builders in London and the sequel to the recent Leeds municipal strike? These events, if there were a Labour Party entitled to the name, would be dragged from their obscurity and set in a blaze upon the hills for the world to see. For these, we repeat, are the real concern of Labour—not Home Rule, not Welsh Disestablishment, not the Army, not the Empire—but these! To take them in their order, consider first, if you have the mind, the bearing of the agricultural strikes upon the problem of Labour in general. It is not so long ago that Mr. Lloyd George was declaring that his Land Campaign was necessary only because Trade Union action among agricultural labourers had failed. Yet here in Essex

and elsewhere was a proof that Trade Unionism among agricultural labourers had not only not failed, but was merely waiting to be begun. When we remember that every city Labour problem is at bottom a rural Labour problem; when further it is recalled that without help from their urban fellows the men of the country can do little even to help themselves, let alone to cease flooding the cities and thereby ruining urban Labour; it should be clear that the duty of the Unions of the town was instantly to go to the support of the agricultural Unions, and to spare neither money nor attention for the purpose of enabling them to hold their own. As it was, however, they were left to scramble to victory as best they could with neither word nor help from the party that had most to gain by supporting them. And what, we may ask, is now the position of the London builders whose case has been buried even in the Labour Press beneath the discussions of Home Rule? As in Dublin, the issue for Trade Unionism of the lock-out now in progress is one of life and death. Never since 1875 has any Union been so directly challenged to fight for its very existence. The most incredible acts of suppression and mendacity, trickery and roguery, are being performed by the masters against the men and for the sole purpose of breaking the Union for good and all. Such an attack upon the citadel of Trade Unionism was worth, we should have thought, a special Conference of the whole forces of Labour. So far as we know, it has not evoked a question in Parliament! Finally, there is the appointment in Leeds of a slave-ganger to superintend the whole of the wage-labour employed by the municipality. While this is an experiment of some interest to the employing classes, its success would mean the collapse and utter defeat of the Labour movement for ever. If Mr. Hamilton should prove the practicality of controlling Labour by means of his absolute municipal bureaucracy, farewell to all our hopes of Guilds and of every approach to them. But on this matter, too, the statesmen of the Labour Party have said, we believe, not one word.

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Some political influence at least ought to be expected of the Labour Party that has sacrificed its economic influence for it. But let us see. On Wednesday a debate was raised again in the House of Commons on the deportation without trial of the nine South African trade union leaders. A most innocuous resolution, having no straightforward reference to the event under discussion, was moved and in an amended form, carried, by the Labour and Liberal parties. In the course of the discussion, however, Mr. Harcourt for the Government again made it plain that they were not prepared to move unless pushed. And again the Labour Party made it plain that they were not prepared to push! But this question of the Nine is really a test of both the gratitude and sense of obligation of the Liberal Party and of the importance of the Labour Party. If the Irish Party for their adhesion to the Coalition deserve Home Rule, it is surely not much for the Labour Party to ask the liberty of its nine South African colleagues; and all the more because in the latter case the Government would have no opposition to meet from the Unionists or from anybody else. Lord Hugh Cecil in Parliament, the "Morning Post" and the "Times" in the Press, presumably speak for their party when they denounce the deportations as dangerous to liberty and the Empire. Even in South Africa, as the elections prove, public opinion is against the deportations and would welcome a friendly word from the Imperial Government. Yet with these inducements to satisfy the demand of the Labour Party and with the assured support of the Labour Party still in their pockets, the Government refused even to advise South Africa to receive back the deportees and to try them by the law of the land. If this is the measure of the political influence for which the Labour Party has sold its birthright of independence, the exchange is fraud and robbery. For the substance they have not even the shadow. Mr.

MacDonald, for all his craft, has less political influence than the Premier's butler.

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We need not despair, however, of sending back the Nine Deportees in honour to South Africa. We are not sure, indeed, that if they decline to go they may not be fetched as they were brought. For it is now becoming clear in South Africa that their banishment from that country was a symbolic act and indicated the approaching banishment of what is known as the White Ideal. The imminent peril of the restoration of South Africa to a condition of black slavery aggravated by back-Dutch Republicanism is, more than the deportations themselves, the cause of the recent set-back to the Government and policy of Messrs. Botha and Smuts. And evidence has begun to accumulate that this black ideal was not only in the minds of the mine-owners, but has long been cherished among them. What has been the meaning, for example, of their perpetual cry of the "high costs" of producing gold? People do not raise a song about high costs unless they have in mind low costs with which to compare them. And what are the low costs on which the hearts of the mineowners are set? *The substitution of black for white labour!* In the leading technical mining journal of South Africa no longer ago than in its issue of February 28 appeared an article under the significant title of "The Passing of the Colour Bar." The article opens with the following paragraph, as straightforwardly as could be wished:

Evidence accumulates daily that the highly artificial and inequitable restriction known on the Rand as "the colour bar" must go. Mr. A. E. Payne, the energetic ex-President of the Mine Managers' Association, put the facts very bluntly. . . . Our inquiry into the problem and possibilities of reducing working costs has brought us face to face with this cardinal fact of the industry, that the first and surest way to economise lies in the industrial emancipation of the native.

And the article concludes thus:

From this would follow, as the night the day, the much desired reduction of working costs. And reduced working costs, it is now a commonplace of Rand economics, mean more capital for the country, more work for all, and general contentment and prosperity. Wherefore, the Colour Bar Must Go!

No beating about the bush there, but only a magnificent and devilish indifference to race, to country and to economic fact! Is South Africa prepared to see this mine-owners' ideal of cheap labour carried into practice and fulfilled? There are, as we say, evidences—only electoral at present—that she is not. But of what use will protest be when the white trade unions which alone stand in the way of the mine-owners are crushed by the Government to jelly? If the white ideal is to be maintained in South Africa, the first condition is the encouragement of white trade-unionism; and of this again the first condition is the recall of the nine banished men.

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The dropping of the Crown case against Starchfield last week ought to moderate, at least, the superstition of the Press and public that much faith can be attached to dramatic identifications. As we ventured to point out, before the case was under proper trial, the "identifications" were suspect on the face of them. Any number of mindless persons under the stimulus of a man-hunt can persuade themselves that they have had a share in bringing a victim to justice, as they say; and when this stimulus is reinforced by the offer of a reward the temptation to invention is irresistible. We are naturally glad that Starchfield has escaped the bloody vengeance of our Press; but the reflection occurs that it was, after all, by chance. There is, in fact, no guarantee that the same evil chance that hung Dickman—condemned, it will be remembered, on a woman's hysterical identification—and that nearly hung Oscar Slater, may not yet hang scores of innocent men. We pray that our readers may do everything in their power to discredit the system of "identifications" and to recall, when tempted, the present case of Starchfield.

## Current Cant

"A word to the working man."—"Evening News."

"King George, who is, apparently, a Syndicalist."—  
GEORGE BERNARD SHAW.

"How to look at pictures."—"Daily Express."

"Advice for lovers."—"Daily Mirror."

"The 'New Weekly' . . . , most luxurious of weeklies."  
—"The Star."

"Our Revue producers are men with fine imagination."  
—"News of the World."

"The tyranny of Labour."—"Fortnightly Review."

"We live in a delightful age."—EDMUND GOSSE in the  
"New Weekly."

"Never before did the spirit of altruism rule the ways  
of the world as it does to-day."—GEORGE R. SIMS.

"Should actors marry actresses?"—"The Era."

"Whether our characters be earnest or frivolous, our  
minds speculative or practical in type, we all nowadays  
have our 'spiritual interests.'"—EVELYN UNDERHILL.

"Mr. Bryan's eyes shone with the enthusiasm of  
humanity, his voice throbbed with the passion of Uni-  
versal peace."—"Daily Chronicle."

"One of the most hopeful signs of the times is the  
universal interest of women in child welfare."—ELIZABETH  
SLOAN CHESSEY, M.B.

"A reader who is not bored by Mr. Chesterton some of  
the time probably gets very little genuine pleasure out of  
him any of the time."—"North American Review."

"Walking into Selfridge's yesterday was like entering  
a beautiful garden where the loveliest and most aris-  
tocratic women in the country greeted one with smiles of  
welcome."—"Daily Mirror."

"Money in its essence is a symbol of the Social instinct  
in man: the emblem of his discovery of the use and  
morality of Co-operation instead of egoism and strife.  
It is the outward and visible sign of the brotherhood of  
mankind and in so far as he fails to recognise this the  
artist is a mere anarchist."—HENRY STALL in the  
"Academy."

"Ladies, who nightly go forth in lovely array,  
sparkling with jewels . . . a word in your ear. Do you  
not think that you might, in consideration for people who  
have no jewels, and no lovely array, switch off the lights  
in your motor-cars when you pass through the streets?"  
—FILSON YOUNG in the "Pall Mall Gazette."

"Norman Angell is, in the true sense of the word, a  
discoverer, an original genius whose powerful reasoning  
marks one of those rare periods in history where men  
are compelled to change the very foundations of their  
political belief."—LANCELOT LAWTON in the "Academy."

"The Church is an institution that's trying to show  
men and women how to be happier. Incidentally, all  
this leads to better social standing and bigger bank  
accounts."—"Church Advertising Committee."

"The leading critical weekly . . . the 'Saturday Re-  
view.'"—Advertisement in the "Athenæum."

"Wordsworth writes of nature like a prophet, Stevenson  
like a man looking for inspiration for a fine phrase, Jefferies  
like an innocent hedonist who has discovered an  
elaborately embroidered cushion, Thoreau with a mingling  
of parsimonious economy and esoteric thought. Mr.  
W. H. Davies is different from them all. You will not  
find so utter a Pagan unless you go back to Theocritus."  
—The "New Weekly."

## Foreign Affairs.

By S. Verdad.

THE official report of the Rochette Inquiry Commission shows, to use the Commission's favourite word, a "deplorable" state of things in French politics; but it is drawn up with less party spirit than our own House of Commons' Marconi Report. Indeed, in the Rochette instance the evidence was so very complete and striking, and the acknowledgments made were so open and frank, that no other conclusions could be arrived at than those set down in the report. M. Caillaux, ex-Minister of Finance in the Monis Cabinet of 1911, and until recently Minister of Finance in the present Doumergue Cabinet, admitted that he had two reasons for asking the Prime Minister, M. Monis, to have the trial of Rochette postponed: in the first place, he wished to do a favour to a friend of his, Rochette's counsel; and in the second place, he was afraid that the speech to be made by Maître Bernard in Rochette's defence might refer to the losses recently sustained by French financiers and investors and thus cause a panic.

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M. Monis, then, in utter defiance of the law, strongly urged the Public Prosecutor, M. Fabre, to have the trial postponed as M. Caillaux desired. It is true that the report condemns M. Fabre for being so weak as to give in to the solicitations of M. Monis; but no doubt the members of the Commission know as well as M. Fabre himself knew that, if he, a clever provincial lawyer of good family, had not granted the Prime Minister's request, which amounted in the circumstances to a command, his career would have been cut short. The report, not unnaturally, goes on to condemn the President of the Court of Appeal, whom M. Fabre had to beg in turn not to insist upon the case being heard. Here we have a fine series of solicitations before the end is achieved: a request from Rochette's counsel to M. Caillaux, conveyed in turn from M. Caillaux to M. Monis, from M. Monis to M. Fabre, and from M. Fabre to the judge. The whole thing is almost incredible, even for French politicians. In Germany, where the relations between the executive and the judiciary are sharply defined, and, what is still better, adhered to, such a miscarriage of justice would be impossible. It is not for nothing that I have frequently insisted in this column that the abolition of a monarchy or a nobility and the consequent rise of a plutocracy under the name of a democracy leads to corruption and inefficiency.

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I have mentioned Germany. Purely monarchical countries, remarked a well-known Russian diplomatist to me the other day, are the most efficiently governed in the world at the present time; and he gave Germany as an example. Certainly, in no country where a monarchy or an aristocracy still preserves its influence could mere financiers have secured such vast power over politics and the Press as they have secured in France. Such a thing would simply not be allowed. In Germany the newspapers, in the few cases where they exercise any influence, are subject to the direction of high Government officials, who always belong to the noble and never to the mercantile classes. Justice in Germany, whatever we may think of some of the peculiar offences for which it imposes fines, is much more rapid, certain, and thorough than justice in France or in the United States. The difference in such countries, as my diplomatic friend further remarked, is seen in the smallest details of the administration. For example, when there is a storm, telegraphic and telephonic communication in France, and, more particularly, between France and foreign countries, is usually interrupted because the wires are above ground. Germany and Austria have long since discarded this antiquated method in favour of the underground method of wire-laying. I mention these observations not so

much because I agree with them generally, as by way of putting forward a new point of view. It will no doubt be admitted, even in England, where new points of view do not meet with immediate approval, that in capitalistic countries the standard of value is the material one of profits, whereas in countries not dominated by capitalism the standard of value is spiritual, however low in the spiritual scale it may be. The difference is one of kind. There is no doubt that capitalistic influences in Germany are increasing; but the Germans have still a long road of profits and exploitation to travel before they catch up with the French capitalists in financial matters, and with ourselves and the Americans in manufacture.

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When one speaks of financial influences in French politics, of course, one necessarily refers to the towns, especially Paris. It is the international bankers who give the "haute finance" of France its bad name; but it is useless to try to show, as a certain group of English journalists would try to show, that these men are Jews. The financial influence of the French Jews is not nearly so great as some people would wish to make it appear to be. On the other hand, the French agriculturist, able as he is to drive a hard bargain, and callous though he often may be, is not governed wholly by profits. The financial struggle at present going on in France, a struggle which has been proceeding ever since the formation of the Third Republic, is merely the attempt of the financiers in the cities to control the wealth of the financiers in the country—i.e., the farmers and the agricultural community generally; and the Radical-Socialist suggestion that Rentes should now pay income tax has been put forward by the politicians who are controlled by the financiers with the object of hitting the small farmer particularly hard.

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The Rochette Inquiry Commission report condemns the close connection now existing between finance and politics and between politics and journalism. Can the Commission break off this close connection? It does not say; it does not know. Nothing short of forcible annexation will separate their wealth from the financiers; and in the present corrupt condition of the French character there will be no such annexation. The agricultural community, certainly, will not allow itself to be imposed upon beyond certain limits; but that is a very different thing from a revolt. There is general disgust with politics and politicians, but a sufficiently large number of people can still be induced to register their votes; and even, as has been so very common, if only thirty per cent. of them do so, the country has, in theory, given its united decision.

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I do not therefore attach much importance to the noisome atmosphere which has followed the publication of the Rochette Commission's report. A Government may fall; a crowd of politicians may be swept away. But another government will come, and another crowd of politicians; and they will, in matters of finance and their relations with journalists, resemble their predecessors. To the reports of M. Poincaré's threatened resignation from the Presidency if he has any more trouble with Radical-Socialist majorities in the Chamber after the next election I attach as little importance. It will be a great pity for France if he goes; he is a good man in the right place—so excellent, in fact, that I cannot conceive why the capitalists should want to retain him. The truth is, they do not; and they did their best to defeat him when he was nominated for the Presidency. His position as head of the State must be attributed to the strength of character, the solid French character, of the rural population, not to the choice of the politicians. Very few moneygrabbers have been able to pick and choose men, and to trust them implicitly after having chosen them. It will take more, for the present, than bags of gold to shift M. Poincaré from the Presidential chair.

## Guilds and Industrial Change.

By G. D. H. Cole.

THERE could be no surer sign of the headway that has been made recently by the idea of National Guilds than the eagerness to pick holes of all those who once scouted it as unimportant. As an unregenerate Collectivist, Mr. L. G. Chiozza Money takes up the cudgels in the "New Statesman" of March 14th. His article, which is entitled "Delimitation and Transmutation of Industries," attacks the Guild system on the ground that it would not leave the labour power of the community sufficiently mobile, and that it would tend to stereotype the forms and methods of production in an age which demands rapid and continual change. I have, of course, no authority to reply for the writers of the Guild articles; but I should like to point out where I personally think Mr. Money to be wrong. I have the more claim to do so, as his article in the "New Statesman" would seem to be an amplification of some remarks he made on my book, "The World of Labour," in the "British Weekly" of February 19. As he there states his position more briefly, I will begin by quoting a sentence from his earlier article.

"It seems to me that the Syndicalist conception takes too little account of the swift development and change of trades and industries which is likely to be one of the distinguishing features of this our new century. It hardly seems to provide for the ever accelerating transmutation of occupations, and it presents the very real danger of stereotyping industrial development and of setting up as States within the State gigantic vested interests in a form very difficult to remould."

There are clearly in this indictment several distinct points, which I will discuss in turn. If in my answer I seem at some points to go beyond the terms of Mr. Money's criticism, it will be in the endeavour to answer in advance certain supplementary points which readily arise out of it.

It is easiest to begin with a comparatively small point, which may, or may not, have been in Mr. Money's mind when he wrote. What, I am often asked, will be the effect of the Guild system on initiative and invention within any given trade? How, that is to say, will it influence change in the workshop itself? Will it make the workers better or worse at inventing new processes, and more or less ready to accept such as may have been invented? Trade Unions, we are told, have opposed at every stage the introduction of new machinery, no matter how "good for trade" its advent might be. Will not the Trade Unions or Guilds of the future show a like disregard for economic advance?

This whole argument, I believe, rests on a misconception. Trade Unions have resisted new machinery—the linotype, for instance—not because it is new, or because of any rooted objection to newness as such, but merely because a new process nearly always tends, for the moment, to throw men out of employment. To men without economic resource, the moment is everything; they cannot afford to take long views. Where the workers oppose new machinery, they do so simply and solely because they are faced with the prospect of starvation if the new labour-saving device is adopted. But most dislocations of employment caused by new machines being temporary, there would be no such opposition on the part of the Guild. For the Guildsman, the new machine would be, not an inanimate competitor for the rights of wage-slavery, but an aid to the lightening of the daily task. Machinery would no longer be dreaded as the enemy of man; it would be welcomed as his servant and his helper. Each Guild would have its inventive departments, as increasingly great factories are now coming to have them; and these departments would aim at making production as efficient and the lot of the worker as easy as might be.

However, this question of change within a trade was, at any rate, not uppermost in Mr. Money's mind. The

"transmutation" of which he was thinking is the transmutation of the industries themselves, the growth of one and the decline of another, the extinction of one and the uprising of a new one in its place. It is in this connection that he complains that the Guild system would "stereotype" production. He assumes throughout an absolute rigidity in the Guild groupings: he speaks of "a State consisting of a number of large and small delimited groups or guilds of labour, each concerned with a separate department of work." This may be the "Syndicalist conception" of the future Society; it is certainly not my conception, though Mr. Money seems to assume that all who advocate the control of industry by the producers must accept it. He offers no reason for this attitude; he merely assumes that the Guild will be a close corporation of workers, apparently absolutely incapable of being shifted to another occupation. This is surely to isolate Guild from Guild in a wholly unwarrantable manner. If the Guild system grows out of the present structure of Trade Unionism, it will come, not by sharp separation of Union from Union, but by their close co-operation and coherence. There will be easy transference from Guild to Guild, and, while each will be charged with the maintenance of such reserve of labour as it may require, there will certainly be in all cases a considerable passage of men from trade to trade, as the demand of the moment dictates. I fail to see what difficulty there is in combining this system of easy transfer with effective control of industry by the producers. Mr. Money seems to confuse the Guild system with the ideal of the universal self-governing workshop of Co-operative Production, which is, indeed, open to the objection he suggests.

Let us take his chosen example, which gives his case at its strongest:—

"If we erect and exaggerate and magnify the Trade Union into a definite branch of nationhood, what is to become of the Trade Union when Science sweeps away the very foundations of its work? If, for example, we erect and exalt and magnify Coal into a self-governing body, a very State within the State, what will become of Coal when Science makes it obsolete, as it may easily do within fifty years from this time?"

I wholly fail to see in what way the problem is more difficult for the Guild-Socialist than for anybody else. It seems to me, at any rate, much easier than it is for the pure Syndicalist. If Coal goes, it goes; and the Miners have to be transferred to other occupations. Even a State-Socialist like Mr. Money would find this no easy matter; but I do not see that it is any harder for the Guild-Socialist than for him. The problem is, in any case, not quite so bad as he makes it sound. If Coal ceases to be used, the change will not happen all of a sudden, without warning or breathing space. Its extinction will be foreseen some time at least in advance, and the demand will decline gradually, and not cease all of a sudden. In face of a falling demand, what does Mr. Money suppose the Miners' Guild will do? Does he think that it will go on producing as much coal as ever, and accumulate at the pit-head stores which no one is ever likely to use? Or does he think the Miners will all work short time, as is done in some trades now, sharing out what work there is? Or does he believe that those who remain usefully at work will go on paying their fellows to stay idle for an indefinite period? These are the three foolish courses that are open to them. But under any Guild system the result of all these courses would be that there would be less to divide among an equal number of persons. This being so, the Guild might be trusted to see to the clearance of its surplus members, as soon as a new occupation could be found for them. Those of least standing in the Guild would probably, in such a case, have to retire, and these men could be supported by the Guild, or by the State in case of need, till a new occupation was found for them. It would only be possible for the Guild to maintain an industry which had ceased to be economically necessary *if the Guild controlled demand*; and Mr. Money advances not a shadow of reason for supposing

that any producers' organisation can control demand, or force its wares upon the reluctant consumer. In short, transference from one industry to another would happen under Guild-Socialism much as it would happen under Mr. Money's own State-Socialism, and with far greater ease and convenience to the worker than in the Society of to-day.

"This," says Mr. Money, "is a large-scale example, but many more only too probable cases, of many degrees of magnitude, could be produced." I wonder what his other cases would be: I can think of few that are in any sense parallel. There is a sense in which new industries are always coming into existence—motor cars are one instance, and aeroplanes another; but neither of these, nor most new "industries," would demand the creation of a new Guild. The making of motor-cars would be the work of one section of the Metal Workers' Guild, and the invention of aeroplanes would merely make a new section necessary. It would involve no dislocation, no starting of a new and separate enterprise. The invention and manufacture of the new product would be one of the duties of the great Metal Workers' Guild.

So far from being static and stereotyped, the great organisations would be the most flexible instruments of production. Neither the analogy of the mediæval Guild nor that of the modern Trade Union holds in this respect. The mediæval Guilds were conservative, not because they were Guilds, but because they were mediæval: the whole Society in which they existed was static, traditional, if you like, unprogressive; it attained to a marvellous skill in craftsmanship, and it possessed a great tradition of "good work" which we may hope that the Guild of the future will emulate; but its conservatism was due not to its organisation, but to its environment. The modern Trade Union has often been against new methods, not because it is a Trade Union, but because it consists of wage-slaves. Its tradition of solidarity will be carried on into the new Guilds; but *ca' canny*, sabotage and conservatism are the products of the wage-system, and with it they will die.

Mr. Money sums up his assault on the Guilds in the following passage:—

The various groups or guilds would inevitably consider themselves possessed of monopoly privileges. They would seek to perpetuate their functions, whether they were useful or not. They would seek to induct their children into their kind of employment, whether it was obsolete or not. The very nature of their organisation would cause them to view with suspicion any proper attempt to alter their very definite character and dimensions to the better advantage of the nation as a whole.

It may be doubted whether Mr. Money understands at all clearly "the very nature of their organisation." The great Guilds could not do these things if they wished to do them; and there is no reason that Mr. Money can show why they should wish to do them. If the mediæval Guilds were conservative in a conservative age, may we not expect the new Guilds to be progressive in a "scientific" age? They will be monopolists, no doubt, whether *de facto* or *de jure*; but Mr. Money has not made clear his objection to monopoly. Is not State-Socialism itself a system of monopolies, and have not Guild-Socialists clearly laid down the methods by which the State will be enabled to prevent the Guilds from abusing their monopoly privileges? Is there not in the Guild-Socialist vocabulary such a term as "economic rent," in the sense of rent paid to the State by the Guild for the use of the means of production? And is it not a good thing that, where temperament is the same and situations are open, son should follow father in the same vocation?

"But," says Mr. Money, having disposed finally of the Guild bogey, "perhaps we are getting a little too fearful of State control. . . . If we are afraid of 'officials,' then let us remember that a Guild or a Trade Union must have officials. If we fear tyrants, then let us remember that the only difference between a little tyrant and a big one is that the former is usually the worse example of tyranny. The essential thing is that men should be so trained from their youth as to resist injustice, to obey

reasonable direction, and to submit to common rules of conduct. *That secure, we need not worry about the good government of a State Department, for a worthy people will secure the Government they deserve.*" (Italics mine.)

This is missing the point with a vengeance. Guild-Socialists aim at something better than good, in the sense of efficient, government; they stand for self-government. The difference between a Guild and a State Department, however efficient, is just this: the one is government from above, from without; the other is government from below, from within, self-government. Guild-Socialists happen, in fact, to be democrats, and to carry their democracy into the industrial field. In this they differ from Liberal State-Socialists of the type of Mr. Money. Guild-Socialism stands for an efficient and self-governing industry; but the emphasis is on the second adjective. Mr. Money is a disciple of efficiency; but all who seek efficiency alone are destined to lose it, for the simple reason that workmen happen to be human beings. It is better to elect one's own petty tyrant than to suffer from the kindness of an efficient and benevolent autocrat.

This, however, is to follow Mr. Money into a generalisation foreign to the specific purpose of his article. No one will disagree with him when he says that, under modern conditions of production, it is essential that labour should be mobile. It is only a little difficult to see how this can be construed by him as an attack on the Guild system, which is expressly designed to meet the object. What he is really doing is to flog the dead horse of a very obsolete form of Syndicalist theory. Whether THE NEW AGE agrees with my positive criticisms or not, it will at least, I believe, agree that Mr. Chiozza Money's strictures have no application either to the system advocated in my book, "The World of Labour," or to their own articles on "Guild-Socialism."

## The Leisure State.

By Arthur J. Penty.

TO-DAY is a great day for "States." It was only yesterday that we had to comfort ourselves as well as we could with the grim vision of the Collectivist State, with a kind of sneaking regard for a rival State—the Communist State, which we were told was a beautiful but impossible dream. The Collectivist State can no longer impose upon us. It has been discovered to be only another name for the Servile State. In consequence there has come a crop of rival States—the Great State, the Syndicalist State, the Distributive State, the Guild State, the Associative State, the Leisure State, and the Work State. All these now claim our attention. It is, however, with the two latter that I propose to deal, defining as they do, better than any of the others, those fundamentally different ideals which separate the rival schools of social reformers.

It is natural, of course, at the present time, that of the two conceptions the Leisure State should have the more popular appeal. It appeals to the immediate need of the majority. More leisure connotes more money, and these are the two things which in the popular imagination count for everything. For the majority to achieve these it is imagined would be to achieve all. Over-worked and slave-driven as they are, it is but natural that their idea of a social millennium should approximate somewhat to the washerwoman's idea of heaven—"for ever and ever with nothing to do." But though, perhaps, the washerwoman might in her ideal state of bliss find herself emancipated from the labours which oppressed her and find rest for her tired body withal, it is probable that she would not find happiness. For though she would find rest for her tired body, she would yet find no rest for her soul—that is, of course, assuming she had got one. And before long it might be expected she would become absorbed in studying books of etiquette which would tell her how to do nothing in particular and to do it very well.

At first sight, this may appear somewhat of a carica-

ture of what those who advocate the Leisure State really stand for. All the same, I think it sums up substantially what would happen. For the ideal of the Leisure State is in last analysis a purely negative attitude towards life. It does not define the nature of the activities which men are to pursue in the future, but merely promises deliverance from the distasteful activities which surround their lives to-day. It could only arise in an age which had emptied life of its contents and had found to its dismay that labour reduced to drudgery had entered to fill the vacuum. For, in truth, the material necessity has come to dominate our lives precisely because we recognise no spiritual need. We are pushed onwards as it were from behind because our activities admit of no direction. And without direction we shall of necessity squander our resources and waste our energies in all manner of futile activities. We may judge as to what would be the probable effects of an increase in prosperity and leisure on a basis of existing activities by reference to what happens in America when the people have money and to spare. The people there have only one idea of pleasure, and that is spending. To spend money appears to be the one aim and ambition of their lives. Outside of New York there is a pleasure resort called Coney Island. It is a kind of Earl's Court, with numberless dancing halls organised on an enormous scale—to lick creation, as it were. It is open only in the summer, and when I was in New York the season was brought to a close with a week's carnival. A Mardi Gras, they called it; a better name would have been "a general kick-up," for the people of America have no idea how to organise a holiday or festival of any kind in the way that Continental nations have. The advertisements simply told everyone to bring confetti; and everyone did, with the result that at the end of the week Coney Island was a foot deep in it, and the New York papers estimated its cost at a quarter of a million dollars. Nothing is more pathetic than the American's search for pleasure, unless it be his desire to do the right thing. This latter desire has brought into existence the most outrageous of social tyrannies. I will only mention one. At Christmas time everybody is supposed to give presents to everyone he knows, and no present is to cost less than five dollars. At this season the shops in New York specialise on articles suitable for presents. The windows are crowded with them. Everybody apparently hates the custom. The newspapers rail against it; leading articles on it fill their columns. And yet the custom persists. Few have the courage to set their faces against it. In this department of life the Americans seem to suffer from a paralysis of will.

Many explanations may be given to account for this side of American life, and doubtless it will be denied that this kind of thing would happen in the "Leisure State." At any rate, I will give mine. It is because of the work which they are engaged in, and the utter lack of tradition. Reasonable pleasure I affirm must have its basis in reasonable work, and if men are turned into machines, or are engaged in occupations of a mechanical nature which bring them no pleasure, then their life is corrupted at its roots. It matters little if that work be reduced to four or even two hours a day, the corruption will be there all the same, and it will corrupt the leisure which accompanies it. The search for pleasure is like the search for beauty, a thing barren and unfruitful. For each of them are by-products and are only to be attained by such as live reasonable lives and have higher aims.

If report is to be trusted, Mr. Webb justifies his policy of advocating the organisation of industry on a basis of "speeding-up" by recommending a reduction in the hours of labour. Apart from the fact that the economic effect of this is the same as to allow things to proceed at a normal pace, for it is merely giving with one hand what is taken away with the other, it is to be observed that he will find it easier to enslave the workers by encouraging "speeding-up" than to liberate them by shortening the hours of labour. For in the one



case he is swimming with the stream and in the other he is swimming against it. To advocate "speeding-up" under any circumstances is, from the reformer's point of view, nothing less than economic lunacy. It does not increase the real wealth of the community. All that it does is to increase competitive waste. And what is worse, it creates powerful vested interests in competitive waste, such as railway companies, who profit by cross distribution, and advertising trades, for which, in the long run, the consumer has to pay. These vested interests will stand in the way of any reduction of the hours of labour. Strikes can avail nothing against this tendency to increase the proportion of non-productive work in the community. And so I ask the question, if you believe in the "Leisure State," how do you propose to bring it about? There are two things you are required to do. One is to secure the profits of industry for the workers, and the other is to reduce their hours of labour. If a strike is undertaken to increase wages, then the consumer has to pay a very much higher price for what he buys, as was the case in the coal strike, where twopence a ton was added to the wages of the workers and two shillings to the cost to the consumer. So that, on this basis, when every trade secures a proportionate rise of wages we shall as consumers be immeasurably poorer than we are to-day. If, on the other hand, a strike is undertaken to shorten the hours of labour, it must either result in a decrease of the wages given to the worker, or again an increase in the cost to the consumer. If you say there is no hope, apart from a general strike, which would dispossess the capitalists, then I ask what are you going to do with the Parasitic Proletariat who exist to supply armaments and other luxuries for the rich. And remember these must number at least one half of the community. Mr. Bernard Shaw, in a series of articles contributed some years ago to THE NEW AGE discussed this problem. But he could offer no solution, for the articles ended in a series of abstractions which no one denies, but which did not face the concrete issues. As far as I can see there is no solution for it. In the case of a general strike anything that was done would have to be done at once or it would be in vain. For when the Parasitic Proletariat found that the market for their work was gone they would rally to the support of the capitalists to re-establish the old regime. A Revolution would be followed by a Counter Revolution, for a certainty.

The truth which I deduce from all this is that if we are to find a remedy for the evils of society we must attack something far more fundamental than a division of the profits of industry. Urgent as the solution of the economic problem may be, we have yet to recognise that the problem is to-day organic with the very structure of society; and that a problem of five hundred years' growth is not to be solved in a day, and that to urge the workers to militant actions can only have the result of hardening the heart of Pharaoh. If a revolution is to come it will come from a disintegration of the governing class. So long as industrialism endures, the capitalist will remain master of the position, because society has no organic structure apart from his activities. Its normal tendency is towards dissolution where it is not towards a tightening of the reins. If you propose to reform society on its existing basis, and accept the great industry as inevitable, then I ask how do you propose to check this tendency? For, remember, you cannot do so by working on the lines of economic evolution, that is, by following the line of least resistance. Nationalisation will not check it. If you are going to reform the modern world in any direction, at some time or other you must put in motion forces which run counter to present tendencies. What kind of forces are these, and how are you going to set them in motion? These are questions which must be answered in one way or another. It is difficult to-day; it will be more difficult to-morrow. And then if you do set these forces in motion I would ask where do you differ from such as accept the Mediæval position and are working for the

restoration of the past? I think you will find, as you get nearer to the fact, the difference is not a difference of principle, but one of degree. The Socialist just as much as the Mediævalist must aim at setting the clock back the moment he embarks upon reform. The only question is how far will he set it back? If we pursue the matter further we shall find that that depends upon the knowledge at his disposal. We may agree that facts are facts, and it is on facts that we have to build. But let us have all the facts, not a judicious selection of them. When the Fabian Society gives up its political aspirations and settles down to the real work for which it is fitted, namely, research, and unearths all the facts about modern industrialism, I venture to think it will ultimately arrive at the Mediæval position. In the meantime it is well to remember that Mediævalists are invariably actual producers who are perfectly familiar with the facts of modern industrialism, economic as well as æsthetic, whereas Fabians are mainly legal, medical, and literary men who are not.

## Towards the Play Way.

By H. Caldwell Cook.

### VIII.

A VISITOR inquired of me recently, "What do you do with a play of Shakespeare?" "Act it," I replied. "What else can you do with a play?" What the old-fashioned pedant could do to a play of Shakespeare is too well known to bear relation, but, incredible though it seems, it is still rare to find acting the principal means of dealing with plays in school. Teachers still compel their pupils to examine minutely a play they have not even read as a story. Here is a paragraph from "Notes on the Teaching of English in the Lower Middles, at Rugby," published a bare four months ago. In keeping with the title of the division "Lower Middles," the method of teaching might be described as "hitting below the belt."

A reading lesson, when the book is a play, proceeds as follows: the Master reads aloud himself, the boys all following. He reads as dramatically as possible, exaggerating his effects, taking ellipses himself in order to encourage the boys to try an inch. When he has read twenty or thirty lines the work begins. The meaning is examined: dug out of the words, torn out of the idioms, enticed out of the allusions. Every bush is beaten, and hares that start up, whether historical, mythological, moral, geographical, political, etymological, architectural, or ecclesiastical, are pursued, and, if possible, caught. All this must be done by the Form, and the Master should play the part of huntsman while they are hounds. . . . Doubtless these hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind. Alas, poor "Lower Middles." "As soon as a scene has been read intensively in this way, the parts are assigned to readers, the others shut their books, and it is read dramatically with any amount of coaching in emphasis and inflection by the Master. . . . When, in the course of a fortnight or ten days, a whole act has been finished, it is read right through dramatically." But then, surely, it is too late. As well hand over your dog to be hung, drawn, quartered, tarred and feathered, and then whistle him out for a run. It appears that the play most recently vivisected in this manner was no other than "Twelfth Night." One recalls Toby's "Tut, there's life in't, man." And we can fancy the "Lower Middles" overlooking the opening line and chanting in chorus:—

Give me excess of it; that, surfeiting,  
The appetite may sicken and so die.

If the meaning has been enticed out of the allusion to "fell and cruel hounds" which occurs in Orsino's second speech, the Master knows what he risks as huntsman of such fearful wildfowl. Ecclesiastical hare, forsooth!

When a teacher says that in his treatment of Shakespeare, "the parts are assigned and the play read dramatically," this generally means no more than the boys reading in turns while seated in their desks. I insist that to ignore action is to ignore the play. A book in the hand is not a very serious impediment to a boy who has the chance to stab someone, or to storm a city wall. The writer I have quoted actually applies to Form lessons what Disraeli said of public dinners, "They are meant to be dull." So we must allow that he is not unaware of the boredom necessarily incurred by his strange partiality for pursuing the architectural and political hare in the study of a Shakespearian comedy. The Play Way, on the other hand, desires to avoid unnecessary dullness, so the playboys are allowed to make their first acquaintance of the play in the manner that most appeals to them. Thus they do all the necessary work of their own accord. In the beginning the class elects a "producer," whose business it is to assign the parts, to act call-boy, to insist on the use of necessary properties, and ingeniously to supply them. He is also responsible for the general order. The boys—I speak now of Form IIB, age 13—are anxious to begin as soon as they enter the classroom, whether the master is there or not. This past week, as a matter of fact, the master of this subject has been ill in bed, but those who were looking after his work have allowed the boys to carry on for themselves a whole lesson at a stretch, a master either looking on as a visitor or not present at all.

If suiting the action to the word is insisted upon, properties are soon supplied. The iron weapons of the Kirkby Sword Dance, the wooden laths of the Flamborough, and certain oak wands used in class recital of poems are all in daily use also as properties. Macbeth's witches mutter enchantments over the wastepaper basket, Gratiano and Lorenzo make great play of courtesy with their school caps, and the suitors of Portia "hazard all they have" upon a box of chalk, a Latin dictionary and a dispatch box. Two episodes in class the other day were the occasion of great merriment. Evidently the producer was slack, for Portia, about to enter with the Prince of Arragon, found herself unattended. Thereupon, striking a most comical attitude to suggest the offended dame, the playboy observed in character, "And *where's* my train?" Just as a prim lady on finding the servants in bed in the morning might ask, "What is the meaning of this, pray?" But the producer got his own back before the end of that scene. When Arragon opens the silver casket he should start back amazed; and Portia should say, "Too long a pause for that which you find there." The producer had looked ahead; and when the lid of the chalk-box was drawn open there appeared such a startling "portrait of a blinking idiot" that Portia's whole retinue burst into shouts of laughter. Such episodes do not spoil the comedy for the boys, but add to its fun; and there is no need to dig the meaning out of the words, tear it out of the idioms, or entice it out of the allusions. Anything not readily intelligible is suffered to go by at the first reading unless the players get hung up over a difficulty. In that case the Master gives a brief explanation, and on they go.

In support of my contention that the boys do really feel the play when they act it in school it may perhaps be allowable to quote the report of an onlooker which appeared a while back in the "Daily News." "Remember how you were taught Shakespeare at school, the dreary reading of a dull play, the dreary explanations of the meaning of obscure words, the lifeless recitation of speeches, and then consider this: 'Well, Jones,' said the Master, 'you're producer, I'll leave it to you.' Then the Master retired to the back of the

room, while the sacred area round his desk was invaded by Jones and his cast. And then they put their backs into it with a vengeance. They read their parts from the book so well that they had to be pulled up only occasionally by the Master or by the youthful Jones. They acted too, and uncommonly well. The great scene was the charge into the breach of Harfleur. To my astonishment I realised that there was actually going to be a fight in the classroom of a school. I saw half a dozen boys armed with sticks take up a position behind the Masters' desk, and then I saw Jones mounted on a bench urging his followers on to the attack. In a great voice he reminded them of their duty, and at the word of command a dozen boys charged the little force holding the Master's desk. In a moment the classroom was filled with the sound of blows, while the master looked on smiling. Twice the charge was repeated, and even a third time did the enthusiastic Jones cry aloud: 'Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more, or close the wall up with our English dead!' But at last the Master thought there had been fighting enough. 'Steady, Jones,' he said. 'You can make the speech, but we don't want another charge.' Jones looked round reproachfully."

It is only to be expected that the boys will do justice to noisy heroics. But it is not generally recognised that by letting them act the plays from the beginning you make it possible for boys under fifteen to appreciate some of the most difficult and moving passages of tragedy. To know this as a fact surely gives great support to my belief that a true feeling for art values may be expected to arise out of the trial practice of the arts. Two instances shall conclude this paper.

The present fourth form having read most of the Shakespeare plays usually done in school, the bold experiment was tried of introducing "Hamlet." It is not so bold if you are to treat it as archæology, but as a play for boys of fourteen there is a fair risk of the motive, the passion of Hamlet, being unappreciated. We came to Hamlet's interview with his mother. The fourteen-year-old boy who played Hamlet had read over the scene beforehand, but there had been no coaching. True, he had been with me to see Mr. Poel's recent production, but his rendering of the scene was quite unlike Mr. Esmé Percy's fine interpretation. There is no doubt in my own mind—and this is the remarkable thing—that the boy interpreted the words spontaneously. In fact he said afterwards that he "made it up as he went along." Hamlet began the scene with an air of assumed madness, snapping out the words in a high-pitched voice. But with "Come, come, and sit you down" his whole bearing changed to suit his altered purpose. He became outwardly calm, but spoke in a tense voice full of restrained excitement. Just that voice, in fact, which so frightened the Queen that she cried out on murder. At this point the death of Polonius provided, of course, an exciting sensation for the class. But, after that, nothing else was thought of but the passion of Hamlet. The boys all watched in breathless interest. No one moved in his seat. It is a pity that the boy playing the Queen unconsciously became an onlooker also, and simply walked through his part. A change from pathos in "This *was* your husband," to contempt in "This *is* your husband"—no easy thing for a boy to express—was very effective, and the tone in "Ha! have you eyes?" rose to a kind of shriek, which seemed to make clear once and for all that the madness of Hamlet was neither real madness nor assumed, but hysteria. Just before the Ghost appeared Hamlet was openly ranting, shouting and throwing his arms about. But now he fell suddenly to his knees, bent low his head and prayed in a hushed voice:

Save me and hover o'er me with your wings,  
You heavenly guards!

And when he crouched right low upon the ground and moaned appealingly, "Do not look upon me," I really almost wished Polonius might have come to life to break the tension with "Look whether he has not

turned colour, and has tears in's eyes.—Pray you no more." Yet when the Queen said,

O, Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain!  
he had spied enough of Hamlet's next attitude not to speak sympathetically; but assumed again his high-pitched tone of madness, and rapped out his lines as before. A school edition has to cut most of what remains of this scene. But the concluding words appealed to me as much as anything. The dead body could not be dragged along the floor, but though Polonius arose and walked out by Hamlet's side no one laughed. And Hamlet, all his excitement gone, piped in a high, mad, jaunty voice, "Good-night, mother." It was diabolical.

The other boys remained sitting, and no one spoke a word. The atmosphere showed that no comment was needed, so I simply praised it as the finest piece of work I had ever seen in the school; and the class dispersed.

Another instance of the playboys' appreciation of tragedy was seen at the close of Richard II, a play which they thoroughly enjoyed in Form IIIa (age 14). The favourite scene was the lists at Coventry, which they played quite half a dozen times. The King surrounded by his court, was seated high aloft on a chair perched on top of my desk, and there was much heraldic display. The champions had each a squire to bear his shield, and a herald with a scroll to read his challenge. The marshal elaborated the business every time, and required more and more performers, until at last the master alone remained sitting in the stocks. They had much fun out of old York, who was played as a fussy old gentleman, and nicknamed "Boots" from his idiotic behaviour in the fifth act. The murder of Richard was carried out with some vigour. After the King had slain the two servants, and Exton was about to run him through, the producer, who had consulted Holinshed's account in a note in another edition, interrupted to insist that Exton must stand on the table and smash the King's head from above. Richard in his turn insisted, for the sake of the climax, on the two servants rising to be slain again. The menials rose and dusted themselves. Exton blundered again, so Richard, who resolutely refused to be dispatched unless the deed were done well, had the whole business repeated, servants and all—he had now contrived to get in six slaughters for the two of them! Last of all the King died also. The triumph came at the very close. While Bolingbroke was winding up his affairs and collecting the heads of traitors, the ingenious producer made ready the funeral procession. A blackboard easel was brought out, and thereon to be borne in by four stalwarts shoulder-high, was laid the body of King Richard. It was supremely ridiculous, because the bearers were of different heights, and the body much in peril of rolling off. But I called a hush, and we all proceeded to play the finale seriously. Exton and Bolingbroke spoke with feeling, and the rest were now perfectly solemn. On the words,

March sadly after; grace my mournings here,  
In weeping after this untimely bier.

the bearers elaborately turned about and the coffin was borne away foot foremost. Bolingbroke stepped down from the dais sceptre in hand, and the lords attendant followed in pairs, each with his bare sword resting on his arm. Poor Exton shuffled hopelessly on behind. The door was opened, and very slowly and solemnly the procession of twenty passed out of the room. I was left alone with a visitor. We were both absurdly impressed. Without scenery, lighting, costume, music or any other aid but the thoughts which are able to piece out all imperfections, and even to deck the obsequies of a king, these playboys out of the spontaneity of their hearts had staged us a tragedy.

A moment later in the passage the dead King came to the ground with a flop, and as the easel was replaced in the corner, they all rushed in to know what we thought of it. "Stop this noise," said the pedagogue. "Shut the door and be seated at once."

## The Day's Work in Albania.

By Anthony Bradford.

### III.

THE Bora—the foulest of North winds—had been roaring for days and showed some signs of lessening, but it was useless to try and get to the front by the usual roads. All of them would be unclimbable and unfordable. There was nothing for it but to take the train to Vir Bazar and chance getting a steamer or boat down Lake Scutari. This was no ordinary train, but a toy affair on a two-foot gauge, and it stopped where you wanted it to, and at many other places, and never seemed to get out of a saunter. As there was only one on the whole Montenegrin system, it seemed very friendly, because we soon became familiar with the guard and engine-driver and the stoker; in fact with the whole railway staff—all Italians. Antivari, of course, is nothing but the Orient Commercial Company, which is but a ruse of the Italian Government, and owns everything thereabouts. Certainly there are a Montenegrin Governor and a Prefect of Police (who is a poet—surely the only one in the world), who live in the post office building, where even the office boy is armed to the teeth with revolvers and knives, but the Montenegrin provincial headquarters are more at home at the old ruined Venetian city of Bar, which sits on a hill behind Antivari, and sports its old lions of St. Mark on its shattered walls, and shelters its bazar full of wild Albanians, and sulks at the alien on the beach. The poetic Prefect was a fine figure of a man, and wore the national costume, and stood picturesquely at corners all day long, smoking cigarettes, and flung his scarf round his shoulders in a gallant way. He was standing thus, sunning himself, when one day Nikolas arrived unheralded, and fell upon him, and shot him off to the front, to die for his country. I met him on the way there, less his fine feathers, and clothed in sober kâki, riding a small pony with his long legs nearly on the ground, and looking very dismal. However, the general would not risk the poet's life, and so he was sent back, and was received on his return at Antivari, after but five days' absence, with great enthusiasm as a Valentine home from the wars. But ever afterwards when old Nikolas was about, he seemed shy and remained in bed.

Snow and slush were deep on the station platform, and the floor of the one first-class carriage in Montenegro was sodden with it, and so I had some hay brought in to make the place less depressing. Hours late, we started off with all the seats occupied and with the usual fusilade by departing soldiers, without which nothing happens. At the first stop, standing space was filled up with Montenegrin women and their bundles—part of the transport of the army. Mothers and daughters and wives of privates and officers they were, carrying bread and wine and homely delicacies to their men in the trenches round Scutari; all very sober-looking bodies with downcast eyes, because of the presence of strange men, and all refusing our proffered seats. There was little to distinguish any one among them. A life of hard outdoor work had left its mark on most, banishing any feminine softness. One met them at all sorts of places—trudging along mountain paths in single file carrying old petroleum boxes full of food, sitting the whole night long on the dirty floors of wayside inns and guard stations, and now here wedged into a railway carriage, and thankful to be anywhere away from the cold and wet. Several had been shot recently getting to the front, but most of them preferred that risk to railway travelling because, apart from the ordinary discomforts, they seemed to suffer especially from nausea—a sort of railway sickness. Their toil and hardship met with little appreciation from their men folk, who, as on the present occasion, did not dream of offering them their seats. On a former journey, one fellow, wearing a Montenegrin Red Cross badge, and so, of course, consecrated to chivalry, had

got quite angry with me for suggesting that he should give his seat up. "Gospodin doctor, I will give it to you with pleasure, but why should I give it to a woman?" Why, indeed! Behind that remark were centuries of struggle against the Turk and Albanian—centuries during which the men had to guard the passes and the hills while the women grubbed the stony land.

When half-way up the mountain it began to snow again, and the Bora increased to a blizzard, and a little farther on the train, after many checks, came to a standstill. The guard came along and shrugged his shoulders, and we waited and waited for fresh engines to shove us out of the snow. Thus the whole day passed. My orderly had fortunately put by some bread and cheese and onions, so things were not so bad. The fresh engine arrived with the night, and yard by yard we were pushed up, till finally, at the most exposed spot, all the engines together could not shift us, and so there we were snowed up till daylight and some men could arrive to dig us out. There was but one small smoky lamp in the compartment, and we were so crowded together that it was hard to move. Once I managed to get out in the hope of finding a shed near, but the cold outside was so intense and the wind so strong that it was difficult to breathe, and I gladly got back again to the evil atmosphere of the carriage.

Some of the women had been induced to take seats, and I had been professionally concerned about one who looked as if with the slightest encouragement she might have a baby at any moment. I thanked Heaven that the hay had been brought in, as it made an existence on the floor possible. Fortunately, however, nothing happened. There was a third-class compartment full of soldiers divided off from ours by a door, and a large jar of the native spirit—a kind of brandy, but tasting like smoky gin—had been shared out liberally, and a young Montenegrin, returning from Egypt to fight, would insist on coming in to us in order to embrace me, as he said he knew the English. He brought a large supply of alcohol with him, and we all—including the women—drank the health of England, ourselves, and the late Mr. Gladstone (who is a Montenegrin saint) several times, and we all felt much better. Then more spirits were passed round and my young friend from Cairo returned to his carriage full of fresh admiration for the English, and he seemed there to make a nuisance of himself, because presently we heard a noisy argument going on, and then revolver shots. The door slid back suddenly and the youth was flung in on top of us, revolver and all: as much as to say—if you are so fond of the English, go to them! He was still cheering for England, and so we had to disarm him and sit on him. In this we were helped by the women, who seemed to quite understand the best methods. Then the enthusiast wept at the bad manners of the people next door, and finally he was sick and went to sleep. By this time the company had had all the alcohol they needed, and the women were not so shy. I had asked one of them what her name was, and had received no answer, but apparently all had heard the question, because later, sitting on the floor and leaning against a seat trying to sleep, I suddenly got a dig in the ribs from one of them who, pointing to herself, said: "Maritza." I responded suitably and was then formally introduced to the whole lot, mainly "Maritzas" and "Militsas." And at various times during the rest of my slumbers I received more digs in the ribs and the introductions were repeated. We were a very jolly and friendly lot just then.

Daylight brought fine weather, and the line was cleared to the summit, where at a shed we managed to get some coffee and bread. Here I found an old Montenegrin warrior, nearly dead with cold, and about to carry his ninety years to the front. He had been in every fight for nearly a century, and was not to be denied this one. I got him round by giving him some hot food and brandy, and had great trouble in refusing to take from him an old jewelled and silver-mounted

Turkish sword, which he had taken in his young days from some Pasha.

The journey down the other side of the mountain was a simple matter. Our train slid down in the sunlight, the engine pushing huge snow balls in front of it, until it looked as if at every moment we were going to follow them over the side down into the valleys. At last, thirty hours late, and having missed all connections, we arrived at Vir Bazar with nothing to do until the next morning, when I hoped to get a steamer to take me and my baggage down the lake to the army before Scutari. The weekly market was in full swing, and the town was crowded, and I had some difficulty in finding a lodging, but at last I got a bed in a room with several others, all owned by an amiable stout lady. She at once took charge of me like a mother and insisted on remaining in the room while I went to bed. I sat bashfully on the edge for some time, and she sat in a chair in the middle of the floor and stared frankly at me, until at last I pulled myself together and was really brave and undressed. But what seemed to impress her most were my pyjamas, because later she described them most minutely to a visitor, another stout lady, who was obviously amazed. Afterwards she, too, arranged her garments and toilet suitably—a simple matter—and got into bed. An officer turned in next, and then a Swiss doctor, and all the beds were full. The arrangement seemed quite satisfactory, except that the stout lady had a bad cough which troubled her a lot, and, after the manner of her race, spat rather noisily on the floor the whole night long. There was a simplicity about the bed-clothes—no blankets, but a sort of wadded quilt with a sheet stitched on the under side of it: a sheet which apparently did duty there for months. Still we slept, and were thankful.

## Judas.

By W. Teignmouth Shore.

THE scene is Jerusalem in the year 33 after the birth of Christ. A man is pacing restlessly up and down the flat roof of a small house; in his face a great fear; often looking down furtively as though seeking something that he has lost; never looking steadily at the city, which sleeps restlessly in the starlight, only here and there a lamp burning, sending out a faint ray, and for a few minutes the gold and white walls of the Temple glow in the light of torches. On the parapet, near to the head of the stairway which leads down outside the dwelling, stand a jug of wine, a strainer of finely woven Egyptian palm fibre, a cup, and in a basket some bread and fruit. The man is Judas of Kerioth, a tall, lank, shambling man; his small eyes cunning and secretive; cheek-bones high and cheeks hollow; his full-lipped mouth always active with a motion as if he were chewing. His hands are clasped behind his back, the long, lean fingers tightly interlocked, but at times restlessly twitching. Turning in his walk, he finds himself confronted by a tall, dark-faced man—his features are handsome, almost too perfectly so; complexion olive-brown; hair jet black, as, also, are his eyes, which even in this dim light Judas perceives to be piercingly brilliant.

Judas (shrinking back): "Who are you?"

Stranger: "A friend."

Judas: "I know you not. You come more like a foe. What is your errand?"

Stranger: "To see you, who have done that which makes even me envious. To speak with you, and to tell you that which you know, but which you would forget, could you do so. You are so born to cunning that you desire even to deceive yourself. You are fighting, as you have often fought before, against the temptation to be honest with yourself. I am here to help you to surrender to that temptation."

Judas: "Again I ask, who are you?"

Stranger: "Again I answer, I am a friend. Although it is not customary to count it as an act of friendship, I am come to help you to see yourself as you really are. You are not doing yourself justice, Judas; you belittle yourself by playing the part of a coward. Because you have betrayed your master is not any reason why you should play the traitor to yourself."

Judas (shrinking at the sneer): "Who are you? What knowledge have you of me?"

Stranger (before whose searching look Judas recoils): "I know your heart; I know those things which you would keep secret even from yourself."

Judas: "Who are you? I fear you."

Stranger: "Many men fear me. I am called by many titles. Again I answer you, I visit you as a friend. Why do you draw back from a friend? You have not many friends—your memory will have none. Drink a cup of your wine, it will put courage into your heart."

Judas: "Whoever you may be, I will not fear you. I have done no wrong."

Stranger: "Did I accuse you? (Seating himself upon the parapet.) You have done no wrong? Why do you deny that deed of which you should be proud? You have obeyed your desires, and argue with yourself that it is well done. Or, that, if there should be anything of evil in it, good will be the outcome. Yet, Judas, you must confess that juggling does not help you; there is biting into your heart an increasing horror of what you have done, which will—unchecked—in the event lead to—"

Judas: "To?"

Stranger: "Will lead you to me, for ever. You possess a certain interest for me, Judas. You are unique. It amazes me that a man of your keen insight should hope to be able to close your eyes to the true aspect of your act, which has won for you an immortality of despair. There are the eleven others, worthy men; you only dared betray your God."

Judas (fiercely): "He is not God."

Stranger: "You deny Him, as Peter did but now; but, just as he knows it, so do you know that you lie. A man is foolish to lie to himself, the purport of a lie being to deceive."

Judas: "They would have taken Him without any aid from me. It had been so decided by the Chief Priests."

Stranger (laughing ironically): "You cannot lie away that kiss, even to yourself. I know your thought. I know that you lay the flattering lie to your soul that if the Son of Man be verily the Son of God He has power over His enemies, so that they can do Him no hurt."

Judas (speaking rapidly and vehemently, endeavouring to convince himself of the truth of what he is saying): "I was one of the disciples by the lake of Gennesaret. He called me to be one of the twelve. I believed on Him then. My eyes were veiled to the truth; His sayings and His doings deceived me. But when I perceived that His teaching was stirring discontent among the people, raising envy and malice in the hearts of the poor and ignorant, and that He was an enemy of authority, my eyes were opened, and I repented. Therefore, when we came to Jerusalem, I went to the priests, confessing my sin, and asking what I must do to be saved."

Stranger: "They spoke comfortable words to you, and filled your hands with silver."

Judas (hoarsely): "How know you that?"

Stranger: "They filled your hands with the price of blood."

Judas: "It is not the price of blood. I am poor. I have robbed no man. I would be free. They gave me of their charity."

Stranger (rising and standing face to face with Judas, who at first meets him unappalled, but then cowers): "I know and you know—that this silver is the price of blood. I know and you know—that you are lying to me and to yourself. Money is your god. You went unto the Chief Priests, and bargained with them for these thirty

pieces of silver. The thought that you might win money by betraying Him entered your heart as you sat at meat with Him in the house of Simon, the leper, at Bethany—"

Judas: "Were you there?"

Stranger: "—when the woman came with the alabaster box of ointment of spikenard. It angered you that the ointment should not have been sold, and the price added to the bag which you carried and from which you *did* thief."

Judas (trembling and moistening his lips): "I took only my own share."

Stranger: "Look at yourself, Judas; be ashamed and afraid."

Judas (stuttering with fear): "I am not afraid. I have done no wrong."

Stranger: "You have committed a grand sin for a petty price; not for the pride of so greatly sinning. These excuses ring hollow even in your own ears; it is your instinct to lie. You lie when you say that at first you believed on Him; from the beginning you were false. You counted on a chance of advancement for yourself, you to whom life held forth no hope of prosperity, but the certainty of toil and small reward. The people followed Him. Had He been triumphant as you believed He might be, winning place, power, money, you would have shared His lot. When that hope faded, when only the humble and the meek were foolish enough to follow Him, and the rich and the powerful stood aloof, or were His open foes, then your love turned to spite. You bided your time, and when opportunity offered held out your hand for the blood money."

Judas (glancing fearfully at his hands): "There is no blood on them."

Stranger: "I have an admiration for a man who triumphs in his sin and dares to be an open rebel against his god. I, too, am a rebel. But I spew at one such as yourself, who sins and endeavours to persuade himself that his sin is an act of grace. A sinner should find joy in his sin. You have done that which will make your name immortal, and you shrink from claiming your due. And, why be so paltry as to ask a price for such a deed? It is beyond reward. You are a pitiful sinner; almost unwittingly you have raised yourself above all other doers of evil. I imagine you will repent, cry for pardon, even give back the silver you have earned. You clutch at your garment! The pieces are next your heart. Fool, it is not of such poor clay that great sinners are made. You are a little sinner who in a frenzy of greed and spite wrought a deed from which many a great sinner would have shrunk. You are great in despite of yourself. You cannot comprehend the greatness of what you have done, your feeble eyes are blinded by the shimmer of silver. And when some glimmer of the truth does force itself on you, you cringe and lie. I love a cheerful sinner."

Judas (whose frame appears to shrink as he cowers to the ground): "Why do you torture me?"

Stranger: "I do not torture you; I never give pain to any man, but watch that which they inflict upon themselves. You torture yourself; you are tearing your heartstrings with fearful fingers. Had you faced yourself and your deed before it was accomplished you would not have taken upon your shoulders a burden you are afraid to bear. You are in hell now."

Judas (his lips writhing and his eyes shrinking with fear): "They dare not kill Him."

Stranger: "You dare betray; will they fear to kill? You did not fear to do a wrong; will they fear to do what they believe to be right? Though you close them your eyes see more clearly and more clearly; each minute that kiss burns more deeply on your lips. Lie there, and grovel. I envy your deed; I despise you. Only a man could conceive a deed so great and so evil; only Judas could accomplish it in a manner so mean, would belittle it by endeavouring to paint black white—could dare repent of it."

The Stranger kicks the figure grovelling before him, and laughs. When Judas looks up again he is alone.

## A Perfect Modern.

By Walter Sickert.

It will perhaps be convenient and appropriate for me to postpone taking up the thread of my considerations on scale till next week, and to endeavour to concentrate in a page some of the reflections suggested by the short life of one of our greatest modern painters, the unfolding of whose genius it has been my privilege to watch from a position of exceptional advantage.

Spencer Frederick Gore built his astonishingly accelerated and fragrantly personal development on the good and stable foundation of a faithful, reverent and obedient studentship. It was at the end of that studentship that I first made his acquaintance. If he learnt to command, and the years that are to come will amply justify my opinion that his influence on a whole generation has only begun, it was that he had been content to obey for many years in silence. Monsieur Degas once sketched out to me an ideal which he had always sighed for. He said, "I wish things were so that when I was asked, 'Why do you do this or that,' I might answer 'Because my master told me to.'" It was curious, in these days, and distinctly unfashionable to hear a young man, who was already influencing a whole generation, willingly allude with gratitude and appreciation to the authority of the men under whom he studied. It was a common thing for him to recall with pleasure the excellence and rightness of this or that piece of advice or example that he owed individually to each of his teachers. "Brown," he would say, "taught me such a thing very thoroughly." "Steer was right when he insisted on this, or Tonks on that." "Russell's practice was always thus." And this power of glad and grateful assimilation remained his throughout the short years into which he crowded the sane experiences and ordered achievements that are given to few men of long life to accumulate.

If leisure for reflection, musing, a kind of playing chess with ideas, may be said to be the ultimate aim for which we all grunt and sweat, and, as the French say, derange ourselves, it was Gore's secret that he wrung, out of a life of incessant intellectual and material service to colleagues and friends, seemingly twenty-four hours a day for the exercise of the purest, the serenest, and the most exhilarated reflection. But it was brush in hand that he reflected.

How conscious most painters are all their lives of this difficulty. They can truly claim, perhaps, to have wielded their pick and spade with energy during the appointed hours, but the magic moments seem always to find them unarmed. Either it is too early in the day, and their wits are not yet with them, or it is too late and they have laid down their tools. The most magnificent game seem always to be started when they have not their gun handy. It was Gore's secret that he seemed to have bagged his bird before or after hours, without prejudice to the regular day's work.

The causes for this faculty, or, let us say, habit, are not far to seek. His intelligence must have told him early that the material paraphernalia of painting is a truculent and hard-mouthed beast. But it was the one he intended to ride, and he took care to come to terms with it from the first, or rather that it came to terms with him—his terms. He had the hardness, with himself, that belongs to breeding, or genius, or both. I never heard him complain of anything. His view of the function of a modern realist in painting can be clearly deduced from his practice. Firstly, he was to accomplish his purpose by means of his chosen instrument, which was oil-paint. He cultivated this instrument to such purpose, that, though he proposed, in time, to fit in campaigns in other fields, and would doubtless have done so had he lived, it would be exact to say of him, as one says of a musician, "he was a violinist," "he was a pianist," that he was an oil-painter. He accepted the instrument as he found it handed down to us by Monet and Pissarro, let us say, for brevity. He ac-

cepted it for what is to be got out of it as an opaque mosaic. He held the not unreasonable conviction that nature was a thicker lexicon than what was bound between the covers of any one human being, and he drilled himself to be the passive and enchanted conduit for whatever of loveliness his eyes might rest upon.

He became a great draughtsman by the road of colour. His studies in line for the extremely complicated pictures he painted of music-hall scenes were means to an end, and therefore so concise as not to be easily legible to a layman. For this very reason, devoid of rhetoric and padding as they are, they will be valued as educational documents of importance. I shall always remember my envy at the dogged way in which he would take his stand, in all weathers, in the queue at the door of the Alhambra at an impossibly early hour, with the regularity of clockwork, so that he might find himself in the desired seat to continue his study of some chosen scene. Some of these pictures were miracles of charm, and above all of fullness. Conder-like fancies, they had the resonance of reality, with all their grace as firmly established in its three dimensions as sculpture. I can see ballets like forests of seaweed extended like fans under an immense arch of some capricious border of coloured darkness. I remember a drop-scene, pregnant behind its coloured vignette of some magical nonsense to come, with, before it, the stiff and apologetic movement silhouetted of a group of late arrivals making their way through the stalls. One picture represents the burlesque apotheosis of the end of an act where there are kings, and "principal boys," and officers in uniform and, conspicuously draped, a Union Jack which plays the leading rôle in the impression.

I remember a garden of rose-trees, little stiff trees aligned with bare thin stems, planted like a set of skittles, or soldiers in extended formation, each one with its tender and radiant burden, trembling in the glittering sunlight. I remember their shadows and the gravel path beyond seen through the stems, and that the path dipped under the shade of some branches, under which was the way out from the picture to some promise of more. Gore understood very well that the painter can give only a sample of each kind of nature, can only make of each canvas a microcosm of each mansion in the house of life.

There was a month of June a few years ago which Gore verily seems to have used as if he had known that it was to be for him the last of its particularly fresh and sumptuous kind. He used it to look down on the garden of Mornington Crescent. The trained trees rise and droop in fringes, like fountains, over the little well of greenness and shade where little parties of young people are playing at tennis. The back-cloth of this scene is formed by the tops of the brown houses of the Hampstead Road, and the liver-coloured tiles of the Tube Station.

But it is not only out of scenes obviously beautiful in themselves, and of delightful suggestion, that the modern painter can conjure a panel of encrusted enamel. Gore had the digestion of an ostrich. A scene, the dreariness and hopelessness of which would strike terror into most of us, was to him matter for lyrical and exhilarated improvisation. I have a picture by him of a place that looks like hell, with a distant iron bridge in the middle distance, and a bad classic façade like the façade of a kinema, and two new municipal trees like brooms, and the stiff curve of a new pavement in front, on which stalks and looms a lout in a lounge suit. The artist is he who can take a piece of flint and wring out of it drops of attar of roses.

The memorial exhibition will give us the opportunity of realising what a decade of maturity can accomplish in the hands of genius. Our critics are voluble in prophecy about the art of the future. It is more probable that the future will belong to those who have accomplished something in the present, than to the young men who sit in the Café Royal waiting to be crowned on the strength of their own post-dated stumers on futurity.

## Present-Day Criticism.

IN the "New Statesman" Mr. J. C. Squire publishes a rhymed soliloquy which he calls an Ode, but which we take to be a satire on a modern poet. Such a subject cannot be considered indifferent by any of us. Herein is a characterisation of the worst effects of modernity on a poet; and the idea, as we apprehend it, is carried out even to realistic extreme in the reproduction of the alternating metrical order and disorder which betrays the nerves of the poet scorified beyond self-control. One spiritual refuge is yet left to the artist, his shame at witnessing the triumph of commercialism. In the piece written by Mr. Squire, we may trace the gradual crumbling of even this refuge, to behold at last the spectacle of a poet utterly bemeaned out of his soul.

The poet is seated in one of those common gaudy restaurants which vilify civilisation, where the lures of money-makers, pretentious gilding, mirrors and staring lights, destructive of digestion, slander the intelligence of man. Steam, "scurrying beetles" of waiters, a thin, sharp band like a gnat's buzzing amid the general noise, and "two hundred munching men" fill in a scene as ordinary as nauseous. The poet confesses to feeling sick at it, to droop, to become emasculate by contact with men behaving in this gilded sty like dressed-up animals.

Some make noises while they eat,  
Pick their teeth, or shuffle their feet,  
Blow their noses. . . .

By sympathy, we understand, that he begins to drink. What else? The alcohol will set a magic ring around him—one, albeit, that will not stay.

With newly flowing blood  
I lift, and now float over  
The restaurant's expanses  
Like a draggled sea-gull over dreary flats of mud.  
\* \* \* \*

No drooping now, the place is mine,  
Beating the walls with shattering wings  
Over the herd my spirit swings,  
In triumph shouts "Aha, you swine!  
Grovel before your lord divine!  
I, only I, am real here! . . . .

Note the conquering beat of the rhythm—the full phrases. The poet's rhetoric is honest, from his heart! The swine will jeer; this will not make them less swine, poor things, or the poet less a poet.

Through the uncertain firmament,  
Still bestial in their dull content,  
The despicable phantoms leer . . . .  
Hogs! even now in my right hand  
I hold at my will the thunderbolts  
Measured not in mortal volts  
Would crash you to annihilation!

Read this, for you will never any more find him so exalted. True, he appears to be willing to annihilate them for their uncouthness; but, is it they whom he hates or the gilders of the sty?—these, that by force of money and for no sake but getting more money, set about to dazzle and corrupt the uprising people, and use for this end an imitation of art, this imitation which now is everywhere thrust between the people and real art. You will see soon that the poet is pitiful—too pitiful for respect—of the people.

He feels the pressure of the sordid times, wealthy times, when the service of the body has become all in all. We divine his thoughts: he has to live in these times! He is no master, but the victim of commercialism, even as these others. His faith fails, and there is no one at hand to strengthen him. False shame seizes upon him to have felt for a while the superiority which great men are only ashamed ever to lose. He is hurled down. Reason raises his terror, and terror hurls him down.

O sadness, sadness, feel the returning pain  
Of touch with unescapable mortal things again!  
The cloth is linen, the floor is wood,  
My plate holds cheese, my tumbler toddy;  
I cannot get free of the body,  
And no man ever could.

The powerful rhythm is gone; any one that comes is

allowed way, is clutched until the nervous and abrupt, despairing finish. He has been hit by the superficial a flat stroke of materialism. Henceforth, he is confused.

Self! do not lose your hold on life,  
Nor coward seek to shrink the strife  
Of body and spirit;

That is just what he will do—to shrink the strife of body and spirit: reason will justify body, spirit will be accused, and those wings of the gull will be assaulted.

even now  
(Not for the first time), even now  
Clear in your ears has rung the message  
That tense abstraction is the passage  
To nervelessness and living death.  
Never forget while you draw breath  
That all the hammers of will can never  
Your chained soul from matter sever.

The signs of mastery are all lost. The rhythm is crabbed, phrases spill over and are padded, the rhymes are feminine, feeble and stale; and we have come down to metaphorical hammers where so lately nothing less than the elements might serve. Everything has slowed down.

And though it be confused and mixed. . . .

Note the vocabulary.

This is the world in which you're fixed,  
Never despise the things that are,  
Set your teeth upon the grit  
Though your heart like a motor beat,  
Hold fast this earthly star,  
The whole of it, the whole of it.

He has begun to forget who he is, to forget the things that may be. He will pretend and almost convince himself that to keep one's hold on life is to tolerate—and soon he will glorify!—much that makes life a disgrace and a persecution. The whole of it? What? These duped swine and all. Yes, he has indulged in feeling his state to be a little like theirs; and this is not intolerably uncomfortable, to feel the helpless victim of one's times. It is the excuse made by Fleet Street—one cannot *escape* from the net of our commercial system; to attempt escape is to be hunted down; it is to see one's family starve; one must be as the rest, or go under! So men of talent force down their objections to duping the people, emasculating them. Some, like our poet, will begin by convincing themselves that their very best effort will be to get right down into the sty and work from there. But once there they have foregone their birthright, they will themselves be unable to rise. The artist may not become a preacher after the apostolic fashion. He may need to become a fighter when the field is closed; but he must fight from his own place, with his works for his arrows. When things come to the pass that people are deluded by coarse imitations of art and literature, and inventions of intellect are misused to keep the people inert, then the business of the artist is battle against the corrupting class. The English plutocracy is at this work of delusion.

And is this all—that the unintelligent are stifled and forbidden to improve? No! Down there, in the under-crowd, are *some of ours*. Who knows whether we would fight, indeed, we might not fight so well, except for seeing that art places hostages among the people, living hostages, men of art. It is for these that the field shall certainly be opened; it is for these that we shall never cease to fight until the Servile State is a vanished nightmare!

Our poet has left the fight. His history, by the wit of the gods, appears in the "New Statesman," this chronicle of advancing tyranny and servility. His lordly feelings, that are the feelings of his gifts, he now reproves—too abstract, too spiritual for one who has, after all, a body like the rest of folk. This is his decline, this is egotism; he is perversely determined upon self-humiliation, where before he would raise the pride in others, though under threat of annihilating them. And soon he, too, will begin to decorate their estate, their grubbing, slaving unlesirely estate of perpetual labour. In so doing he will assist their profiteering masters, and confound

themselves with his bewildering apotheosis of glorious trade—but, he will do it, he has thrust his soul away, he holds now the soft brush of the flatterer. He begins in a maudlin reverie, remembering that they, too, drew "woman's milk" ("which you partook" he conjures himself) telling himself that they, too, have hot blood, quick thought—

And try to do the things they ought.

It is his own weakness he is excusing.

These coarse trunks that here you see,  
Judge them not lest judged you be.

Now he has set his reason to defend poor body. Presently you will hear of body's wondrous, stupendous conquests of the earth—these triumphs of the spirit of man will be verbally stolen by the doomed poet and put to decorate "these coarse trunks."

Think of these bodies here assembled,  
Whence they have come, where they have trembled  
With the strange force that fills us all,  
Men and beasts both great and small.

Paddings! But again the poet looks and, not quite lost, sees the truth, a little of the truth, of man's body unguided by proud spirit, and driven as here into this eating house for coarse and hurried satisfaction amidst all mockeries of civilisation. He rants, but somewhat of the truth is expressed.

O, they have come from all the world,  
Borne by invisible currents, swirled  
Like leaves into this vortex here  
Flying, or like the spirits drear,  
Windborne and frail, that Dante saw,  
Who yet obeyed some hidden law.

The next stanza betrays him, seated as if like a child or a savage before the spectacle of manual labour which he feigns to behold characterised in these clients of the restaurant.

Is it not miraculous  
That they should all be gathered thus,  
All to be spread before your view,  
Who are strange to them as they to you?

Follows a maddened, cinematographic recapitulation of bodily labours—maddened, because through the abortive, unshaped lines, sounds the agony of the poet who knows that he is lying against the soul that prompted those labours, and that alone can control the demon of its own creation. This agony breaks from him in lines of pure form that fix the sentimentalities, in bewildered naming of the robbed soul.

Soul, how can you sustain without a sob  
The lightest thought of his titanic throb  
Of earthly life;

He has forgotten the very meaning of soul. You would suppose that soul was what he has miscalled it, something abstract from life, not that by which we live and adventure. His secret horror breaks out in allusions to things of the imagination and intellect, in self-sheltering infantile prattlings, in the satiric scream—"Whence we are eating!"—there's the reward of all your bodies' labour in tith of the land and the sea—we bodies are eating! He grinds his teeth upon the grit right enough, he mocks himself in futurist yelps and mouthings—but it is all grit, as we shall see.

He has set himself to glorify Trade, our lady of money-lust, and he pretends so well that you might believe to be reading one of those profiteering poems on the dignity of labour which periodically drown the groans of the wage-slaves. Almost, though not quite, he starts up to share the grandeur of the three-shifts. In truth, it is not his birth-fate to slave for wages, but neither is it his part to trim the chains of the slaves! He damns himself with them doing it. Hear him prosily yelling, and pity him a little despite the mean bluster.

Through forests where for uncounted years nor sun nor moon

Have penetrated, men have driven straight shining rails  
Through the dense bowels of mountains, and climbed  
their frozen tops, and wrinkled sailors have shouted  
at shouting gales

In the huge Pacific, and battled round the Horn  
And gasping coasted to Rio, and turning towards the  
morn. . . .

And so on, and so on, until he sinks babbling like a school-child:—

Each atom that we eat . . .  
Stare at the wine, stare at the meat.  
The mutton which these platters fills  
Grazed upon a thousand hills;

and ends with a poeticalistic allusion to Iberian Helicon, a reminiscence by his fast-failing intellect, that brings along a score of other tags from better men and poets, the which he grinds into yet a further distracted eulogy of Trade. The psychology is extraordinarily rendered, showing the poor poet tortured between his ineradicable knowledge that spirit creates and directs, and his determination verbally to accredit the body with creating though it is only an instrument. So the wage-slave is flattered into believing that he has sufficiently justified his existence by labouring with his body without need to nourish his spirit by the exercise of responsibility.

The passage sinks away in drivelling jingle upon the foresight of God knows what God regarding Trade.

O wonderful procession fore-ordained by God!  
Wonderful in unity, wonderful in diversity.  
Contemplate it soul, and see

How the material universe moves and strives with  
anguish and glee!

The mention of God switches him into a mood of infantilistic piety. In tripping three-beat verses, he vows to be a man, a man of action—what? Not he! But we see where he has come to—he is preparing for the profiteering magazines, preparing for those columns, so well paid, where you may see the scarcely educated public coaxed out of thinking, flattered out of their brains, flattered into believing little busynesses calculated to open the gates of Heaven whereas Intellect will fail of entrance.

And though the unknown that plan's life  
I may attempt to scan,  
Yet I must live a man's life  
Since I was born a man.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Man worships God in action,  
Senses and reason call,  
And thought is putrefaction  
Where thought is all in all."

A very convenient damned doctrine to give to them that do not too often aspire to thinking! But the poet is not going to peddle continually in these pietist goods. There are several ways of extracting pence from the public that must be reading something, feeding its starved mind. He will screw out pathetic romances. Himself, hardened to a stone, will trade in fictional tears.

Most of the guests are gone; look over there,  
Against a pillar leans with absent air  
A tall, dark pallid waiter. There he stands  
Limply, with vacant eyes and listless hands,  
He dreams of some small Tyrolean town. . . .

And this marketable fancy of a whiskified lost poet is mentally completed before he leaves the table—train, eyes all dim—and a girl with plaited hair who said goodbye to him; none of the property is mislaid. It is no matter that the waiter may not have been a Tyrolese.

This piece, as a satire, is terrible. The author spares never. We are made to hear the last words of the damned man, words of cynicism against self, and everything else. And this awful cynicism is fixed forever by its honesty. The poet knows that he is tied henceforth to his inexorable âme-damnée.

Fool! exert your will,  
Finish your whisky up, and pay your bill.

But what sang he once?

I hold at my will the thunderbolts  
Measured not in mortal volts. . . .

Come, let us cut a way through mediocrity for this spirit!





ETHEL. By M. GODWIN.

## Readers and Writers.

SIR E. T. COOK has some right to discourse on the "Art of Biography" ("National Review"), since he has proved himself by his lives of Ruskin and Florence Nightingale. And yet not so much right either; for, on his own confession, only those biographies are possible that are full of talk and incident. Chatham, being a silent man, he would have said, and, indeed, did say, would prove a bad subject for a biographer. But Mr. Williams has "done" Chatham, and if not to miracle, at least to the encouragement of every Higher Biographer. I mean to protest against Sir E. T. Cook's supposition that a life expressing itself mainly in thought and act is not susceptible of biography. It is; though I admit that both the biographer and the biography must be unusual. For a man like Chatham, a kind of dramatic critic is needed as biographer: one who divines the significance of action in dumb show. And his biography must be of a similarly subtle nature—all psychology and criticism. As an example, though not of the best, I may point to Mr. Henry James's biography of his father and brother. Being myself an inarticulate person and having no annals to my history, I should nominate a writer like Mr. Henry James to write my biography. Sir E. T. Cook would find me a blank, my lords.

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The least pleasing form of biography is autobiography by reminiscences. The very word "reminiscences" appears to excite indulgence in disorder and formlessness. Commission a man to write his autobiography and he sets about discovering a form for it; but once allow him to call it "Reminiscences" and he empties out rags from a rag-bag. I have just been turning over the pages of Mr. Henry Holiday's "Reminiscences of My Life." It is an indescribable jumble of the intimate and public, the trivial and the significant. I never saw such a pastiche. Nobody could read it through even at a seaside hotel, where one reads anything.

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Readers occasionally find fault with THE NEW AGE for apparently having no literary policy—as if you had only to sit down and imagine a policy and then proceed to expound it. But a policy is not arrived at in that way. That way lies idiosyncrasy. To formulate a true policy, two things are required—first, a good standard, and, secondly, a perceptible drift and tendency in one's age. While claiming to possess good standards, I affirm that our age is for the present too distracted and puzzled to have any particular tendency. Our writers are revolving very busily on their axes, and some, even, set off for somewhere; but who can say that so much as a school are going in the same direction? What, in fact, is the literary tendency of the age? Mr. Gosse has made a shot at an answer by defining it as "the increased study of life in its exhibitions of energy"; and high marks should be given him, for his formula covers a good many of the phenomena. But, on the other hand, it does not cover all nor the most significant of existing literary phenomena. I do not remark, for instance, much study of energetics in current novels and plays—where, presumably, it should appear most clearly. On the contrary, our novels and plays are concerned with very supine people as a rule, as remote from exhibitions of astonishing energy as from ideals of any kind. In verse, perhaps, Mr. Gosse's case is a little stronger; for Mr. Masfield undoubtedly preaches energetics and, quite as undoubtedly, is somewhat of a fashion. But the fashion is fleeting and is, indeed, as good as obsolete; and the next boom was of Tagore, the least energetic maniac of them all. I conclude, once more, that the age is really characterless; like Mr. Wells, it is versatile and nothing more. It will be recorded in history as doing everything badly.

Not to leave the subject without a bone for the dog, I may say that my own view is that our immediate future is along the route which, beginning with brilliant common sense, conducts to beauty by way of wisdom. We English are sensible at bottom; and good sense is our proper starting-place. Hence, when, as now, we find ourselves floundering, we ought to return to our base in common sense and resume from there. Common sense mellowed and experienced is wisdom; and wisdom in its ripeness is beauty. Young men, I say, first learn to write common sense; then study to be wise, and beauty will afterwards be added to you.

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"Bernard Lintot," of "T.P.'s Weekly," is a most ungenerous man, for after reprinting whole my explanation of the appearance of Blake's poem in these pages, and using it as a bait for similar dream-verse from his readers, he suggests that we have let ourselves off lightly. But, though I say it myself, if every error in "T.P.'s Weekly" were as fairly and frankly acknowledged and as fully atoned for as the error in THE NEW AGE, I should pray "Bernard Lintot" to make a score of errors every week.

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Another writer has the distressing task of examining in detail the latest issue of the quarterly "Poetry and Drama" published from Mr. Harold Monro's Poetry Book-shop. I need only wonder what in the language's name these young versifiers are after. A recent meeting with a few of them satisfies me that they are, as they foolishly hope, remote from the world right enough, but not, as they also foolishly suppose, on any peak of Darien. Their ignorance is appalling! Not content to boast that they are not concerned with such vulgar subjects as politics and economics, they boast also their ignorance of the main stream of English poetry. The main stream, if you please, is not broad enough for them; it is on the little rivulets that fed it that they ply their little boats. Well, I do not deny that discoveries are to be made there—but what of them? The discoveries will be of modes and forms discovered by the great poets, worked and then abandoned. Coleridge and Wordsworth, in their retirement among the Quantocks, neglected neither the main stream of poetry nor the political life of their day. Regarding the first, their self-imposed task was to disestablish Pope and to crown his successor. Coleridge nominated antique glamour as the solvent of the rigidity of Pope; Wordsworth substituted the simple contemplation of nature; both, in short, were mightily concerned with their duty to their day and place. And as for the second—their interest in politics—did not Pitt employ a spy to report on their sayings and doings? Fancy Mr. Asquith apprehending danger from the whole Poetry Book-shop!

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The March "English Review" contains some excellent "Maxims and Reflections" of the late Professor Churton Collins. A very few of the hundred or so are platitudes, but the rest are gems and precious stones of worldly wisdom. Here are half a dozen of the best in my judgment—I mean that I have learned something from them:—

Never take into your confidence either a man whom you cannot praise or a man who will not praise you.

The luxury of wisdom is irony.

If men were as unselfish as women, women would very soon become more selfish than men.

If we wish to curry favour with superior men we should endeavour to impress them; with inferior men we should reverse the process, and persuade them that it is they who have impressed us.

It is not because of what he has done, but because of what he may do, that a bad man should be shunned.

Never trust a man who speaks well of everybody.

\* \* \*

The "Times," I see, is announcing that its sales at a penny are greater than those of any other penny

morning paper. But let it circulate like the "Daily Mail," nothing can restore its prestige or its influence; for these are gone. What a series of misfortunes have fallen upon what was, and ought to have remained, a national institution! Since the ill-starred day when Lord Northcliffe was called in to substitute his money for ideas, the "Times" has gone steadily from bad to worse. Nothing so Beætian a character as his could do could possibly be right for an undertaking requiring delicacy, tact, honour and high intelligence to carry through. What if the "Times" was losing money at threepence and at twopence—the remedy was neither to tout for advertisements nor to reduce the price of the paper. These, of course, were the obvious shifts for the pedestrian business man to adopt, but not for the directorate of the "Times." The very contrary, in fact, was the right procedure—to exercise more care than ever in the matter of advertisements and to raise the price of the paper to sixpence daily. By how much, I ask, would the circulation have dropped under these circumstances? With rejuvenated prestige by reason of its resistance to the commercialism of its day, the "Times" would have become more rather than less necessary to us all. Every publicist would have continued to subscribe for it; and, as well, new subscribers anxious to distinguish themselves by reading it in public would have been added. I dare swear that at sixpence its circulation would have risen! But such a subtle piece of prudence is beyond Lord Northcliffe.

\* \* \*

But is it really prudence, or can it possibly assume this guise at the time? It is one of the most profound (I am not writing cliché!)—one of the most profound questions in the world. We are familiar with the theory that virtue is enlightened self-interest and I have said myself that good taste is only long sight; but is there not in fact all the difference between the *feel* of virtue and the *feel* of self-interest, however far-sighted and enlightened? Can virtue consist with calculation, or good taste with considerations of prudence? This question, it will be seen, is not in doubt of the ultimate issue of virtue or good taste; for it is a fact that virtue in the end is rewarded and good taste in the end survives; but are the reward and the survival not dependent upon the very absence of their contemplation in the moment of virtuous choice? To be really virtue must not virtue appear to be at its moment its own only possible reward? How I have racked myself to discover the true answer—for I am certain that much depends upon it. If I am not mistaken, virtue depends upon it. I should like to illustrate the case by reference to the recent history of THE NEW AGE, but I fear my readers are not sufficiently interested in casuistry.

\* \* \*

Mr. M. D. Armstrong, whose letter, I understand, appears elsewhere, attempts to justify his bombastic remarks on modern poets by describing his phrases as labels simply. But it will not do, for it is idle to profess that "the spirit of pity contemplating human patience in face of overwhelming odds" does not suggest a poet "above the stock size." Such a phrase Mr. Armstrong would not apply to "King Bruce and the Spider"—and why? Because even to him the incongruity of the poem and the label would be ridiculous. Similarly to me the association of his phrases with his poets appears ridiculous; and it is only because he never saw the incongruity that he made it. By the way, Mr. Armstrong *has* contributed to THE NEW AGE; at best our guilt is therefore equal.

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My recent suggestion to the publishers of cheap reprints to include in their series articles from THE NEW AGE brought me one letter from a well-known firm that may prove fruitful. The first offer, however, was not generous. Briefly, it was that I should guarantee the cost of production! It cannot be did! Who, I should

like to know, guarantees the cost of producing the hundreds of re-re-reprints now being poured upon the market? If by one, some of the classics have been cheaply reprinted by a dozen publishers almost simultaneously. I can only sincerely hope the publishers will discover their error before going bankrupt. My notion of a cheap and novel series—and of at least as popular a series as most now on sale—is a selection of contemporary writings. I would cheerfully undertake to make a selection and to secure for the publisher the serial rights for a nominal sum. And I would stake my initials that the series would be a success!

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To the "Everyman" Series many, as everybody knows, have been added. The latest instalment of cheap Bohns (Bell, 1s. each) brings this library up to sixty volumes now, I believe. Of the new set, several are really new at the price. You could not get before, for example, at less than four-and-six, the "Plotinus," edited with an introduction by Mr. G. R. S. Mead; nor for even that sum could you have obtained Hooper's "Campaign of Sedan." I appreciate, too, Trollope's novels in a shilling form, also Pushkin's Prose Tales and several others. But "Blake" we have already in the Oxford Series, Macaulay and Emerson are easily accessible, Marcus Aurelius is a drug, and even Montaigne, I think, can be had complete for less than three shillings. Why duplicate and triplicate so often? I ask. Have not publishers sense enough to aim at distinction and to hit the mark? The "Bohn" books are well printed and pleasant to handle; but one does not need several copies of the same work. An even cheaper series is now appearing under the name of the "Every Age" Library (Kelly). Published at tenpence, on good paper and well bound and printed, the series starts well enough with less-known works like Weynon's "Across Siberia," Male's "Through Two Campaigns," Burton's "Call of the Pacific," and Keeling's "General Gordon." But I see that subsequent volumes include Cobbett's "Rural Rides," already published in "Everyman," Dante, Bunyan, etc., etc.—a good many old-stagers, in fact. Will a reduction of twopence really make a sale for them? I doubt it.

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No further reply has been made by the proprietors of the "Daily Herald" to the criticisms of its business and editorial policy offered by our correspondents. I take it, therefore, that the oracles intend to remain dumb. But it is an unsatisfactory state of affairs, and I cannot conceive that good to the "Daily Herald" will come of it. If, as somebody remarked of the Marconi Ministers, if they have nothing to conceal, why do they conceal it? Oh, these rebels!

\* \* \*

Mr. W. L. George ought not to expect me, of all people, to be bound by the opinions of his "Bed of Roses" expressed by my predecessor, Mr. Jacob Tonsen. I know, and so does Mr. George, the circumstances under which those opinions were written; and they were certainly more "pour encourager" than for judgment. Secondly, I have read the book for myself and have heard it discussed with Mr. George as a party; and the judgment was not even then flattering. Finally, I have read Mr. George's "Making of an Englishman"—which, to my mind, might as well be called the "Making of a Book." As a series by such a journalist as Mr. Twells Brex the chapters would do very well in the "Daily Mail"; but nobody can persuade me that any insight into or study of the English character has gone into the book. Arbuthnot, Swift, Heine and Emerson have pretty well exhausted our Englishman for us; there is nothing new to be discovered, there is only to be learned and understood. Mr. George does not appear to have read these writers; and his Englishman is only skin-deep. Mr. Bland will find it out, never fear!

R. H. C.

## Views and Reviews.\*

LADY CONSTANCE LYTTON has puzzled me. The personal experiences of the ordinary lady of title seem to be of a very scandalous nature, if one may judge by the published accounts of them; and consist mainly of careful calculations of the number of children that some other ladies of titles have borne to the wrong men. Whatever else they may do, such reminiscences never puzzle me; the authors are obviously typical women attempting to gain reputations as wits by calling other women, "Women"! But the personal reminiscences of Lady Constance Lytton are not personal to other women; they are most embarrassingly frank concerning herself. I did not know before, and I am not sure that I ought to know now, that Lady Constance Lytton is "accustomed to sleep in flannel sheets, woollen under-clothes, and a hot bottle, also with two flannel pillows." The precise value of the revelation of the fact that Lady Constance Lytton sleeps in a hot bottle, I cannot estimate; the old-fashioned theologian may regard this habit as an instinctive preparation for the conditions of her future existence, the bacteriologist will probably regard it as an attempt to destroy the personal effects of the contamination of this world by a process of sterilisation, and hail Lady Constance Lytton as the High Priestess of Hygiene. The reviewer can take refuge in none of these explanations; but if he should be curious to know from whence comes all the "hot air" in this book, I commend this passage to his notice as a probable revelation of its origin.

As I said before, I am puzzled by this book. I do not know Lady Constance Lytton, and I can testify on oath that I never indulged the slightest curiosity concerning her sleeping arrangements, or, indeed, concerning any of the intimate details of her life. That she loved her mother, I was willing to believe; all English spinsters are supposed to love their mothers; but I certainly did not want to read her correspondence with her mother. It seems like an unwarrantable intrusion on the privacy of other people to read such a passage as this: "Prisons, as you know, have been my hobby. What maternity there lurks in me has for years past been gradually awakening over the fate of prisoners, the deliberate, cruel harm that is done to them, their souls and bodies, the ignorant, exasperating waste of good opportunities in connection with them, till now the thought of them, the yearning after them, turns in me and tugs at me as vitally and irrepressibly as ever a physical child can call upon its mother. The moment I got near the Suffragettes, the way to this child of mine seemed easy and straight." I have long believed that the Woman's Movement includes every form of misdirected maternity, so Lady Constance Lytton's naïve admission of the fact was not necessary to me. But why did she publish a letter of such an intimate nature?

The question can be asked concerning every detail of this book. Why should I be told, for instance, that on the night of her first arrest, she shared a bed with her eldest sister, and "all night she kept her strong arm round my heart"? Is this pre-occupation with the bed a new form of symbolism? Certainly, the bed appears in this narrative at all sorts of odd moments, like the leitmotiv in a Wagnerian opera; but what it signifies, I do not pretend to know. As a leitmotiv, the bed shares prime importance with sanitary conveniences; but I find it even more difficult to invent a symbolical explanation of the sanitary convenience than of the bed. Anyhow, most of Lady Constance Lytton's revelations concerning prison life make free play with these two symbols of civilisation; and the hot air of the narrative is tempered by the sound of running water.

But Lady Constance Lytton is not entirely concerned with beds and sanitary conveniences; there are also baths in prison, and Lady Constance Lytton devotes some attention to them. Bathing, of course, necessi-

tates dressing and undressing, and the recital of the details of her toilette gives full scope to Lady Constance Lytton's powers of description. Lady Constance Lytton asked for, and obtained, flannel underclothing; and it seems that the garments were not made to measure. Indeed, they were obviously standardised in shape and size, and expressed no individuality. The symbolism of these garments is easily understood. Being made of flannel, they are subject to a process of shrinking; and their texture is symbolic of the soul of the prisoner. Their cut being uniform and without beauty symbolises the rigidity of the prison system; and the patches that decorate the flannel shirt are more than symbols, they are mementoes of the various attempts at the reform of our prison system. This symbolism, I may say, is not Lady Constance Lytton's, but mine. But the flannel drawers and the woollen stockings are not so easily explained. "The stockings," says Lady Constance Lytton, "were of thick, rough wool, most irritating to the skin, but warm. I never had a pair that were long enough to cover my knees, and as the drawers stopped short of the knees in the opposite direction, I had the chance of sampling the knee part of the Highlander's dress." The stockings apparently symbolise the irritating comfort in which Lady Constance Lytton lives, but why should the drawers shrink away from her knees? I am afraid that my symbology will not cover the knees, and leave the subject to other commentators. But I cannot help wondering whether Mrs. Pankhurst, who is "a woman whose appearance struck awe into every fibre" of Lady Constance Lytton's being, had to wear flannel drawers which exposed her knees to the rude caress of every wanton wind.

With the whole prison system "leaping in her womb" (if I may quote Scripture in this connection), Lady Constance Lytton naturally wanted to be treated as an ordinary prisoner. This was impossible so long as she was known as Lady Constance Lytton. "An infancy and youth of chronic rheumatism had affected my heart. . . . The doctor's impassive face and manner changed to one of concerned inquiry after testing my heart"; and, of course, she was sent to the infirmary. Being there, she tried to get dismissed. First she complained, and was put for greater comfort in one of the infirmary cells; then, "I piled on my good behaviour, and ate as much food as I could, to conciliate the prison authorities." She petitioned the Home Secretary, and he refused to transfer her to the ordinary side of the prison. Then she caught a cold, and, when recovering from that, cut her hand with some crockery; and the prison officials remained obdurate. Then she put the mattress on the floor and slept under the bed; tried a little plain prison living; then began to scratch "Votes for Women" on her breast with a needle; and, at last, was sent over to the cells, but was not allowed to do any of the routine labour. She found the cells at least as comfortable as the infirmary, and really had quite a pleasant time among the Suffragettes in prison.

The "Jane Warton" escapade became necessary, if she was to know this child of hers intimately. Lady Constance Lytton would never be forcibly fed, however much she desired the experience; but "Jane Warton" obtained the privilege without any trouble. Although she had "looked forward to this moment," she gave no unnecessary trouble; she "lay down voluntarily on the plank bed," and only resisted with her teeth, of which, she tells us, some are artificial. After a few experiences of forcible feeding, she became expert enough to advise the doctor how to do it with the minimum of discomfort to herself. She told the doctor to give her less food, to put less of the tube into her, to use less glycerine on the tube, etc. "Jane Warton," having obtained her experience, Lady Constance Lytton got her brother to complain to the Home Secretary about it; but, on the whole, she seems to be very pleased with herself. According to her "Dedication to Prisoners," she went "into prison hoping to help prisoners." She admits that, "so far as I know, I was unable to do anything

\*"Prisons and Prisoners." By Lady Constance Lytton. (Heinemann. 3s. 6d. net.)

for them. But the prisoners helped me." But her zeal for prison reform begins and ends with "Votes for Women." All these revelations of bed, bath, and toilette have no value as arguments for prison reform; and Lady Constance Lytton naïvely confesses that prison discipline does not exist for Suffragettes. But an elderly spinster, even if she has misdirected maternal yearnings, is not the proper person to make an indelicate appeal to the affections of men. Flannel has many advantages, but it does not allure the senses; and I venture to think that a younger spinster would not have made such a miscalculation of the most effective sort of personal revelations. Lingerie—but I am reverting to the reminiscences of other ladies of title.

A. E. R.

## Soldier Tales.

By Peter Fanning.

### SERGEANT JOCK MCFEE.

ALONG with seventy other recruits I had just arrived in Belfast to join my regiment. After an inspection by the C.O. Colonel "Paddy" Stokes, who gave us some good advice regarding our future conduct, we were dismissed to our several companies. Half an hour later I was busy with my traps when a sergeant (who I afterwards learned was named Jock McFee) entered the barrack room, and in the most beastly Scotch accent I've ever heard demanded to know if I'd just arrived with the last draft from the depot.

"Yes, sergeant," I replied.

"Then follow me," said he, "I've a wee bit job for ye to do."

I followed the sergeant down to the ground floor, where he unlocked a barrack-room door, and we entered in.

"Now young fellow me lad," says he, "light a fire here, and when I return, let me find it roaring away up the chimney." The sergeant departed, and I took stock of the room. It contained four broken iron bed cots, a barrack-room form, two whole tables, and a piece of a table, and the usual coal box. I walked over to the latter, expecting to find it contained the necessary materials for lighting a fire. I found, however, it was as empty as Mother Hubbard's cupboard.

On this discovery I came to the conclusion that the Scot was merely taking a hand out of me, so without further troubling myself, I sat on the edge of the coal box, pulled out my pocket edition of the "Lady of the Lake," and was soon lost in the beautiful work of Sir Walter.

I had been following the chase, oblivious of all else for two hours or more, when the door opened and in came the sergeant. "Hello, my fine fellow, what are you doing sitting there?"

"Reading, sergeant."

"Reading! Where the hell's the fire I told you to light?"

"In hell, sergeant, where you'll be eventually."

"Why isn't it lit, you damned scut?"

"You left me no coal, nor wood, nor paper, nor matches, nor anything else, sergeant."

"Suffering Moses, is there not seven other barrack-rooms in this block where you could have gone and sneaked coal and wood, and anything else you required?"

"There may be seven other barrack-rooms in this block, sergeant, but there isn't one that I would go into and sneak anything for you or anyone else."

"Well I'm damned—what next?"

"You see, sergeant, I'm not a countryman of yours, so sneaking isn't in my line. Do your own sneaking, sergeant, it's your natural element."

"By God I'll clink you for your insolence."

"Oh, no you won't, sergeant. There are only two of us here, and if you are going to play any of your

monkey tricks on me, before I let you out I will knock the stuffing out of you."

"Well, of all the——"

"Yes, that's just the position, sergeant, and now scoot." He went. Up to the day he left the regiment Sergeant Jock McFee never found another "wee bit job" for me to do.

### GETTING RID OF A ROTTER.

CAPTAIN GRIBBINGS was a cad. His speech, manner, and morals were all of a kind—rotten. He was as vain of his face and figure and as much addicted to corsets and cosmetics as a ballet dancer. In reality there was only one thing about him which would attract attention—his eyes. With the exception of Parnell's, they were the finest pair of eyes I've ever seen on a man. But his figure! He had a twist from the right hip upwards, which threw his right shoulder forward, and made it appear, when he was on the march, as if his right shoulder wanted to go at the double, whilst his left desired to mark time.

The humour of the situation can be easily imagined, when Captain Gribbings would stand out in front of his company and command the men to "Stand upright and square to the front like me." If this impossible demand produced a grin, which it invariably did, Gribbings would rush at the offender with: "What are you laughing at, you dog?"

"You dog" was everlastingly in his mouth. Did a man slip on loose stones when climbing up a hillside, it was: "Where are you tumbling to, you dog?" Did a man fall to the rear when on the line of march, "Hurry up, you dog," he was commanded. If things didn't suit him on a barrack-room inspection it was: "You dirty dogs this, that, and the other," till at last we came to accept this form of address as part of the game.

But perhaps the following incident will best illustrate what this officer and gentleman was really capable of when he tried. During part of the time I was stationed at Carrickfergus Castle, Captain Gribbings was in charge of the detachment. One Saturday he returned to his quarters at midnight, accompanied by two civilian friends, the whole lot being maggoty drunk. They started boozing, bawling and singing, making night hideous and sleep impossible till after three o'clock, when the pottle pot had them beat. At reveille, to get a bit of his own back, the bugler got underneath the captain's open window and sounded his call for the duties of the day. The captain and his friends, however, merely took it as a summons to start boozing again. And now through the open window we could hear them bragging as to which could tell the most mottled story. From that they changed to their personal experiences when on the batter, and if half the yarns they spun were true, neither of the three was fit to associate with pigs.

At last, about eight o'clock, the captain, feeling he was getting bested in the contest, declared he would show them a trick of which neither was capable. "He would bet them each a bottle of cham, that he would walk round the Castle in his bare pelt." "Done," shouted his friends. "A dozen you don't do it," challenged one. "It's a bet," replied the captain.

In a few minutes, sure enough, the captain staggered along the grand battery as naked as at the moment he was born. His companions cheered him, the troops jeered him, whilst the three married women gathered their children and fled. He walked round the Castle and won the liquor, but whether from shame or a report of the matter, I don't know, he returned to headquarters a few days afterwards.

When I rejoined the regiment in Belfast I found this beauty in command of my company, and still indulging in his "you dog" tirade. The end of his career with us, however, was approaching.

Every Saturday morning was devoted to kit inspection, when the men were expected to display their traps in a clean and serviceable condition. This applied particularly to the men's boots. Each man was supposed to show a good pair of boots on his cot and another on his feet. It was customary for the inspecting officer to stand in front of each man, whilst he held up first his right and then his left foot, so that the soles of his boots might be inspected. Now, it happened on this particular Saturday morning that the fellow next to me had been on the beer and had sold a pair of his boots. Consequently the pair he was wearing was an old pair he had borrowed; they were sadly in need of repair. This was particularly the case with the left one, the sole of which was worn through. We all knew the circumstances and, like the fellow himself, expected that he was in for a roasting.

At last Captain Gribbings reached Dutton's cot and inspected his kit; everything was neat and clean and passed muster. The captain then stepped back a pace to get a view of the soles of the boots Dutton was wearing. Dutton raised his right foot in front of him. The captain glanced at it. "The other," said he. As quick as lightning Dutton turned about and held up the same foot from the rear. "That will do," said Gribbings, and passed on to the next cot. Then the storm broke. The twenty-six men burst into a spontaneous roar of laughter. The captain rushed at the nearest man: "What are you laughing at, you dog?" It was no use. The fly, smart Captain Gribbings had been made a mug of in front of the whole room. Order and discipline went by the board, and the men laughed openly in his face. He stood in the middle of the room and poured a torrent of scurrility upon us with the volubility of a fish-fag. He did not, however, finish the kit inspection, but went off threatening us with all kinds of vengeance.

On the following Wednesday night I was sentry on the main gate from 10 to 12 p.m. A few minutes before "Lights out," and whilst the sergeant-major was receiving his reports from the orderly sergeants and corporals of the day, a cab drove up to the gate.

"Halt! who goes there?"

"Friend."

"Gate." The corporal of the guard opened the gate and the cab drove in. As it came within the circle of light thrown by the lamp under which I was standing, I saw it contained Captain Gribbings, and crouching down, trying to hide herself, a woman.

I let out a yell, loud enough to awaken the seven sleepers.

"Pass Captain Gribbings, and a prostitute."

"Damn you, you dog," hissed the captain. "Cabby, right about turn."

The captain took his "mot" back into town, and three days afterwards was on his way to Egypt. He "dogged" us no more.

#### COLONEL "PADDY" STOKES AND THE MARINE.

AFTER going through manoeuvres off the west coast of Ireland, the Channel fleet put into Bristol Lough. The shipping companies took advantage of the occasion, and used their tug boats as pleasure steamers, conveying people to the fleet at a shilling each.

My chum, Barney McBennett, and I determined to visit the fleet; so on Saturday afternoon we went down the Lough and boarded the "Devastation." A friendly engineer took us in tow, conducted us below, and showed us the torpedo which had burst in Blacksod Bay.

After wandering about below for an hour or so, being very much surprised at the devastation caused to the internals of the battleship by the firing of her big guns, we came on deck again.

As we did so my attention was attracted by a group of three persons about a machine gun. A Marine was

busy explaining the destructive powers of the gun to what he evidently took to be an old lady and gentleman of the agricultural class. I, however, at once spotted that the supposed swede-trimmers were none other than our commanding officer, Colonel "Paddy" Stokes, and his wife.

Now, "Paddy's" peculiarity was his right leg, which was perfectly stiff. The leg was worthless for practical purposes, but as an indicator of "Paddy's" temper it was infallible. When he was in a good humour he shook his stiff-un and beat it affectionately with his cane. But when he was annoyed, he would lift his right foot up about an inch and pound it on the ground. "Paddy" was busy pounding the deck when I caught sight of him. "Dekko, Barney, twig 'Paddy's' stiff-un stotting on the deck; that Marine must be laying it on thick to get the old man in that condition; let's go and spoil his game." As we approached, the Colonel turned, and seeing two of his own men, assumed his usual pose.

"Private Fanning, come here!"

I walked forward and saluted. "Beg your pardon, Sir."

"Private Fanning, how long would it take the regiment to blow a thousand Marines with a thousand *things* like that to blazes?"

I looked at the gun, then at the Marine, then at "Paddy." "Just as long, *Colonel*, as it would take you to give the command 'Fire.'"

At the word "Colonel," the right hand of the Marine flew up to his cap at the salute, but not so fast as the blood had flown to his face. Yes; he must have been pulling the long bow for "Paddy's" benefit.

"Paddy" was now shaking his stiff-un and caressing it with his cane. His amour propre was re-established, and the prestige of his regiment vindicated. I turned to depart.

"Ah—Private Fanning, are you on pass?"

"Yes, Sir, till midnight."

"And your comrade?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Ah, well, there—that will enable you to enjoy yourselves."

"Thank you, Sir."

#### "CHUCKING A DUMMY."

BEING sent on detachment to Carrickfergus Castle I found there was an opportunity of adding to the scanty pay of a private soldier by acting as guide to parties of visitors who came to inspect the ancient fortress. Purchasing a history of the Castle I committed to memory the principal events in its long and tragic story, and in a short time could reel them off with the ease of a pater-noster.

On August Bank Holiday I was engaged the whole day with different parties of Irish, English, French, American, and Australian visitors, and so well had I told the tale that, when the gates were closed, I found myself in funds to the extent of fifty-two shillings.

Later in the evening I sent two of the men into town for half a gallon of whisky, one pound of tea, four pounds of sugar, and a parcel of ham sandwiches. Tea punch was brewed in a three-gallon can, plates and basins set out on the table, the eatables and drinkables distributed round, and the detachment sat down to a spread and concert. We kept the fun going, with the aid of more liquor, till lights out, at which time, willy-nilly, we were obliged to chuck it.

Next morning I was on guard, and never was I more disinclined to undertake that responsible duty. I lay for a while, trying to concoct some scheme or invent some excuse by which I might "Chuck a dummy," and so escape duty for the day.

Quite accidentally I happened to touch the back of my left hand with the fingers of my right. Ah, the very thing, thought I.

Now, it so happened that, at that period of life, after

any unusual exertion, climbing hills during a field day, boxing, or the consumption of ardent spirits, a small nettle rash would make its appearance on the back of my hands and neck, remain a few hours, and then disappear.

I reported sick on the strength of the rash, and was marched off by the orderly corporal to undergo a medical examination.

The doctor who attended the detachment was the medical officer of the Carrickfergus Artillery Militia, and as he was old, deaf, and near-sighted, I anticipated no difficulty in working the dodge on him.

"Well, my man, what's the matter with you?"

"I don't know, Sir."

"Have you any pain?"

"No, Sir; but there is something the matter with the back of my hands."

"Ah, let me see."

He took hold of my left hand and began to draw the thumb of his right hand across it. As he did so I began to flinch.

"Does it hurt you?"

"No, Sir."

"Is it itchy?"

"Yes, Sir."

He let go my hand, took up a powerful magnifying glass, stood up and surveyed my face through it. He then sat down, took hold of my hand again and studied it through the glass, then he let go my hands, put down the glass, and took up his quill pen.

"I think it's itch. I'm sure it's itch. It is itch," said he, and then he slashed across the sick report: "Head Quarters by road."

He folded up the sick report, handing it to the corporal. "Pass that to Belfast," said he. Then turning to me with a grin, "I hope you'll enjoy your tramp, my man, you want some exercise."

On returning to the Castle the men had a good laugh at my expense. The colour-sergeant paid me up to date, and then, with my busby, leggings, and small book, I set off at 10 a.m. to walk to Belfast. It was a beautiful day in August, and as I had plenty of time and money at my disposal, I hob-nobbed with every vag I met on the road, and arrived at Queen Street barracks just as last post was sounding, having accomplished the ten miles at a gentle jaunt, in twelve hours.

Next morning I attended hospital. "Have you come from Carrickfergus?" inquired a staff sergeant. "Yes," said I. "Well, strip," he replied. "You have to go before a board of officers."

I stripped naked and was marched in before three medical officers. Dr. McNeish, being the senior, occupied the centre of the table, and had the sick report before him. He looked at the report and then at me, and then at the report again.

"Well, what's the matter with you?"

"Nothing, Sir, that I'm aware of."

"Then what have you been sent here for?"

"I don't know, Sir."

"Where's the itch you are supposed to have?"

"Itch, did you say, Sir? I've never had such a thing in my life."

"No, I should think not. Then what the blazes have you been sent here for?"

"Have no idea, Sir. The doctor in Carrickfergus sent me."

"Yes, the blind old bat. Fancy an old bosthoon like that being kept in the Service. Go to your duty. Sergeant, give him a dose."

The sergeant marched me into the compounding room and measured out a dose of cod liver oil. "Take that," said he.

I took it all in one, intending to spit it out again as soon as I was out of the room. But the sergeant was fly, and in the sweetest manner imaginable inquired: "And what did you say your regimental number was?" So the physic had to go down, and that ended my first and only try "Chucking a dummy."

## Drama.

By John Francis Hope.

SOME time ago I asked: "Where is Somerset Maugham now?" I have discovered that he, or that "worser part" of him, a play, is at the Duke of York's Theatre. London is not usually an abode of the blest, but immediately before Easter a dramatic critic feels that Christ was wise to get himself crucified at that date. There never are produced any new plays in London, but just before Easter even fewer new plays obtain production than at any other time. Tree, waiting until Christ has been duly crucified at St. Paul's Cathedral before producing Shaw's "Pygmalion," reminds me of Macbeth screaming: "Thou canst not say I did it. Never shake thy gory locks at me." Even the Court Theatre failed me; not one provincial author dared to attempt the conquest of London from Chelsea immediately before Easter. There was no escape; I had to go to see Somerset Maugham's play, "The Land of Promise." The play has been running long enough for its plot to be familiar to the public, so I need only refer casually to it; and amuse myself in my customary way by talking about anything but drama.

When the history of this civilisation comes to be written (which God forbid it ever should, for did He not say: "I will blot out their name from under heaven"?), the works of Mr. Somerset Maugham will be very valuable. I can imagine the eugenically bred and sociologically trained young artist of the fifth millennium Anno Domini turning over the pages of Mr. Maugham's plays (which will then be in a dead language), and, after overcoming his first flush of pride at being able to read them in the original (which is more than I can do), concentrating his attention on the general trend of this civilisation revealed by these plays. Talk about Theocritus—but why talk about him? The young artist of the future, having discovered that "bridge" had nothing to do with engineering, and that "shimmy" was not a lady's garment, but a form of gambling (I give its name in full for the benefit of posterity, *chemin-de-fer*), will feel that his study of the classics has been well rewarded. I am not suggesting that he will adopt these games of chance; the only medium of exchange at that date will be Cubist drawings which, by their very nature, lack the fluidity necessary to an ideal circulating medium. Wealth will not be transferred, but created; and, even now, you could not organise a whist-drive if the only prizes were examples of space-shyness.

But there is more in Somerset Maugham than a mere catalogue of card games. He is writing the folk-lore of modern society; and to every typical character, he adds a description of its activities. Thus Algy, the parasite in "Smith," details the services that he renders in return for the somewhat aborted privileges pertaining to the status of a "poodle dog." In "The Land of Promise," Norah Marsh, who has been a lady's maid, makes a similar enumeration of the duties of a body servant, which will be very valuable to the student of our civilisation. I hope that a sound philology will safeguard the student from the error of supposing that, when Norah Marsh speaks of taking the poodle for a walk, she means that she is walking out with Algy. Let posterity take note that the fact is otherwise. But there are certain phrases that become historical because they summarise a complex situation in the terms of one of the basic desires of men. "There was corn in Egypt." is one example. It states a fact; but the statement of such a fact implies a whole history. No one would have bothered to say that there was corn in Egypt if there had not been other places where there was no corn. So the student infers that, except in Egypt, there was famine; and famine implies hunger, and hunger induces travel, and travel is the great civiliser of man, and here we are because there was corn in Egypt. There is much history in a phrase.

Mr. Somerset Maugham coins such a phrase. "Women are scarce in Manitoba," says Frank Taylor, who is not a tailor, but a farmer. So the student will

infer that women were plentiful at this time in England, which will be a very shrewd inference. Knowing a good deal of folk-lore, such terms as exogamy will not baffle him. He will know that if women were scarce in Manitoba, the natural stupidity of men would try to make them plentiful. "Marriage by capture or by purchase; which?" he will ask; and turn the leaves rapidly in his search for an answer. He will discover that this is an age of synthesis; and that although Norah Marsh accepted marriage by purchase, Frank Taylor treated it as marriage by capture, and Mr. Somerset Maugham synthesised the situation into marriage for love, which our student (if he be assiduous in his study and do not understand the meaning of the Divorce Court) will discover to have been the prevailing type of marriage in this age.

But he will discover that the sons of Manitoba did not look upon the daughters of England, and see that they were fair; from which he will infer either that the sons of Manitoba were blind to female beauty or that the daughters of England did not possess it. He will be right in either case. The Futurist painter will not be able to paint "The Rape of the Englishwomen by the Manitobans"; for Manitoba is a long way off, and drunkenness is an offence in the streets of London. The student will notice that Norah Marsh voluntarily exported herself to the Dominion of Canada; and he will ask "Why?" He will discover that, after having endured all the humiliations attaching to the office of a lady's maid, Norah Marsh had been left without a legacy when her mistress died. As Miss Jane Harrison would say: "Then, by a piece of luck that almost makes one's heart stand still," he will discover the explanation of this situation in the very play that he is reading. A legacy, he will infer, was obviously a permit, allowing a lady's maid to stay in England after her employer had died. As this lady had left no permit to Norah Marsh, he will infer either that the old lady was ungrateful or that Norah Marsh was undeserving. Having by this time forgotten the eugenic principles that control his own relations with women, he will begin speculating about the psychology of Norah Marsh. It she was willing to waste ten of the best years of her life, and endure unspeakable humiliations during that time, to gain a permit to stay in England for the rest of her life, why did she resent the humiliations forced upon her in Canada? Was it that she did not wish to earn a permit to stay in Canada; and, if so, why did she choose to stay in Canada when she had the chance of returning to England? What was this love that made her want to stay in a country where she had endured more humiliations than she had suffered in England, without any prospect of a legacy? When a student begins speculating about love, it is wise to leave him alone; and a eugenic student is a particularly undesirable companion. Let us infer that his thoughts will be too deep for tears.

Having recovered from the lethargy of love, the student will summarise his impressions of our civilisation. He will see that women waste the lives of their maids, and leave them without legacies, whereby they are compelled to emigrate to Canada. Although they have endured ten years of humiliation from certain women who have money, they will not endure ten minutes of humiliation from other women who have no money; with the consequence that they rush into marriage with the first men who offer or suggest marriage. Still supposing that because they have been ladies' maids, they are superior to all men and most women, they find even marriage humiliating at first; more particularly when the men do not defer to them, but take them by force. But love comes to dignify even Canadian marriage when the ladies' maids have been forced into contact with Nature; and Mr. Somerset Maugham is revealed as the dramatist of Christianity, proving that happiness follows humility. He is also the dramatist of Nietzschean doctrine, for he shows that humility can only be induced in ladies' maids by a liberal use of physical force. The student will conclude that ladies' maids were a nuisance to us as well as to themselves,

and that in no other state than that of comparatively primitive civilisation could they find happiness. He will infer that a woman-ridden civilisation is intolerable even to women, and that the only escape from it is to return to Nature. If these interpretations are added to Mr. Maugham's work, it becomes significant; but not everyone will discover these meanings in his play even three thousand years hence, or, discovering them, will think them any considerable addition to the wisdom of the world.

## Art.

### The Arts and Crafts Again.

By Anthony M. Ludovici.

A YEAR and two months have elapsed since I said anything concerning the Arts and Crafts in THE NEW AGE; and, if I remember rightly, some of the more prominent among the members of this movement thought I had acquitted myself so badly on that occasion that a long and tolerably acrimonious correspondence followed the publication of the article. Among those who joined in the correspondence was Mr. A. Romney Green, now exhibiting his work, consisting of furniture and knick-knacks, in the rooms of the Little Gallery, Great Marlborough Street. On January 30, 1913, I took these workers in the arts and crafts very seriously indeed, and I do so still. I understand them to consist of a body of people who desire not merely to revive the æsthetic charm of everyday surroundings in the home, *objectively*, but also *subjectively*, so to speak—i.e., they wish the very production of these surroundings to be what it should always be, a *pleasure to the producer*, and to be freed from that complexion of sordid and heartless drudgery which purely commercial workshops impart to their goods. This is a noble desire. It cuts at the root of some of the worst evils of this age. I am not sure that it does not cut at the root of most of them.

For, in this matter, we have not to consider the producer alone, although his personality and his spirit are important enough; we have to think of the thousands to whom his handiwork becomes a constant environment. I remember a remark of George Gissing's recorded, I believe, by Mr. Morley Roberts. It was uttered at the time of Gissing's second marriage. He was living in a jerry-built cottage somewhere in the suburbs of London, and, after six months' tenancy of this doll's house, he discovered that scarcely a door would remain properly open or properly shut; that scarcely a window could be moved save by the most practised and powerful athlete; and that all taps, handles, chains, locks, pipes, and other fittings of his home required the constant and minute attention of a skilled and expensive specialist in order to be kept in moderately good working condition. It was then that he exclaimed: "There seems to be a conspiracy on the part of the builder, whitesmith, plumber, and carpenter in every district in England to levy a perpetual toll upon every unfortunate inhabitant of the modern middle-class dwelling." This is everybody's experience, and it applies not only to the fixtures of the house itself, but frequently also to every article of furniture in the house. Knobs fly out at the most gentle pull, keys jam unexpectedly in a badly fitted fastening, and drawers remain glued at absurd angles inside the chests that hold them. All this the modern world endures with a patience that is as odd as it is contemptible, and while the incessant fidgeting with these results of incompetence and impotence slowly but surely adds to the general sum of nervous irritability and exhaustion, the victims of it are generally in the clouds, dwelling deliriously upon questions of social reform, Irish Home Rule, and other nonsense. Social Reform! As if the most crying need were not a reform of conscientiousness, a reform of the modern conscience! The very people (Gissing, of course, excepted who groan and cry out in the midst of this atmosphere of flying knobs, self-opinionated locks, burst pipes, and free-



willed and insubordinate windows and doors, are the first to scamp a piece of work if they can, and neglect a duty or an ideal if the gain depending upon it will in no wise suffer.

I went carefully over Mr. Romney Green's exhibits—so carefully, indeed, that a lady who was present and noticed that I was quick to find defects, however apparent, which she had again and again passed over, insinuated, kindly enough, I believe, that I was out to find fault. This remark, I confess, annoyed me very considerably, for it revealed a total misunderstanding not only of myself and my methods, but of herself and her methods. I pointed out to her immediately that it was in my search for quality that I had been forced to light upon the few and trivial examples of lack of quality which I had found, and that if she and others had so far failed to discover these examples of lack of quality, I accused her and them point-blank of being in no wise in search of quality. This was more than a bitter rejoinder; it contained a profound truth. It is obviously the earnest seeker after quality who to-day becomes nauseated by its comparative non-existence in the produce of capitalistic Trade and Industry or of Art; as a rule, the suburban-villa city man is not similarly nauseated; and why? Not because he is less inclined to find fault than the genuine critic, but because he is simply not concerned with the question of quality, and by ignoring it altogether is utterly unconscious of its absence.

The search after quality, then, necessarily involves the discovery of examples of its absence when these occur. Oh, if everybody would only realise what that means, and how laborious, indigestible, and painstaking the search after quality must be nowadays! I attempted to approach Mr. Romney Green's work from two standpoints which I felt myself more or less competent to assume: first, the æsthetic standpoint; and, secondly, the standpoint of the purchaser or user of Mr. Romney Green's productions.

From the first standpoint I found much to admire particularly the walnut roll-top writing desk (No. 1), the delightful cow-hide stool without the turned legs, the fine shovel board table (No. 3), the inlaid cigarette-boxes (No. 13), the shell inkstand, candlesticks and cigarette-box (Nos. 11, 10 and 12), the hand mirrors inlaid with shell (of which the better is the walnut one No. 14), the carved oak, gilded and painted mirror-frame (No. 20), the inlaid mahogany tea-table (No. 36), and the cabinet of West Indian woods (No. 33). All these things, without, I confess, being stamped with a style which can make any great claim either to novelty or to exceptional grace, are pleasing enough to behold, charming to have about one, fragrant with the touch of the happy workman and the loving though modest designer. The dressing-table bearing the mirror, the cow-hide stool with the turned legs, and one or two candlesticks, hand-mirrors, and boxes seemed to me, from my first standpoint, to be failures. Let me explain what I believe to be wrong with the dressing-table. Even the untrained eye, if I may with all respect so refer to the optical organ of the lady above mentioned, is, I hear, conscious, and becomes more and more conscious every day, of something amiss with this table. For this to be so, something far more fundamental than a trick of design must be wrong. Let Mr. Romney Green ask himself what it is that the lay or expert spectator expects most of all in contemplating a structure, whether it be architecture or furniture. He expects that all important masses or lines should have a definite direction, that all supporting and resting members should strive one with another in a comprehensive fashion—that the forces of gravitation, for instance, should be met in an intelligible way, the more intelligible the better. Now let Mr. Romney Green examine the legs of his dressing-table—there really is not a definite line about them. A hesitating, imperfectly

understood curve, beginning at the broad root of the leg and wandering vaguely down towards an all-too-slender ankle, gives an impression of weakness, clumsiness, and indefiniteness, which is the very last impression that a supporting member should give. Let the curve be boldly pronounced, so that the eye can follow the sweep of the forces round the arch, and the spectator is satisfied; let the straightness be exact, so that gravitation seems to be overcome for ever; again the spectator is satisfied. But it is this compromise of the two, this indecision even in the mind of the craftsman himself, at a point in his structure where decision is, above all, necessary and urgent, that makes these legs bad legs. Some may tell Mr. Romney Green that the legs taper too rapidly from the thigh to the ankle; others may maintain that they are needlessly thick at the top. I suggest that my explanation is the right one. With regard to the stool with the turned ornament in the thigh, am I not right in saying that the eye is naturally offended by the mixture of a turned and an unturned style in the same leg? The turned ornament suggests a swivel motion, a revolution; but below the projecting foot suggests permanence of direction outward, not roundabout. Is that the reason why the legs of this stool offend the eye? I would submit for Mr. Romney Green's consideration that the only legitimate foot to a leg with a turned ornament is a round foot suggesting *no* direction. Mr. Romney Green may adduce numerous and impressive precedents for his stool-legs. I feel sure that they, too, must be wrong.

Now, from the second standpoint, that of the purchaser and user of Mr. Romney Green's productions, let me allude to No. 4, the walnut adjustable easy-chair, which is excellent; the monk's bench (No. 25), a useful and solid piece of furniture; and the walnut roll-top writing desk (No. 1), for which, if it is ever raffled, I should like to procure a ticket. Among the cigarette-boxes (No. 13) there are many I should like to use; but as many, too, I fear, which would drive me to desperation if I used them. The corner cupboard, of which three out of four doors do not fit, I would not like either. Neither could I endure to use the shovel board table, which, when pulled out, is not quite even. Why do I mention these things? You will say they are details. So they are; but, though to a smaller extent, they are of the same nature with those more significant failings which exasperate one so much in the workmanship of capitalistic industry. Mr. Romney Green little knows how happy I should be to acknowledge and acclaim perfection throughout in a fine piece of work such as his shovel-board table. Why is it this cannot be achieved? Am I romantically fastidious in expecting it? The last time I raised these points I was told that the craftsman could not possibly give the time he ought to give in order to perfect his productions. Well, this may be so. I know myself how often the exigencies of time compel one to do things against the dictates of one's conscience. If this be so, then, the trivial failings, in the nature of slightly defective fitting, disproportionate fittings, and imperfect joining, which I came across in Mr. Romney Green's work, are all excusable and accounted for, since it is obvious that a man who can produce any one of the really good pieces here, such, for instance, as the delightful inlaid tea-tray (No. 27), must be capable not only of avoiding the failings, but also of overcoming the difficulties, to which I have alluded.

In any case, taken all in all, Mr. Romney Green's show is a creditable and arduous performance; and if for a minute or two one halts in one's examination of it, to think of the age in which the artist is working, the difficulties, both spiritual and doubtless material too, with which he has to contend, and the virtues for which he stands, one cannot help feeling that, if one ventures to criticise at all, it must be as an associate wishing to remove the last blemish from one's friend's mantle, rather than as a foe determined upon thwarting an adversary at all costs.

## Pastiche

### ONE OF THE "HAUGHTY FORTY" SOLILOQUISES.

God moves in a mysterious way. I was one of twins. Had I been the other one, I should not even have had a tombstone. He died at the early age of five days without benefit of Clergy. Imagine England (for Thou canst imagine) had it been me! A shudder runs through this vast Empire at the thought.

Posterity will stand aghast when it hears of the might-have-been. Strange that I should live and he should die. And yet—I will not be modest—how could it have been otherwise? I hear some scoffing scoundrel whisper, "Both might have lived or both might have died; nay, both might never have been born." Such an one (however did I attain to such literary niceness) I repeat, such an one proclaims himself a disbeliever in Divine Providence.

So surely as Moses was destined to lead the Children of Israel out of Egypt, I came into this breathing world to take its breath away. And I have accomplished my life's work. Slowly but surely the reforms I have suggested for the betterment of my fellowman are beginning to take effect. So much so, that it can already be calculated that in a thousand years the descendants of the workers who are now earning their eighteen shillings a week will be making their twenty and twenty-two shillings a week. Though I shall never live to see that blessed Millennium, I do not repine. Sufficient for the day is the improvement thereof.

Wonderful it is to me how marvellously my head was modelled to wear the headgear of a Parliamentarian. I remember the first time I ever put it on. It was on a Sunday morning before Chapel, the day I overcame my nervousness. I have had such an affection for it ever since that I could contemplate the dying agonies of a workhouse inmate with more equanimity than I could the sight of a battered silk hat.

Four hundred pounds! No wonder the people in our village think I've got on. And I've got everybody else on, too. We're *all* getting on.

O Liberty, I take off my tall hat to Thee.

GEORGE A.

### THE AMATEUR ANCHORITE; A VADE- MECUM FOR THE LONG-HAIRED.

I am a trifle like that ancient sage—  
Cato, I think—who was, I understand,  
Never less lonely than in solitude.

Solitude? Let me snatch an odd half-hour  
To woo my ponderings, to muse upon  
A hundred nothings; leave me this respite,  
And you may bore me for the surplus hours,  
Or vice versa. But the while I chew  
My wilful cud, I take no joy in man,  
Nor woman neither.

Well, in such a mood  
I sought the station, heedless of the crowd  
That scuttled to and fro, a fitting theme  
For rhapsodists of Paris—"Mighty Man,  
A Chant in Half-a-Dozen Gasps"—I sought  
To find a dodge to practise Cato's trick,  
Eschewing company.

For in a train  
There's much to brood upon. Your phantasy,  
Properly nurtured and in wholesome trim,  
Can hear the rails become articulate.  
Conversing with the wheels. The clank and jolt  
Of axles tossing over points. The song  
And high-pitched simmering of gases, cooped  
In metal tubes, can open out a track  
Whereon your spirit gains infinity,  
Unburdened by the grime-scape either side,  
Unharassed by the gaze of fellow-men.  
And so I settled in my corner, bent  
On blotting out from my strange palimpsest  
Of memory the daily screech that sprawls  
In uncouth characters, and in its stead,  
I thought, with flourishes and uncial pomp,  
To blazon an illuminated text  
Of timeless purport.

But the train had scarce  
Began to glide from underneath the joists  
And tarnished canopy of Charing Cross,  
Than some belated booby floundered in—

Mottled of hue, with fishy eyes—and flopped  
Upon my plans for paleography,  
With laboured breath and oozing brow, the which  
He dabbed at with a scarlet wimple.

Then

His tongue began to clack :—A narrow squeak ;  
The nick of time ; his watch was slow or else  
The station clock was fast. So garrulous  
As chimpanzee or parrot he discoursed  
On this and that, according as the froth  
Of topics filtered through his shallow pate.  
He ranged from A to Z and dwelt upon  
The four and twenty intermediate,  
Driving me frenzied with his hotch-potch talk.  
Then, passing on to personalia, he  
Enlarged on his pursuits. A cunning hand,  
He was, it seemed, of lengthy practice in  
Shifting of chattels, buying things dirt-cheap,  
Bartering oddments, faking pictures up,  
Furnishing flats—he was of much account  
In Camberwell and Peckham Rye.

At length,

His stale recital ended, he made mien  
To know what paths I trod. Well, tit for tat.  
So fixing him with an uncanny stare,  
I thus began :—

"I am a breathing law,  
I am a fragment of eternity,  
A clot of animated dust, compact  
Of blood and tears and fire, and seasoned with  
A dash of madness. I have hereabouts  
(I pointed to my waistcoat) some strange thing  
They call a soul—a kind of tuning fork  
That sets my daily melody—a waltz,  
A dirge, a symphony, a serenade—  
In beat with the eternal. I have lived  
In other ages and in other guise,  
In other planets. I shall live again  
In equal change of form. For in this husk  
And fragile shell of me are garnered up,  
Inwoven with the sinew and the flesh,  
Dissolved in all the fluids, merged among  
The mist of vapours, elements derived  
From every haunt where I have sojourned in  
Prenatal being. Gaseous charges, breathed  
Amid the clouds of Saturn, liquids quaffed  
From lunar oceans, metals quarried out  
And smelted from the mines on Jupiter,  
Cunningly mingled with the salts and ores,  
The acids, and the alkalis of Earth.  
And all these things are welded into one,  
Stewing in one alembic.

Is it not

A marvel how the bulbs and throbbing valves  
Withstand these magic distillations?"

But

The train was slowing up at Hither Green,  
And helter-skelter my upholsterer  
Alighted with infringement of the laws.

P. SELVER.

### JACK COMES TO TOWN.

Jack was an English terrier whose sire and dam were the property of a man in Devonshire. It was this man's hobby to see that dogs came into existence properly, and with successful constitutions. It was his hobby, furthermore, to make himself responsible for the health and ultimate perfection, both of physique and of general good appearance, of those dogs that were created under his supervision.

Jack was the only puppy out of a litter of five to cause his master keen disappointment, his fault being a large black patch in the wrong place; a mistake on the part of Nature which excluded him from the showroom. When, therefore, his master chanced to see an advertisement in the London paper for a "Young English Terrier, sharp, and a good house dog," Jack was immediately dispatched to the centre of civilisation. "Be a good dog," his master had said to him, and then the lid was nailed down.

The next important thing that happened to Jack was the opening of his box in the little backyard of Mr. Curtis's grocery establishment in Croydon. He barked excitedly and looked around him. Everything seemed different. The four faces that peered in at him as the lid was removed frightened him, they were not like the faces

that he had been accustomed to. His master's face had been red and plump, but these new faces were thin and yellow. . . . A chain was fastened to the tight collar which they fastened about his neck before taking him out of his little box, and then he was poked into a discarded soap case.

That night Jack dreamed of the other puppies in Devonshire, and of the large piece of grass-land behind the kennels where he had first become conscious of his legs. He dreamed of his old master's kindly red face, and of the sham fights he had fought with his brothers.

When he awoke it was dawn. The rain was coming in through his soap box; he had cramp in one of his hind legs, and his collar almost choked him; a strange feeling of terror came upon him. He was alone, and in a strange place. He shivered; and then, as the rain flooded the soap box, commenced to howl.

At six o'clock the little back door was opened, and Jack heard strange voices. It had stopped raining, but his soap box was half-full of water; he shivered and whined, and felt far too wretched to take any interest in what might possibly happen when his new masters discovered his plight. The four yellow faces came and stared at him, then they bent down and examined him. "Lets in the rain," said one. "He's shivering," remarked another. "We shall have to go to the expense of a kennel," exclaimed Mr. Curtis irritably. "Shouldn't wonder if it isn't distemper comin' on," said the eldest son. "'Ow old is 'e?" inquired another. "They've had you," continued the first. "Take him in and dry him," suggested the eldest son. And Jack continued to howl. "If I hadn't paid a pound for him," exclaimed Mr. Curtis, as he moved towards the house, "I'd drown 'im."

ARTHUR F. THORN.

#### JUGGERNAUT.

Our missionary story-tellers, trying to reach our purse,  
Tell of India's millions living life of sin; and worse  
'Neath Vishnu's Car they cast them, nor fear suicidal  
curse.

The book says something 'bout the mote we see in  
others' eyes,  
Having in our own the while a beam of thumping size.  
As for those missionary tales, we take them with  
surprise!

But what about our Collier lads, that army thousands  
strong,  
That's sent to Heaven—some say Hell—as each year rolls  
along;  
For whom they make Westminster Bills too late, and  
mostly wrong?

What about the Railway track that counts for many  
score?  
The Ship-yards, Foundries, Factories, Workshops, send-  
ing ever more?  
Contributing of bone and blood far greater than does war?

Juggernautic suicides we well can understand.  
But Britain's annual sacrifice at Capital's demand  
Passes comprehension, as does Labour's humble stand.

J. T. FYFE.

#### CURRENT CANT.

[The compiler wishes to state that the following extracts are taken from a symposium in "The World's Press" for 1914, on the price of newspapers, their dependence on advertisers, etc. Readers will note the modesty of Mr. Caine, the sturdy independence of Mr. Blumenfeld, the wisdom of Mr. Garvin, and the immaculate aloofness of Sir Robertson Nicoll. Also the pure reason of Mr. Parker, the shrill dignity of Mr. Fyfe, the glorious (but somewhat confused) British patriotism of Messrs. White and Maxim, the senile chuckle-headedness of the Lord Mayor and Sir George Birdwood, and the optimism of Mr. Morgan. Again, the contradictory opinions of Mr. Gibbs, a journalist, and dear Mr. Allnutt, an advertiser; the strange news from Mr. Lansbury, and, lastly, the broad-minded contribution from Mr. Harry Lauder, which is reprinted in full.]

MR. HALL CAINE: "I do not think, and I should not like to think, that any reviews of my books are influenced by the fact as to whether space is taken in the advertisement columns or not. Such an attitude would be shocking."

MR. R. D. BLUMENFELD: "The editing of newspapers

from the counting room has never succeeded and could not possibly succeed in any condition."

MR. J. L. GARVIN: "The public pays less for all kinds of papers than they cost to produce, and only the deficit makes the difference."

SIR W. ROBERTSON NICOLL: "I am afraid I could not give any information as to the commercialism of newspapers."

MR. PERCY L. PARKER (Editor of "Public Opinion"): "I see no reason why legitimate advertisements should have any dangerous influence in self-respecting journals. They are merely the price the reader has to pay for the privilege of getting his cheap paper, and one is glad to observe a growing feeling against the insertion of advertisements which are not first-class. . . ."

H. HAMILTON FYFE: "When newspapers were dear, the 'puff' system flourished. Search them now for the once-familiar paragraphs of recommendation, and you will search in vain. The notion that a newspaper with a widespread circulation could allow 'advertisement interests to become paramount' is absurd. . . ."

MR. ARNOLD WHITE: "The thinker who has offended advertisers may be boycotted by the Press for a season, but his time always comes, and the great common sense of the British people, on the whole, is expressed in the new science of advertisement, which is wholly good and not evil, as many people think."

SIR HIRAM MAXIM: "We are an advertising people, and the advertisers practically pay for our newspapers."

SIR T. VANSITTART BOWATER (Lord Mayor of London): "I think it is absolutely necessary that newspapers derive a substantial advertisement revenue; otherwise they could not exist, and the public would suffer."

SIR GEORGE BIRDWOOD: "So long as the moral and intellectual quality of our leading newspapers is maintained at the present high level, I have a strong faith that any serious degradation in their outward guise and show will be rapidly recognised and corrected."

MR. H. E. MORGAN: "The tendency of the day is all towards honesty in advertisement."

MR. PHILIP GIBBS: ". . . the trail of the advertiser is seen in the editorial columns—that is not a serious evil."

MR. SIDNEY ALLNUTT (Editor of the "Advertising World"): "Our leading newspapers have maintained their editorial independence in a very admirable manner, and they show no signs of allowing it to be encroached upon."

MR. GEORGE LANSBURY: "All who care for freedom of expression . . . should unite in supporting newspapers that will pay their way by the price charged for them."

MR. HARRY LAUDER: "I would rather not give my opinion in public. Anything is worth the money if it is valued."

#### AT NOON.

Standing beneath an aged tree,  
I thought, five hundred years ago,  
Some man, unknown, has stood like me:—  
Yes, even so.

Against its girth he leaned his head,  
In such a noontide hour as this,  
To think of other lives long dead,  
As I of his.

For lonely men, on divers days,  
Here found a refuge from the sun,  
And mused awhile, and went their ways  
Till life was done.

I know they saw the still noon sleep  
Upon the stream and meadows there;  
I do not know the graves they keep,  
What men they were.

But when they heard an acorn fall,  
Or watched the white clouds wander by,  
The same thought lightly touched them all—  
That they must die.

R. E. BARKER.

#### SCATTERBRAIN.

He goes woolgathering 'neath the stars:  
He hath a screw loose: Scatterbrain.  
He hath a window loose that jars  
Open to heaven, and falls shut again.

E. H. VISIAK.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

## ÆSTHETICISM AND HISTORY.

Sir,—In an article in your issue of April 2, entitled "Æstheticism and History," Mr. A. J. Penty takes certain remarks in my "World of Labour" as his text. I think he has misunderstood my position. I agree with nearly everything in his article, and I regard the frequent saying of it as essential if the Socialist movement is to be brought back from bureaucratic Collectivism to moral and political sanity. Mr. Penty bases his criticism on the following sentence in my book: "There is no hope in solutions of the social problem which end in a false æstheticism, as they began in a false reading of history." On this Mr. Penty builds up his theory that I am the opponent of "mediævalism" and craftsmanship, and no better than a machine-made Collectivist myself. I entreat him to look rather more closely at the whole passage from which he quoted.

I said "false mediævalism," "false æstheticism," and "false reading of history." I agree wholly with Mr. Penty that the most disastrous moral effect of industrialism has been the divorce of artist and craftsman; I agree further that historical perspective is precisely what most "social reformers" painfully lack. I want more than I can say the modern world to realise how the greatness of the Middle Ages was built on the unity of artist and craftsman; I want our world to read history, and act in the light of history. But I want it to read its history right.

All true greatness is based on tradition; but all true greatness is also, supremely, novel. True progress is the product of the interplay of these two forces. Where tradition is lost, or where novelty is absent, we are in the presence of disease. By "false æstheticism," then, I meant the attitude of those who see the importance of tradition, but miss out the factor of novelty. By "a false reading of history" I mean that view which treats history as static, to which the Middle Ages are not long centuries of striving and adaptation, but an "epoch," immobile and lifeless as a painted canvas. The false æsthetics are those who believe that nothing can be right unless it is done nowadays just as it was done so many centuries ago. There are also the true mediævalists, who pierce beneath the surface, and seize, like William Morris, the essence of the whole period—who see that wages and leisure are secondary things, and that what counts above all else is man, "the maker and user." With such æstheticism I am in full sympathy.

My point was that in the modern world we were faced with an immense mass of curable poverty. If we scrapped machines, we should merely condemn a great part of the population to famine and penury. I believe, with Morris, that there will be more machinery before there can be less; I believe that, when machines are applied, not exclusively to the making of profit, but to aiding man in his task of good and beautiful production, they may be good and useful servants. I hold, indeed, that from many crafts, especially from such as, I think, Mr. Penty practises, the machine must be almost wholly excluded; but I do not hold that it is useful to start on a machine-smashing crusade in industry generally.

This, however, does not mean that I disagree with Mr. Penty's ideal, as I understand it. As he says, "Economic considerations may stand in the way of its widespread application to-day, but its fundamental truth is unquestionable." I believe that if the wage system is once abolished, if the worker is given control over his work, sooner or later the integrity of the craft will be restored by the workers themselves. The Guild, in my view, as in his, is a step to the restoration of craftsmanship to the artist, and artistry to the manual worker.

If I have answered Mr. Penty at such length, it is because he hit me in a very tender spot. I came to be a Socialist through Morris, and Mr. Penty's own book was one of the first to turn my mind in the direction of Guild organisation. Nor do I accept any responsibility for the recent *draft* report submitted to the Fabian Research Department by Mr. and Mrs. Webb, with which Mr. Penty seems to identify me. If I say little in my book of the skilled crafts, it is because they are in the main a craftsman's problem, which even a Guild organisation might well deaden and pervert.

G. D. H. COLE.

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## ART AND THE WEALTHY.

Sir,—The perils which confront and destroy Art in modern society are, I think, abundantly clear, but what (at least to me) Mr. Penty has not even yet made clear

is his statement dealing with the total disappearance of Art in the event of an alteration in the position of the wealthy class, I previously questioned. I must appear to harp on this because I do not see how we are to get a more sane system of society without such an alteration—which seems desirable—and I think possible—without a serious loss of any Art we may possess, because I do not admit that even our present Art depends entirely upon the markets, whether of capricious patronage or commerce.

I should have made myself clearer if I had mentioned independence as well as security, comfort and leisure, as making for the production of good work, but it seemed to me in my looseness that security would argue independence to an artist.

Mr. Penty tells us that "the ordinary trade craftsman of to-day—where he survives—generally knows the technical side of his craft, but he knows nothing about its æsthetic side." And goes on to say that the problem is how to bring that knowledge to him. I am not quite sure what Mr. Penty intends me to understand by "æsthetic knowledge," but should like to say that, in considering mediæval work, it seems apparent that the conscious thought in the artist's mind was only of the technical excellence of the workmanship according to workshop traditions—the expressive qualities and real beauty crept in as unconsciously as character into handwriting. True it was an age of faith—I am glad to see that Mr. Caldwell Cook has at least suggested a way to that—it was quite beyond me, but I suspect that, much more than Rationalism and a popular science, rush and insecurity destroyed, equally with the crafts, the faiths. But Mr. Penty will no doubt remind me that even if Mr. Caldwell Cook's revival of faith were allowed, the workshop traditions are gone. Quite true, but why? The workshops are gone. Reconstruct the workshops, i.e., the Guilds and an apprentice system, guarantee the conditions, and I think we are justified "in assuming that because with independence, security and leisure, beauty came naturally to the craftsman of the Middle Ages," it would come as naturally to the modern workman. For it comes unheralded and unconsciously to the good workman so circumstanced as to allow a pride and pleasure in his work. "Man makes beauty of that which he loves." In fact, as these conditions decline, so Art.

At present artists are a small, isolated clique who do not work for the people or come in touch to any extent with the ordinary trade craftsman, cut off from the people by the very fact of the people being unleavened by a body of craftsmen amongst them. That is the link in the chain which bound them which has been snapped by machinery and modern industrial conditions. Surely the repair necessary to make the artist organic with, instead of parasitic upon, society is clear. It is lack of that which accounts for much of the freak and restless work of the present, for the artist is to some extent influenced by his public, and a public lacking a leavening of craftsmen becomes divorced from and indifferent to the artist and his art, and he to that public, and so loses much of his balance.

The problem, then, is not so much how to bring æsthetic knowledge to the craftsman as how to obtain the desirable conditions of work. These obtained to those who are capable of any measure of beauty to-day under present conditions, it will certainly still accrue, if not to many others. Yet it is for the saving of them from entire disappearance that Mr. Penty would have us believe we must tolerate the wealthy and their conditions of scramble and prostitution amongst artists.

We are to believe that Art is to-day stimulated and solely sustained by the discriminating patronage of an aristocratic and wealthy class.

Mr. Penty will pardon me, I hope, if I remind him that Queen Victoria patronised the Arts, no doubt to the best of her aristocratic ability and discrimination, and her husband had much to do with the founding of our State schools for the propagation of design! This is, I think, as fair and irrelevant an argument as his of the architects enjoying security, comfort and leisure in public offices.

HAYDN R. MACKEY.

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## BRITISH BANISHMENT LAWS.

Sir,—Will you let me tell Mr. Alfred E. Randall and his readers that in the article headed "Law and Government in a British Protectorate" (NEW AGE, March 19) I find no blemish for which its writer is to blame, but that my learned friend, Mr. Ferrers, whose open letter was its text, has not given the facts quite carefully

enough. I am the journalist who stopped the particular injustice cited, and I rather resent the lawyer's facetious remark that I "took care that it lost nothing in the telling." It gained nothing from my pen, for it was quite bad enough to horrify, naked and unadorned. Mr. Ferrers is quoted as saying that the Chinese clerk crumpled up and threw down an official circular. He did not offer the official even that provocation. The official was "off his head" during the excitement; he saw that his circular had been so dealt with; he picked out this one young clerk (one of many), and bullied him before his office-mates. You have heard what the Chinese feeling of "losing face" is like. Conscious of innocence, unaware of the awful power of reprisal possessed by the official, and goaded by "lost face," that youth returned a saucy answer. Ordered to write down his name in Chinese, he said, "Can you read it if I do?" For that awful crime, and for that only, he was dragged through the streets to gaol, sentenced without trial to a term of imprisonment, to be followed by banishment. I made a journey to the place, interviewed the official, the eye-witnesses, urged the Chinese to refrain from excitement and to maintain order, and promised that the youth would soon be at liberty, for I was simple enough to suppose that the plain facts had only to be disclosed to ensure redress. For a full month, in the "Straits Echo," day after day, I expostulated, commented, argued, threatened. All the other papers jeered (at "Wright's storm in a teacup"), and told their readers that nothing could come of it. Even Mr. Ferrers, who might have backed me up, maintained silence. It was I who had finally to address every M.P. individually, and my announcement that I had done so, long before we got the news that a question had been asked, fetched the Government off its high horse. The young man was released; the official "broke" (I afterwards employed him as one of my correspondents; he was quite a good chap at heart); and the Chinese community, in their grateful way, burdened me with a gold ornament far too big to wear, which also offered opening for the liberty-loving (?) Englishmen out there to sneer at. England, when it gets time to learn about its Crown Colonies (most of which I know), may want to inaugurate big changes there. Meanwhile I say quite soberly and seriously that the foregoing incident, and the ordinance implicated, furnish only a sample of the all-round injustice that my fellows live unashamedly alongside.

Jersey.

TOM WRIGHT.

#### A REDMOND FOR ULSTER.

Sir,—When I was a youngster I was familiar with an old Irish "Come-all-ye," which related that "In Ireland there are leprecauns, shomadauns, and omahdauns," and many other wonderful, fearful, and stupid things. But in the whole twenty verses there was no mention of anything so queer as "Redmond-Howardism."

Would the author, discoverer, or inventor of this monstrosity tell us exactly what it is—its origin, nature, and genus?

As far as I can make it out, from the explanations already offered, it appears to be a two-headed beast with two utterly irreconcilable natures. One is called Redmond, an Irish Nationalist Home Ruler; the other is called Howard, an Ulster Covenanter, who takes an oath that Home Rule he will not have at any price.

This is all surely strange enough, but the queerest feature about this freak is that it proposes to be able to reconcile all these contradictory and mutually destructive faiths by the use of a mere hyphen, thus, "Redmond-Howard."

Come, young fellow-me-lad, let's have less of your posing and prattle. Instead of pestering the readers of THE NEW AGE with explanations of the inexplicable, and excuses for the inexcusable, sit yourself down and try to make yourself acquainted with the real bearings of the Irish question.

There is plenty of material for you to dine on. Sir Edward Grey, Lord Cromer, three writers in last Monday's "Times," all lords, too! Then there are the three closing paragraphs in last week's "Notes of the Week." Stripped of their trimmings, those paragraphs contain the plainest, straightest, and most candid exposition of the actual position of the Irish question which has yet appeared in any English publication. Never mind the manner in which the confession is made. Read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest it, and then you will understand why, if the whole of Nationalist Ireland stood up to-morrow and declared that she would not have Home

Rule, England, from sheer necessity, would be compelled to force it upon her.

By the way, when, how, or where did Mr. Redmond-Howard learn that an incident which happened on May 6, 1882, was fatal to an action that occurred on April 8, 1886, or four years afterwards? Ireland is evidently in for some queer history-making if the above is a sample of the fudge the "new generation" is going to turn out.

A final word with Mr. Redmond-Howard. It is time you were aware, Sir, that Thomas Davis is an Irish national institution. Unless you can refer to him without misrepresenting or maligning him, you had better leave his name alone. Davis is outside your class.

PETER FANNING.

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#### THE POSTAL UNIONS.

Sir,—I am still doubtful whether it is an entirely wise step for an Executive officer of an organisation which possesses adequate machinery for the control of its Executive to engage in a public newspaper controversy with critical members. But I am now glad that I yielded to the temptation to enter the healthy debating atmosphere of your columns, because I think your general readers may learn something as a result of the turn taken by the discussion initiated by "A Postal Worker." Not only has my unworthy presentation of the other side of the case drawn a sound critic like my friend Gibbon, of Newcastle—THE NEW AGE, by the way, was an early bond between us—into the discussion, but it has worked wonders with "A Postal Worker" himself. Embarking on a tour of swash-buckling, that gentleman has been coaxed a little distance into the field of argument. Good.

I might leave his defence of his non-de-plume to your readers. But after reading his second contribution, I am inclined to think that in spite of his earlier reference to my Executive colleagues and myself as procrastinators, deceivers, machinators, lick-spittles, anti-amalgamationists, place-seekers, forcible-feeders, and "Ramsay Macs," he really did *desire* to discuss in an honest spirit principles rather than persons. I shall try to meet him. I must still meet him at your expense, Mr. Editor, since the only other chance of placing Executive sinners on trial he offers is a debate on "Political Action for Postal Unions."

With mere assertions made, I was surely right to merely question them. The accuser brings the proof, according to our ideas of justice, before the accused is asked to produce evidence for the defence. So I contented myself with obvious replies to the unsupported assertions of "A Postal Worker," and obtained what I wanted—argument.

The deceit and procrastination of the Postal Committees we are told, lie in the fact that their resort to Parliamentary action does not fit in with the crisis described so vividly in the Press, and with some "strike-talk" reported at mass meetings. What innocence of this wicked world is displayed in advancing this argument! Why blame an Executive because the truth differs so greatly from the description in the commercial Press which "A Postal Worker" himself so well describes? Are we to try and force the truth to the pace and along the path of the Yellow Press? Did any Executive officer of a Postal Trade Union ever seriously threaten an immediate strike?

"A Postal Worker" does not appear to know the constitution of the National Joint Committee which represents him. All the faults of that Committee—and they are legion—spring from its constitution, N.J.C. policy! Executive powers! The N.J.C. is strictly forbidden by its constituent Unions to have a policy except *such Greatest Common Factor as can be found in the perfectly independent policies of its parts*. It has no Executive powers except to call a meeting of itself and carry out *without infringing the Executive powers of its constituent parts*, the policy—as above described—it is possessed of at a particular moment; I ask my colleagues and your readers, Mr. Editor, to accept my statement that the N.J.C. has never exceeded that all too modest charter. Its action at this moment conforms to it. If this is not true all the members of the Postal Executives have been hoodwinked.

As regards the alleged blocking of Amalgamation, I can only repeat that the Executive of the Postal and Telegraph Clerks have merely carried out the instructions of Conference in submitting a reorganisation scheme which includes outside officials. There is, in my opinion, nothing in that scheme to hinder a larger Amalgamation, and "A Postal Worker" makes no attempt to convert me from this opinion. Above all, the views on Amalgama-

tion, and on the reorganisation of officers are merely Executive suggestions asked for, which can, of course, be disregarded by the membership in Conference.

Surely "A Postal Worker" misreads me in regard to Joint Boards. The unhappy phrase has probably been my undoing. But if he reads again the Executive suggestion to which I referred, he will see that after suggesting periodical inquiries—there must be inquiry—and arbitration between management and worker when disagreement arises in interpreting awards, it is suggested that the vital questions regarding demarcation of work should be settled by committees composed of representatives of the staffs concerned and the Department. This is surely not Joint Board management. Surely this is not a Port Sunlight-cum-Furness gag. It is, as a matter of fact, the extension of Official Recognition so rightly demanded in the Leeds resolution, endorsed by "A Postal Worker."

I do not agree that such restraint on the autocracy of the permanent official is useless, nor is the wretched Parliamentary machine absolutely useless—past history showing that used as we are using it at the moment, some little is gained. The extent of our gain from Parliament, and from official recognition, will always, of course, be in exact and direct proportion to our economic strength. That strength will be at the full when we have a monopoly of labour. But we are not going to step right into that monopoly any more than into Guild Control. The horrible suspicion struck me as I noticed the glib reference to this monopoly that "A Postal Worker" was perhaps not in the Post Office at all. Whilst we wait and work for that monopoly, we must meet the enemy. The enemy is not going to wait till we are ready to fight. So we must, whilst never forgetting our ultimate ideals, whilst never ceasing to organise for their attainment, meet the foe with the poor weapons which the social and political system leaves us. We are fighting under conditions as they are, not as we would wish them.

A reference to Mr. Gibbon and I am done. His criticism is of the right sort. He believes that the judgment of the Postal Executive was at fault when they decided not to take a strike ballot. That is the same point which took the said Executive seven hours to discuss. I don't think a repetition of the many pros and cons will interest readers of THE NEW AGE. It is certain that a debate at Conference will furnish the members' view. Don't believe, John, that I am damaged in my ideals. A little routine work has not killed the rebel in me.

Now, Sir, I hope your readers will see the moral of this correspondence. The Postal Union is but a reflection of the wider movement in these things. It is fashionable to-day—and with some reason—to deny ideals to Trade Union officials. But the men best suited to help such officials as retain correct ideals—surely some do—spend valuable time and energy in criticism which is solely destructive. How on earth can you plant ideals in a membership, whilst constantly telling them in effect that they cannot hope to have officials with ideals? As a preliminary to a monopoly of labour, we want the spirit of co-operation. We kill that spirit if we suggest that the workers cannot find honest or capable individuals to represent them. It is an integral part of my faith at least, that the workers never have lacked, and never will lack, adequate human instruments to obtain their wants. The difficulty is to create and keep alive the want. Here I obtain my comfort. The gods may deny me many things, but they deny me the privilege of working with "A Postal Worker" and Mr. Gibbon to make Postal Servants want.

N. A. LARSEN.

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#### AN APPEAL.

Sir,—In the advertisement columns of the "Evening News," without signature or any mark of authorship, has been appearing intermittently during the past few weeks a proclamation to the workmen of the building trade. The text is as follows:—

"How long will you, who are walking about, be content with strike pay, while other members of your union are drawing full wages?"

"How long will it be before you think and act for yourselves, and return to your jobs before all the places are filled by the hundreds who, instead of drawing strike pay, are earning £2 7s. 11d. a week?"

"Do not forget that competent men who are coming into London from the provinces will not go back. And the employers will not go back on them."

"Demand a ballot—and abolish tyranny."

I suppose that this anonymous appeal strikes its authors and publishers as being a 'cute bit of business. It does not occur to them that attempting by bribes and

playing upon fear to reduce the workmen from allegiance to their union is a form of treachery comparable to the Unionists' attempt to employ the Army to veto Liberal measures.

TRADE UNIONIST.

\* \* \*

#### DEMOCRACY AND MR. COX.

Sir,—Even at the risk of appearing too vigilantly parsimonious in the making of admissions, I feel I cannot allow myself to be drawn into a discussion so complicated as that proposed by Mr. Cox's last letter, without in the first place retracing my steps to a stage at which the issue was a plainer and simpler one. And I wish to do this, not so much because, as Mr. Cox suggests, I may "tire" of a controversy so heavily laden with questions and counter-questions, most of which remain unanswered, but rather because I feel that Mr. Cox and I are not even yet agreed as to the precise meaning of the terms we are using. For such a crop of questions to spring up spontaneously on either side in a dispute there must be something amiss with the very tokens or verbal coins in circulation between us. It was thus that the controversy began, and, unless we endeavour to be quite clear now, it is likely to continue along the same lines.

In his second letter, eight-ninths exactly of which was devoted to my use of the word "essential," Mr. Cox put a definite question to me. Let me quote it: "Does he (meaning me) mean that what is common to men is less important than what is not?" Let me now remind the reader of the point of this question. I take it that Mr. Cox's process of thought was somewhat as follows: "Mr. Ludovici, having declared that democrats detest recognising essential constitutional differences between one man and another, is aiming a blow at the democratic doctrine of equality. Now, if I can induce him to admit that the word essential here is not used in its proper sense; if, moreover, I can urge him to acknowledge that, whereas there are subtler differences in men which would sanction a pedantic and meticulous classification on the lines which he suggests, men in all their essentials are equal, it will rest with him to prove that, in order for the doctrine of equality to be fallacious, the subtler differences on which his pedantic classification rests are more important than what I understand as the essentials that all normal men have in common which constitute their equality."

Now you will see the point of the question Mr. Cox put to me, and you will be in a position to understand my manner of meeting it. Allow me to state at once, however, that I have made the above sketch of Mr. Cox's process of thought, not out of any desire to caricature or distort it—I have no such intention—but rather out of a desire to arrive at some clarity, some definite issue. Thanks to the above sketch, Mr. Cox will be able to score two discoveries and two advantages:—First, how far I have understood his position—a discovery which will enable him to correct me if I am wrong and to lay stress on his own point; second, how I feel I have to meet his position—a discovery which will enable him to approach me with a full and voluptuous appreciation of my anxiety.

What is my position? What have I done and said? I have maintained:—First, that my use of the word "essential" was legitimate; second (and here Mr. Cox declares that he does not understand me), "that if the democrat, with his belief in equality, maintains that what is common to all men in a state of barbarity is more important in classifying men for civilised political life than, let us say, the qualities of ruler and subject, then I maintain that he is concealing essential differences, from the standpoint of civilised humanity, beneath a generalisation derived from man as a genus."

As Mr. Cox is not certain of my meaning here, and as I consider this the whole crux of my position, perhaps I may be allowed to elaborate the idea.

In the hope of making myself quite clear, I used several words in the above argument which, if Mr. Cox wished to quibble—an intention of which I should be the last to suspect him—would have given him ample opportunity of so doing. I understand, however, that Mr. Cox is desirous of understanding the ideas behind my words, and does not intend to be *à cheval* upon shades of meaning which may or may not give him a momentary advantage.

Very well, then, let me restate the above argument in other words—words more guarded, I admit, but by no means intended to convey an idea different from that which led to the first and freer statement.

If the democrat, contemplating man as a species,

differentiated sharply by certain characteristics from the rest of the order Mammalia, takes those characteristics which all men as a genus have in common, and argues therefrom that men in a state of society are equal, he is concealing beneath a generalisation derived from an abstract "Man," representing the genus Homo (sub-species of the Mammalia), essential differences which distinguish actual men one from another in everyday social life.

It is admitted that those characteristics which differentiate "Man" as genus Homo, from the rest of the Mammalia, are all important—indeed, that they constitute his identity against the background of the order Mammalia; but against the background "Social life" or "human community" there are characteristics which differentiate man from man in an equally striking manner, and therefore, however confusing and plausible it may seem, it is unfair to place man as a genus against the background Mammalia and then to employ the resulting generalisation as an argument about man when the background has been shifted and Human Society stands in its place. This I understand was Rousseau's error. This I understand, too, was the error of the French Revolutionists. And, if I have not mistaken Mr. Cox, it is his error, too.

But this explains my question to Mr. Cox, "Important for what?" in reply to his question quoted above.

I trust now that I have made amends for any parsimoniousness of which I have been guilty during the course of this discussion in the making of admissions, or in the acknowledgment of my adversary's points.

A. M. LUDOVICI.

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ART AND THE PLUTOCRACY.

Sir,—It is impossible to reconcile two views on modern art, expressed in your issue of March 19, under the respective headings of "Present-Day Criticism" (unsigned), and "Art and Revolution," by Arthur J. Penty. Which of them then is right?

The first says with passionate eloquence: "Artists! . . . Poets! . . . Your enemies are the vulgar rich of today, the miserly, insolent and murderous plutocracy. Attack then this plutocracy! . . . Only at the cost of mutual rivalry in sensationalism, and not in art, one, here and there, among you wins a temporary approval and a disdainful and niggardly patronage. . . The monied class. . . injures all . . . poets, musicians, painters, architects. . . Nothing can arise from your spirits while the incubus of this class is allowed to feed upon the nation's energy."

All this, and much more in this vein, says the first. The second says: "Should . . . a revolution take place and the wealthy become dispossessed, the market (for art) would disappear entirely. If the democracy took control of affairs, it would never trouble to think about the welfare of art. In having come to regard it as a luxury of the rich the chances are it would utterly neglect its claims."

Mr. Penty apparently does not fully realise the incalculable psychological potentialities of his own phrase. "If the democracy took control of affairs." The spirit of democracy is not dead. It is but asphyxiated by the moral stench of Wagerly and Capitalism. Let the democracy but indulge in the vitalising exercise of taking control of affairs and we should inevitably behold the revivifying of its spirit, and the speedy winging of that spirit to a concern for art.

Mr. Penty's chief charge against the democracy in its relation to art is that it is incapable of exercising discrimination. Does he then suggest (as implicitly he does), that the rich are capable of exercising discrimination? What, the obese plutocracy capable of exercising discrimination that is in the interests of art! The only discrimination they ever exercise is that which affects, not the interests of art, but the interests of the parasitism of surplus value.

And where, oh where did Mr. Penty get the notion that "the average man . . . always wants to dictate"? The average man is for the most part a wobbly loon, who is content servilely to toil through life at the dictates of the reigning orders of Rent, Interest, and Profit.

And as for the interests of the rich in art; well, look at the houses and the streets of England. And look at the faces of the rich!

ARTHUR ROSE.

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PRESENT-DAY CRITICISM.

Sir,—Mr. Visiak has, of course, the right to place Coleridge among the creators if he can support his judg-

ment. It is, in my opinion, no support to say that Coleridge's work is of child-like beauty and that child-beauty is never second-rate. (I never used this term, by the way.) The matter is of literature, not of its particular beauties. Moreover, "The Ancient Mariner," which Mr. Visiak instances, is not child-like, but, among other things, didactic. Surely Mr. Visiak is thinking of the simplicity of the metre and language. But this simplicity is not lacking where required by the creators! I gave enough definition of the different orders of poets to require some consideration by Mr. Visiak if he wishes to discuss. His own suggestion that Chaucer and his order were inspired by the Seraphim and Coleridge by the Cherubim is not discussible. As for inspiration never being second-rate, there are so many ranks of it as degrees of skill in poets. Inspiration unformed does not come within our judgment. We may believe that Coleridge's genius outran his talents, but what is the substance of that formless inspiration to us more than a dream? Here is distinction of the creators—they become masters of their inspiration once this approaches them.

Some time I may offer my study of Wordsworth's Ode; but it is years since I was committed to an analysis of some famous novel, a task that grows more oppressive with every passing week. However, the ode is far more to my taste.

In reply to Mr. Caldwell Cook, I confess that he does not convince me by his pin-practice of the utter benevolence of government by one's schoolboy peers. Melikes not that pin. Mr. Cook will be appalled to hear that it reminded me of an ancient assault against my unruly childhood, when an inquisitorial nurse tied me by the wrist to a chair-leg with, not a rope, but a piece of cotton. The second time, dignity overcame my superstitious terror. I should like to know what would happen to the one who either was bored at the pin-joke and refused to see it any more, or was disgusted at some fancied indignity in the business—to one who yelled out or "squizzled" through the nose just in the nick of time? Would his peers be allowed to stone him for his refusal to keep their order? I divine more tyranny, more misery and proud melancholia to be the portion of a rebel agin the Government by one's peers than ever fell to one who could at least make allowances for the natural right to show off vested in a superior.

THE WRITER OF "PRESENT DAY CRITICISM."

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SYNTHESIS v. ANALYSIS.

Sir,—I am sure my handwriting must make reader, or printer, or whoever is responsible for the correspondence columns, swear. May I, however, make one correction? Musicians will be able to spell out the names of the Hungarian composers from the alphabetical combination given them. But I must protest against being made to uphold the musical analysts.

I wrote: "If we apply our Western analytical method to the understanding of Asiatic methods, we shall lose the continuity which binds contemporary music to theirs."

LOUISE LIEBICH.

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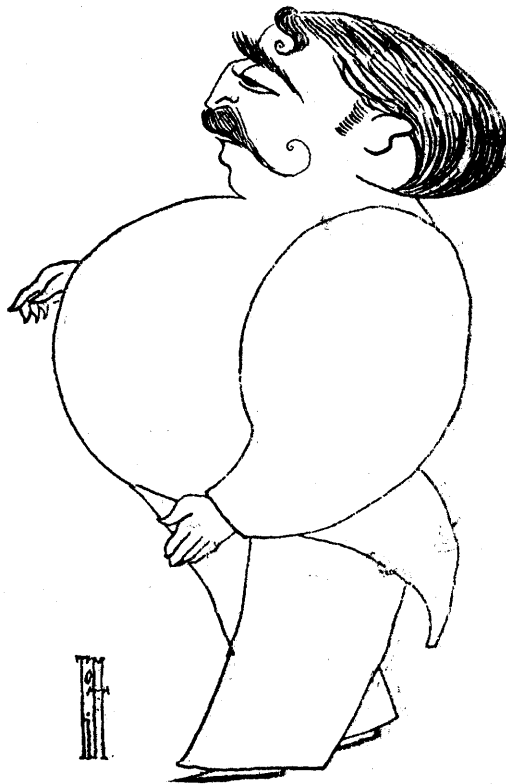
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