

# THE NEW AGE

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## NOTES OF THE WEEK.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE'S announcement on Thursday that over three hundred of the munition factories have been declared controlled establishments within the meaning of the Munitions Act comes as a welcome surprise. And the official explanation that "by this provision Parliament has secured that the sacrifices made by the workmen are made for the nation as a whole and not for the benefit of individuals" is a recognition at any rate of the principle of national service for which we have been contending. At the same time there are several circumstances that raise an interrogation. In the first place, why has the announcement been so long delayed? If, as Mr. Lloyd George says, controlled establishments were being made within a day or two of the passing of the Act, would it not have been wise to announce the fact weeks ago? We might have been spared the South Wales strike. Again, it is unfortunate that the "interests of the Army and Navy" require secrecy concerning the factories scheduled as controlled. Under cover of this cloak fish of one factory and fowl of another may obviously be made. Are the so-called "great" munition factories, for example, controlled; or is the principle to be applied only to the small firms that cannot afford to keep a member of Parliament? Still again, we are not informed upon what basis the proposed limitation of profits is to be calculated. A common formula, we know, offers all kinds of difficulties, for each factory has its peculiar circumstances. But an individual application, on the other hand, might open the door to arbitrary and inequitable treatment. How has the Government got over these difficulties? Finally it is misleading to suggest that the adoption of the principle of limited profits equalises the sacrifices as between the employers and the Trade Unions. It is true that the sacrifices become more nearly equal; but a disproportion still remains between sacrificing everything like

the Trade Unions and sacrificing merely a defined surplus of profits like the employers. The employers, while they forgo for the period of the war the right to excessive profits, preserve, it is clear, their hold upon the machine that creates profit. They may thus expect to enjoy its fruits without restriction as soon as the war is over. But in abandoning the rules of their Unions the workmen are actually giving away their machinery of defence. They not only forgo its present use, but they scrap its parts at the risk of never being able to put them together again.

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We are inclined, in fact, to think that the Trade Union machine will never be put together again in the form in which we have known it in the past. On the one hand the circumstances that will prevail after the war will not be a replica of the circumstances that prevailed before the war. And, on the other hand, a more considerable resistance to Trade Unionism may be expected from the employers who by that time will have learned by experience the advantage of having no unions to contend with. Is it likely that, given the opportunity and the means of avoiding it, they will acquiesce in the re-establishment of the rules which have proved so irksome? And is it likely that the Trade Union officials will then have more power to enforce the re-establishment than they have now to resist the dis-establishment of their rules? Less, much less, we should say. For if in a period when labour, by reason of its scarcity, is almost a monopoly of the Unions, the Unions have succumbed to the wiles of the employers, how much more readily they must succumb to the pressure of facts when peace breaks up their monopoly by flooding the labour-market with several additional millions of workmen. The women now trickling steadily into industry will, moreover, aggravate the conditions hostile to the complete recovery of the privileges of the Trade Unions. In a purely economic sense, the introduction of women into fresh

industries differs in no way from the introduction of, let us say, cheap Chinese labour. And if the Unions consent to the one, there is no economic ground whatever for refusing to consent to the other. Yet we imagine that if the employers proposed publicly to import Chinese coolies for the same occupations in which women are now finding employment, the Unions would be upon their hind legs declaring that their interests were being jeopardised. But why not now? Cheap labour, it stands to reason, whether it be that of our own women or that of Chinese coolies, is the real enemy; and it is not a whit less dangerous to Trade Union standards in petticoats than in pig-tails. The fact, however, remains that women are flocking into industry while the Trade Unions stand looking on in bewilderment. By the time the war is over they will have made themselves at home in industry. As allies of the employers in the common cause of keeping wages down they will prove a powerful enemy to the Trade Unions, who will thus live to regret that they did not make a stand a year ago.

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In most of the Trade Union journals that we have seen the subject of the introduction of women into industry is treated with a mixture of jocularity and resignation; such as suggests that the officials are consciously committing euthanasia. The effort, it would seem, that we have called upon them to make to obtain a monopoly of labour and to use it to force themselves into responsible partnership either with their employers or with the State, is too much for them. Rather than declare that neither women nor children shall enter industry until the wage-system is abolished, even at the cost of themselves as Unions assuming a part of the responsibility for national industry, the Unions, in horror of the latter, make a joke or a platitude of the former. Mr. Wardle's journal, for example, pokes fun at women porters on the railway lines as if facetiousness were a weapon quite lethal enough for the deadliest enemies of the standard rates of men's wages. And in the "Federationist," the organ of the General Federation of Trade Unions, "T. Q.," who, we believe, is the son of the late Mr. Harry Quelch, scarcely less facetiously suggests that the Unions must treat the importation of women into industry in a "broad and statesmanlike manner," by admitting them as members of the existing Unions. Certainly if women could command the same wages as men, and the number of labourers seeking employment made no difference to the rates of wages, the admission of women into industry and the Unions would be "statesmanlike." But neither women's wages nor men's wages are fixed by the fiat of Trade Unions, but by the Law of Supply and Demand; and it follows that the more labourers are in competition for work the lower the wages, Unions or no Unions. However, we must leave events to demonstrate these things, since the Unions will not learn them by reason. Time will prove what we can not.

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It is clear that the scheduling of "controlled" establishments, though a passable device for meeting the objection of workmen to work overtime to put surplus profits into the pockets of private employers, is no more than a piece of opportunism. It establishes no new principle of industrial organisation; and it can as easily be abandoned as it has been adopted. The real problem of industrial organisation remains exactly where it was before the Munitions Act was passed. But the question is whether a piece of tinkering opportunism that stops a leak for the moment will prove to be sufficient to carry us through the war, let alone to enable us as a nation to resume and maintain our leadership of the world when the war is over. Lord Haldane lucubrates concerning the necessity of "ideas of organisation and leadership." Well, here is an idea for him. The organisation of the nation that hopes (and deserves)

to lead the world must provide for the discharge of national functions by means of national organs. Laissez-faire, as everybody knows, is played out. Prussia has effectually killed it. But equally by her example Prussia has put an end to any desire in man to see established an absolute State control. If now both laissez-faire and its presumed only alternative, State collectivism, are discredited—the one by its failure, the other by its abominable success—in what direction must a nation with a future seek for a new principle of self-organisation? We reply, for our own part, that the principle to be applied is that of Home Rule in the economic, as well as in the political sphere. The nation that first learns to distribute national functions and their responsibility among national groups of its members will first obtain leadership in the new era of international competition opening before us. The Munitions Act, we repeat, is no more than a stop-gap. The principle there partially and timidly applied must be fully accepted and generally adopted in every industry. Not merely must we have a limitation of profits, but profits as such must no longer be sought. National production for national use must take the place of private production for private profit. No lesser idea will enable a modern democracy to hold its own against the State collectivism of an autocratic Prussia.

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That State collectivism, strange as it may appear to the Fabian Society, is quite compatible with the continuance of production for profit, is clear from the case of Prussia. We have during the last week, in fact, seen evidences in the German Press that the abandonment of laissez-faire in the matter of the freedom of industry need not connote the abandonment of laissez-faire in the conduct of industry. Once it has decreed the nature and amount of the things to be produced, the State in Prussia leaves to the employers both the control of the means of producing them and the amount of profit to be made. This has naturally become a source of complaint among the few Socialists in Germany whose economic ideas have not been forgotten during the war. The extreme left wing of the Social Democratic Party complain, for example, that "under the cloak of the political truce, the rest of the party has been transformed from a champion of the workers' class-struggle into aiders and abettors of the bureaucracy in a capitalistic State." In other words, they accuse the party of conniving with a bureaucracy which itself is already in league with capitalists to maintain the exploitation of labour. There is not the least doubt that this is the case. The Prussian bureaucracy, though all-powerful, exercises its power by and with the concurrence of the great capitalists; with the effect that to the economic power of the capitalists the sanctions of the State are formally added. Capital is indeed nominally under the control of the State and has, we must admit, to mind its p's and q's when dealing with the Prussian militarist machine. But at the same time when this submission has once been made, Capital's control of Labour is wellnigh absolute. The great capitalists, in short, are the State's barons of mediæval times, sworn to allegiance, but in return for the right to exploit their economic retainers. What wonder, we say, that German Socialists who have kept their heads see clearly and ever more clearly what is afoot during the war? Our hope, indeed, is that more of them will recover their senses until a party is formed strong enough to overthrow not only the capitalists, but the State that is in league with them. And in this hope, curiously, our own profiteers must join. But what a piece of irony it is that English profiteers must wish the success of German social-democracy while doing all in their power, just like their German confrères, to defeat social-democracy at home!

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It is not for us to oppose any promising discussion of an immediate peace. Peace certainly cannot come too soon to please us. But we would warn our readers

that a peace which is no more than a truce would be infinitely worse for civilisation than the prolongation of the present war to a finish; and, furthermore, remark that, by all the signs, a peace at the present moment would involve nothing less than a victory for Prussia. It can hardly be imagined by those who do not study the German Press regularly how far German public opinion is from acknowledging either the error of its ways or, still less, the possibility of defeat. We would put it to our wrongly named pacifists (they are really "trucists") whether the petition of the half-dozen landholding and industrial German associations to the Kaiser, which was published last week, indicates a spirit of negotiation, to say nothing of surrender or even of compromise. These powerful bodies, so far from being satisfied with the success of their national defence, have now thrown off any pretence of a purely defensive war, such as seduced the social democrats to co-operate with them, and demand the annexation of Belgium and north-east France on the simple ground that these districts contain coal and iron in great abundance and of the utmost future value to Germany. National freebooting in other words, with a European war as its incidental accompaniment! The signatory associations cannot, we are afraid, be dismissed as obscure academic bodies without influence or significance. On the contrary, they are powerful and representative. We leave it to be imagined whether peace negotiations with robbers who fancy themselves victorious are likely to prove fruitful. Until *they* cry for peace, it appears to us certain that the rest of Europe would cry in vain.

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The prospect of an indefinite prolongation of the war makes it, however, imperative that longer views should be taken in this country of our national strategy. While in the early days everybody in the Cabinet and out of it believed that the war could not last very long, temporary measures and day to day expedients were the natural responses of the Legislature and the public to the demands of the situation. We ourselves complained of their shortsightedness, it is true, and urged the need for radical instead of superficial measures; but neither Parliament nor the Press was disposed to listen. The realisation is now beginning to be made that the war, instead of certainly coming to an end next week or the week after, will *probably* last another year and *may* last another two or three or four; and the change of outlook in the one ought to involve a corresponding change in the national view of our necessary adaptations. We have discussed so often the industrial needs that we can be excused for taking them for granted at this moment. But two needs remain which deserve attention from their interrogative attitude during the past week. One of them concerns the raising of the money to carry on a long war; the other concerns the future of Parliament.

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In the unflattering comparisons some of our patriots are making between England and France, it is strange that the contrast of our respective Parliamentary procedures should be neglected. Last week there came to an end in France a political struggle of principle which had been going on since the war began. It was no less than the struggle between the principle usually called democracy or government by elected persons (pace "A. E. R.") and the Prussian principle of the absolutism of the de facto Executive. Months ago the French Chamber and Senate succeeded in securing representation on the Executive Ministerial Committees; and months ago both asserted their claim to remain in session at their own discretion. But latterly it was felt by the Executive that so much popular independence, especially when accompanied by criticism, was a nuisance; and it was sought in France, as here, to muzzle permanently the representative assemblies by adjourning them practically sine die and by dissolving the Parliamentary Committees intermediary between the

Chambers and the Executive. Last week, however, the struggle was concluded; but not, as here, by the surrender of Parliament to the Government, but by a compromise favourable to Parliament and not, in a long view, unfavourable to the Executive. The Chamber and the Senate are to adjourn from time to time, but only for very short recesses. The intermediary Parliamentary Committees, on the other hand, are to be made permanent, and are not to lapse as Parliament adjourns. It is, all things considered, a great victory for Parliamentarism; and by the same reasoning it is no less to the ultimate advantage of the Executive. For the moment, perhaps, the Executive may feel itself encumbered; but the encumbrance is of the nature of a defensive organ. The responsible co-operation of Parliament with the Executive ensures the latter not only popular support but, in case of need, popular defence. Executive heads will not fall and a revolution will not be precipitated if Parliament shares responsibility with the Government. The moral for us is plain.

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The financing of the war likewise necessitates a view as long as the war is now considered likely to be. While our Government and public were under the impression that the war might stop at any moment, we can understand, though we cannot approve, the plan of raising loans lest heavy taxes should make the war unpopular. The case now is changed in several respects. The war will *not* soon be over; and from being an unpopular war it has become the most popular (we do not say *desirable*) war ever engaged in by this country. There is thus not the least reason to fear that taxation will make the war unpopular among the masses of the people. The fear is only that equitable taxation or taxation according to means will de-popularise the war among the commercial classes who, as we know, are more cosmopolitan than patriotic any day of the week. Loans, moreover, are a poor substitute for taxation even from the point of view of concentrating national attention upon the war. They have certainly almost disguised from the public the fact that we are engaged in the costliest war of all time. They have induced the illusion of prosperity when actually the nation as a whole is becoming impoverished. And they have encouraged, or at least not discouraged, habits of extravagance and waste, both private and public, which are accelerating national bankruptcy. Under these circumstances, it is public policy to begin war-taxation at the earliest possible moment. The policy of loans might have served for a short sharp war in which it was not necessary that the whole nation should be engaged in individual and concurrent sacrifice; but for a war demanding the serious co-operation, measurable in sacrifice, of every citizen, only the policy of taxation here and now will be effective. Let us have no more exclusive loans by means of which to live riotously on our uncles at the expense of our posterity; but let the nation begin its sacrifices now, share the burdens of the war now, and risk their economic ease in the financial trenches now. If a democratic nation is to be carried through the war it should pay its fare as it goes; and we believe it would willingly do so. But are we in this suggesting what is known as the "broadening of the base" of taxation—in other words, the taxation of the food and wages of the proletariat? Our readers know we are not. In the same cant we retort upon the "broadeners" that the burdens of taxation must be laid upon the shoulders of those best able to bear them. It is the simple fact that of the annual income of this country, one half is enjoyed by one million of us while thirty-nine millions of us are left to scramble for fragments of the other half. One million persons take twelve hundred millions annually; we other thirty-nine millions take each forty times less than they. The proper shoulders for taxation are surely as apparent as the figure of Saul among the pigmy Israelites. The million would prefer, naturally, to lend us of their plenty and to be repaid with interest when the war has been won for them. Tax 'em, tax 'em, and again tax 'em.

## Foreign Affairs.

By S. Verdaz.

LAST week the attention of diplomatists was concentrated on the Balkan Peninsula, and in connection with the negotiations which had been proceeding there for some time two very important pronouncements were made. The first was the statement issued by the Serbian Government at Nish that the representatives of England, France, Russia, and Italy, had asked for certain guarantees from Serbia in respect of territory in Macedonia claimed by Bulgaria in return for her eventual participation in the war on the side of the Allies. The second was the interview which the Bulgarian Prime Minister, M. Radoslavoff, arranged to grant to an American journalist for the purpose of conveying to the world in general his view of Balkan affairs. It was stated in the Nish communiqué that the Greek Government had been asked by the representatives of the Powers to give guarantees similar to those requested from the Serbian Government. The Serbian statement indicated that "for the present" the guarantees asked for could not be given, but that expression "for the present" may almost certainly be regarded as a saving clause which will probably be taken advantage of at a very early date.

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As was indicated in these columns last week, the Allied Powers are not uninterested in ultimately effecting a Balkan settlement which shall be as much to the satisfaction of all the parties concerned as any Balkan settlement can reasonably be expected to be; but their immediate object is to utilise the military strength of one or more of the Balkan States which have not yet joined us. The strategic position on the eastern front is at the present moment of such a nature that the participation of Roumania is not advisable from a military point of view. On the other hand, the Bulgarian Army can be utilised to advantage.

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As our enemies are quite familiar with what will happen in consequence of Bulgarian participation in the war against them, there is no harm in saying that the employment of the Bulgarian forces against Turkey is not everything that may be expected. There are at the present moment so many British, French, and Italian troops at the Dardanelles that the ultimate forcing of the Straits with or without the aid of Bulgaria is only a question of a short time. Even one-third of the Bulgarian Army would make a vast difference to us in that field. It is not now too soon to consider the possibilities of an advance into Hungary through the Balkans after Turkey has been eliminated from the campaign. Too much attention need not be paid to the apparently successful advance of the German Armies. Even in the middle of last week it was clear that both the German flanks had been weakened in order that troops might be concentrated in the centre for a tremendous attack on Kovno. It is evident that the German forces, exhausted and spent as they are after several months of very hard and incessant fighting, are not in a sufficiently strong position to meet an attack by a new army from the south composed of Roumanians, Bulgarians, and several divisions of British, French, and Italian troops released from the Dardanelles.

It is in the light of this probable circumstance that M. Radoslavoff's statement to the Press must be judged. It is true, as he said, that the Bulgarian Government was negotiating with both sides—with the Central Powers as well as with the Allies. Both sides promise territorial compensation—the Entente Powers on condition that Bulgaria takes an active part in the campaign; Germany and Austria on the sole condition that she continues her neutrality. But it is sufficiently evident that a continuance of neutrality can avail Bulgaria little once the Dardanelles are forced; and they can be forced without Bulgaria's assistance. If we are asked, as we are asked by the Bulgarian Prime Minister, to regard the situation as it exists at present as a business proposition, then let us consider it from our own point of view. We force the Dardanelles in a reasonably short time, and the moral and material effect of that action is felt throughout the Balkans. Turkey is rendered incapable of taking any further part in the campaign. Greece, if she wishes to help us, is allowed to retain Kavalla and the Struma Valley; Roumania, no longer fearing Bulgaria, is free to march against the Austrians, and thus relieve the pressure on the Russians, with the aid of the troops released from the Dardanelles operations.

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That does not pretend to be a prophetic statement, for the hypothesis need not be entertained at all; but it is certainly a reasonable presentation of what we might expect to see if Bulgaria chose to take the part of our enemies. While we admit, therefore, that Bulgaria's assistance would be most valuable, we do not admit it to be so valuable that we cannot afford to do a little bargaining. There is one other factor in this situation which not merely Bulgaria, but Greece and Roumania as well, will have to bear in mind, and that is the financial factor as it is likely to exist after the war. We need not pay, in this connection, too much heed to the pessimistic statements regarding a poverty-stricken Europe which are so prevalent just now; a general depression of securities, and money at an extortionate price. Whatever the financial condition of Europe may be, it is to France and England, and not to Germany and Austria, that the Balkan States will have to look for their future loans; and loans, at some time or another, they must have. Furthermore, the Ottoman Debt, as readers of THE NEW AGE have been reminded from time to time, has never yet been apportioned among the conquering Balkan States, as it should have been after the Second Balkan War, and would have been if it had not been for the present war. It stands to reason that the Balkan States which have helped this country and her Allies in the struggle against Germany will naturally meet with greater consideration at the hands of the Financial Commission than Balkan States which have aided Germany or maintained their neutrality. This is only natural; for the allocation of the Debt must necessarily be made, to some little extent, in a purely arbitrary manner.

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From what has just been said it follows that Bulgaria, despite her negotiations, frankly admitted, with both sides to the present struggle, has really a very limited choice. If she risks an alliance with Germany and Austria she loses, eventually, not only Kavalla, the Struma Valley, and the districts in Macedonia she claims, but also her title to financial consideration after the war. In view of the normal conditions prevailing in Bulgaria since 1912, this last is not to be despised. A rising young State, fresh from a popular war, and with additional territory, should not have to borrow money at between seven and eight per cent. in times of profound peace. Yet that was the condition of Bulgaria last year. It is to be hoped that these aspects of our present relationship to Bulgaria have not been lost sight of by the Foreign Office.

## Towards National Guilds.

THE L.C.C. tramway strike is an episode of the past and had no particular significance to call for passing comment. It was the *n*th demonstration that wage-strikes, even under the most favourable circumstances, are played out. Until the unions can ensure themselves against blacklegs by stopping the source of supply, above and below, they can now be defeated on every occasion. The employers are now skilled in defence. It should be noted, however, as giving the lie to the farmers who pretend that labour is not to be had at any price, that Mr. Fell, the manager of the L.C.C. tramways, not only announced that he had no difficulty in obtaining men, but got them! The poor farmers got women and children.

We are quite prepared to be told—and to believe—that capitalists do not deliberately maintain the horrors of the wage-system by which they live upon Rent, Interest and Profit. The following story, however, from the "Reminiscences of Sir Robert Ball," may be commended for an illustration of the case.

There was a discussion at the Church Congress in Dublin pro and con the Darwinian theory of Natural Selection. Dr. — spoke against it, saying: "Look, for instance, at the shark, a malignant monster with eyes on one side of his head and a mouth on the other. Under natural selection no such creature could exist." Sir Robert, who subsequently took part in the discussion, said: "While agreeing with some of the speaker's statements, I think that he is wrong in one respect. He does an injustice to the shark. I know him to be quite tender-hearted; but, like all other creatures, he requires food. Nature kindly steps in and places his eyes on one side of his head and his mouth on the other, so that he may not witness the struggles of his dying victims."

"Is it then impossible to introduce discipline and greater regularity into the essential industries? Not at all; but we must first recognise the workpeople in some other character than that of the servants of private employers. Let us put it in this way. Suppose that industry were organised on what is roughly called the Guild System . . ." More dots, please. . . . The quotation is from an editorial in the "Nation" of May 29. We like that "roughly called the Guild System." We thought we had called it very precisely indeed. The article continues: "We have urged from the first in these columns that true statesmanship would turn in this national ordeal to the great democratic institutions that represent the most important change in our life since the last great war. Give to the Trade Unions . . ." Wisdom is about!

The special correspondent of the "Times" reports an experiment undertaken at Leeds to "eliminate the employer." A factory for the manufacture of shells has been prepared "under the direction of a small executive committee of engineering employers, who will manage it on behalf of the Government without having any financial interest in it of their own." So far so good, but there remains to be effected the inclusion of the Trade Unions in the undertaking. Is it the remissness of the Unions that is responsible for their omission? Are they afraid of power because it entails responsibility? Or are they just asleep?

In the House of Lords Lord St. Davids recently fell into the common error of distinguishing labour from the labourer. "It was no more undemocratic to requisition a man's labour than to requisition horses, cattle, hay, vehicles, etc." But a man's labour is inseparable from himself. You can requisition his horses, etc., without requisitioning his person; but you cannot requisition his labour without requisitioning him. For this reason we have suggested the amendment of the economic formula of Land, Labour, and Capital as being necessary to production. It should be Land, Capital and Labourers. There are, in fact, only two instruments of

production,—land and capital. The labourers are the users of the instruments, and the real producers.

The "New Witness" (June 10) "would offer a suggestion to the Trade Unions. . . . If the Government does conscript the plant of the armament works, etc., and then calls for a conscription of labour, what is to prevent the Trade Unions from offering on their collective responsibility to supply such labour? . . . Such a solution of the question would be a step in the right, instead of in the wrong, direction." A happy idea! We think so then, and we thought so still.

One of our correspondents has been disturbed by the problem of foreign trade under the National Guilds System. Before us lie a number of manifestos recently published and scattered broadcast over China urging the Chinese people to boycott Japanese goods the equivalents of which can be made in China itself. "It is supposed," writes the correspondent of the "Saturday Evening Post," "that the boycott was instigated by the guilds, by which every industry in China is controlled." "There are," he continues, "guilds for every sort and character of occupation or employment. . . . In some instances these guilds correspond to trade organisations [trusts] in the United States, and in some instances to labour unions." More accurately, we should say, every guild partakes of the nature of both, being at once a trust and a co-operative association of workmen. Their defect in China is that they are local for the most part in character; for in the absence of a "nation" a guild cannot be national. But they tend towards amalgamation in these days of easy communication; and, as Japan is discovering, their total effect upon foreign imports can be crushing.

We have received the following letter:

In Chapter V of "National Guilds" the view is expressed that international trade between guild and other countries would take place with advantage to both parties. On p. 31 it is suggested that the business of buying and selling abroad should be carried on by the Consular Service manned with Guild representatives. No indication is afforded, however, as to the manner in which imports into this country should be retailed. Two possibilities have suggested themselves: that the retailing of imports should be carried on either by the Government or by the Guild appropriate to each class of imported commodity. In either case, delicate questions would arise as to the desirability of importing goods that are also manufactured at home. In other words, are the Guilds to be "protected" against foreign competition? The question is not on all fours with the existing one of Free Trade v. Tariff Reform, because under the Guild system the issue would be simplified by the removal of conflict between the interests of classes, and only those of the nation as a whole would have to be considered.

The points raised by our correspondent are not as clearly stated as they might be; and we must therefore be absolved from blame if our reply should prove beside his point. The question of retailing imported goods is surely no different from that of retailing goods manufactured at home; the same system of distribution will presumably operate in both cases. What it may be we have elsewhere suggested: a system of Guild stores in every part of the country where the products of each particular manufacturing Guild may be purchased. The Guild, it is to be presumed, would determine for itself whether foreign goods in competition with its own should or should not be imported. Its function is to supply certain goods; it is scarcely likely to import what it can itself produce, since in exchange for such imports its only means of payment is goods like them! We see no difficulty in the question of Tariff under the Guild system. The primary object of Tariffs to-day is to maintain prices, in the interests of profiteers. Under the Guild system the object of Tariffs would be to maintain quality; and nothing below the standard of home production would be admitted. Each guild, however, could be trusted to see to that.

NATIONAL GUILDSMEN.

## Americanising the Hyphenated States

### III.

THE first necessity, if the Hyphenated States are to be Americanised, is a general recognition of the identity of American nationality and American democracy. This, in turn, supposes a clear conception of the meaning of both terms. There is but little evidence to show that Americans really understand what is meant by a nation or a democracy. Reference has been made to facts and statements which indicate serious or ludicrous misapprehensions. It is not unfair to say that the majority of people in the United States are prepared to greet as loyal citizens those who are moved to patriotic emotionalism by the Stars and Stripes, just as they hail as democrats men whose social conscience is as atrophied as that of Rockefeller. After all, did not Andrew Carnegie write in perfect seriousness, "Triumphant Democracy," that epitaph upon the tombstone of American ideals? To Americans democracy is associated almost entirely with a particular form of government, just as nationality is confounded with aggressive patriotism. Both phenomena may be explained as pure reactions to stimuli from Europe. The hereditary nobility and class privileges of monarchical countries produce in Americans the illusion that they are a democracy. Similarly, the contrast of their military unpreparedness and lack of national homogeneity with the preparedness and unity of the European peoples at war suggests doubts as to the reality of an American nation. In either instance the conclusion is reached passively, and cannot have the value of positive thinking.

The hyphenated, pseudo-democratic conditions have existed all the time, and are by no means to be remedied by ephemeral measures, drawn up in view of the special circumstances of the present. The inter-relation of the two is not, however, understood. Conscious of hyphenation, Americans are still sunk in their superstition of democracy. They imagine, indeed, that the war revealed the former and confirmed the existence of the latter, thereby demonstrating, once again, their inability to grasp the significance of the words "nation" and "democracy." They attribute their condition of hyphenation to the European war, and proclaim the war itself to be the outcome of undemocratic (in the American sense) conditions. The States would be inhabited by united, instead of hyphenated, citizens had European affairs not come to distract them. Europe would be at peace if American democracy had been there to ensure it. Whether Americans will succeed in persuading themselves, after peace is declared, that they are again a united people it is difficult to say. Their failure to see the connection between their pseudo-democracy and hyphenation, as well as the perfectly erroneous deductions they have drawn from the war, make it appear probable. Rather than achieve nationality, they may prefer the democratic shadow which they have tried to grasp, losing the reality of national democracy in the attempt.

Probably the most disheartening feature of American society is the widespread belief that the United States have long since faced and surmounted the obstacles to democratic progress which exist in Europe. In every country one expects to find a majority profoundly convinced that their nation is superior in some—if not every—respect to the rest of the world. This is a self-protective instinct and does not call for special criticism, because of its universality. What is remarkable in the United States is a species of political, as opposed to national, pride of race. We in Europe hardly realise with what fatuous, but sincere, self-complacency the majority of Americans congratulate themselves upon the "freedom" of life in the United States. The sonorous phrases of Rousseau are still current, but with this difference, that they are no longer regarded as expressing an ideal, but are held to be plain statements of

American facts. We can hardly conceive of a vast population to whom Europe is but a name with which they conjure up fantastic pictures of vice and kingly tyrannies, happily unknown in this land of the virtuous and free.

European visitors have encouraged this self-idealisation in a twofold manner. The enthusiasts, by accepting Americans at their own valuation; the fault-finders, by objecting precisely to those things upon which every citizen prides himself. It is not easy to estimate who have most contributed to the support of this fallacy: the minor critics, who have abused "democracy" for everything that displeased them, or the higher critics, like Bryce, who, finding no American commonwealth, proceeded to invent one. The former are regarded as witnesses to the incapacity of the servile European to appreciate liberty and equality; the latter are gratefully received as evangelists of a gospel to which Americans subscribed, without daring to put it to the test of dispassionate examination. There is something pathetically naive in the gratitude of the United States towards the author of "The American Commonwealth." Who could have believed that a foreigner—and a Britisher at that—would make a monument of such imposing brick with the straws of political oratory in the United States?

The complacency of the many, and the self-interest of the few, tend, therefore, to obscure the problem which must be solved before the United States are a nation. The profiteers who control Press and Parliament are not likely to raise the question whether Jefferson was a democrat, nor will they throw obstacles in the way of George Washington's canonisation, now almost accomplished. One can picture with what agreeable emotions they hear the mob denounce the evils of monarchical government, with what well-concealed mirth they observe the thanksgiving exercises for the absence of class-rule. There are no classes in America, Viscount Bryce assures us, and how many Americans would be so rash as to contradict him, at the risk of appearing less informed than their critic? The truth is, of course, that the classes in the United States are as distinct as elsewhere, and that their differences are growing yearly more marked. Socially and politically the citizens are classified, and no amount of pride in the equality of opportunity, or the elimination of hereditary privilege, can alter the fact. Freedom from the law of primogeniture, that subject of constant felicitation, will not deprive John D. Rockefeller, Junior, of any of the advantages conferred upon him by birth. Nor do the "democratic" principles of the United States Government seem at all likely to conflict with the growth and exercise of such "rights." Never was the contempt for public opinion more perfectly demonstrated than when the Rockefellers were questioned by the Industrial Relations Commission as to their complicity in the recent massacres at the Ludlow mine colony.

There is an element of tragedy in the abortive attempts made by Americans to control their masters—those whom they term mysteriously "the Interests." One is reminded of what would have been the success of France in 1789 if she had presumed to control, instead of daring to abolish. The traditional imperviousness of a bureaucracy to criticism is nothing beside the pachydermatous condition to which the business autocracy in the United States has attained. The commissions of inquiry and the muck-raking journalists, now a permanent feature of the American scene, are apparently the contribution of transatlantic democracy to the social struggle. Ostensibly their function is to prove that Americans are incapable of acquiescing in the iniquities of European industrial life, that they can hold to account the forces which we, unfortunates, allow to conspire against freedom unchecked. In reality, their business is to provide sensations—or, rather, the muck-rakers attend to that; while the commissions, under pretence of translating sensationalism into serious criticism, afford the plutocrats an opening

for public manifestations of their disregard for humanity and civilisation. While a Rockefeller is being "grilled" the head-line writers enjoy the sensation of democratic control, which they transmit to innumerable readers. The only tangible facts that transpire are (1) profiteering is above the law, (2) American profiteers are even less intelligent than their victims. Whenever these revelations of inhuman greed and incredible incompetence are made, one realises how fortunate American Business is in the possession of a Tariff and an uneducated proletariat; without these the United States could never stand competition from Europe. Here, again, the absurdity of the individualist theory dear to Americans becomes evident. Claiming an hereditary privilege, they demand credit for the virtues, such as they were, of the pioneers. At the present time there is no community more indebted to natural and social advantages, and less entitled to claim superiority as the reward of personal effort. America's great wealth is essentially Economic Rent—not the rent of ability.

The absorption of economic rent—and what an extent!—by a small class is somewhat incongruous in a professional democracy. Americans are morbidly sensitive to the privileges accruing to aristocracy, and they are scornful of the European's failure to abolish them. Yet they are absolutely blind to the fact that their own plutocracy has usurped values created by the community—or by nature—and is, therefore, a far greater menace to social progress than the privileged classes in Europe, to which they so strenuously object. The railroad corporations and the trusts have been permitted to grow in exactly the same way as our landed aristocracy came into existence, although America had her own professions and the example of Europe to guide her. The democratic citizen who sneers at social precedence, and becomes facetiously superstitious when royalty is mentioned, is unaware of the comparative harmlessness of the one, and the practical limitations of the other. Viewing them, as he does most things, with the eyes of the Revolutionary philosophers, he loses sight of the fact that he is living in an industrial age and in a highly commercialised society. Otherwise, he would be aware that the unearned increment appropriated by American capitalism is a greater evil than the unearned esteem commanded by birth in England—for it is always of the latter he complains.

Consciousness of the distance which separates the United States from even the preliminary steps towards democracy will be slow in coming. The peculiar conditions which have been outlined, all tending towards the exclusion of enlightened opinion, lead to a pre-occupation with trivialities and superficialities, as becomes a newspaper-fed public. In spite of much play with political generalities, American people are politically uneducated. We hear far too much about exceptional States, notably Wisconsin, and not enough about the average, where the level of politics is far below that of the Western European nations. Federal politics are removed far outside the life of the ordinary citizen, State and municipal politics are too closely interwoven with his own personal and private welfare. Owing to the abominable trail of the politician over everything within the area of his city or State, an election becomes mechanically a question of jobs. When a considerable section of a town's population hangs for life to the ballot box the discussion of municipal affairs is not calculated to be deep or inspiring.

When we reflect that the reformers, the muck-rakers, and other guardians of popular liberties, are equipped with nothing better than a selection of the more sanctified items in the Fabian programme, we need not be surprised that they effect nothing. The profiteers will have decidedly little to fear, even when they are obliged to accede fully to the suggestions which they now dismiss with indignation or disdain. Progressivism, as the name indicates, represents the advance guard of political thought, so we may estimate the arrears which

America must make up even to reach the stage at which English Liberals find themselves, the latter being in many respects ahead of their disciples on the other side of the Atlantic. The sense of civic responsibility and the communal spirit are so much in abeyance that propaganda is becoming increasingly directed towards their awakening. Belated individualism, and a very natural distrust for State or municipal administration, given the nature of American politics, are making this a more difficult matter than in countries where democratic opinion is more self-conscious though less self-confident. Consequently, the energies which might be employed in preparing for democracy are diverted into a channel which, as we know, may lead to a very difficult goal. The very difficulties to be overcome threaten to make the results seem vastly more important than they really are.

The primitive state of its social consciousness constitutes the gravest defect in the character of American society. This may appear a strange statement, in view of the almost notorious activity of American citizens on behalf of "reform"—especially in international questions. There is, it is true, a number of organisations and enterprises of an "uplifting" nature, which give scope to that most objectionable class of unemployed, "the American woman." Settlement-houses, peace leagues, and the like, are the speciality of this caste, for the women who are responsible for these manifestations of the philanthropic spirit form a sort of class, the equivalent of our "Idle Rich." The ordinary American woman, of whom we are told nothing, is simply the European woman more industrialised. Child and female labour, be it remembered, are most important factors in American profiteering. The female uplifter bears no more relation to serious social reconstruction than her "slumming" sister in England. It is her business to mind other people's business, to foster the arts, and, generally speaking, to take care of the ideals, while her husband looks after the cash. Her clothes, amusements and occupation are a stimulant to the ambitions of the less fortunate, who hope to emulate her, just as the middle class English wife studies, for possible future needs, the doings of "Society." Remove the American woman from the pedestal of uselessness, which is the only alternative to industry permitted (domesticity being beneath contempt), and the uplift will die.

The most cursory survey of industrial conditions in the United States leads to the conclusion that the pressing need of society is a social conscience. The fearful contrast between the actual position of labour and the theoretical advantages it is supposed to enjoy is such as to make one doubt if the immigrant is not worse off than in Europe. The only fact to be urged in favour of his emigrating is that, generally speaking, escape from starvation is possible. The opportunities of labour are quantitatively, but not qualitatively, better than in Europe. Even this is ceasing to be true, as the growth of unemployment testifies. The revolution of ideas necessary to change this state of affairs must be slower here than in England, owing to the immensity of the area to be affected and the great variety of local circumstances. One might parallel the situation by saying that, if London had been obliged to wait for municipal tramways until the principle of municipal ownership was accepted in Anatolia, the Fabians would still have a future before them. Intellectually and politically the South is far behind the North and West, so that when an idea has taken root in the latter it will be a hated exotic to the former for many years. But we know how slender is the thread connecting collectivism and democracy; it will assuredly not support the weight of "Big Business." What are the prospects for the growth of a national spirit, when such difficulties beset the path of civic progress? State Socialism seems to be the highest point in sight, a distant prospect, it is true, but the certain goal of present evolution. Evidently the future of democracy in America is precarious. E. A. B.

## Compulsion!

IN reading the Northcliffe journalism and certain other kindred organs of the Press one acquires the impression that though victory in this war is an undoubtedly desirable thing yet that this is after all in a sense subsidiary to what ought to be the supreme goal of national endeavour, namely, compulsion—i.e., compulsion of persons alike in military and industrial matters. If, as Lord Kitchener is reported to have given as his mature opinion, a conscript army and a voluntary army will not work together, it must be quite clear, one would think, to the advocates of compulsion that there is at least a chance that the resort to the latter system at this stage of the war might result in our defeat, or at best, in a hazardous prolongation of the war. If they will not admit that much they may as well say at once that Lord Kitchener is a fool whose mature opinion is worth nothing at all. Hence, I think, we are fully justified in the above statement, that the pro-conscriptionists place schemes of compulsion, at least in so far as military compulsion is concerned, as a goal to be striven for at all costs, even that of defeat, complete or partial.

Now let us take the other side. It is alleged by the conscriptionists, in effect, that compulsory military service is as good as necessary if defeat is to be avoided. We need scarcely say that for ourselves we traverse this conclusion entirely. But let us grant it for the sake of the argument. The problem then presents itself as follows:—Would a defeat with a voluntary system be so very much worse than a victory at the cost of the sacrifice of that principle of personal liberty (within the limits, of course, of the economic liberty permitted by capitalism) which it has been the historical function of the Anglo-Saxon race to exemplify for humanity? This is a serious question which it is impossible fully to discuss in a general article like the present. We do not hesitate, however, to say that in our opinion a material victory in arms gained by this country would be more than outweighed by the moral defeat of the great principle (for after all, it is a great principle) which constitutes one of England's most important contributions to human culture. Here is a question not merely of our own immediate safety as a nation, but of buying an immediate advantage by being false to a principle with which historic destiny has entrusted us in the service of humanity. The question may be put in this way:—Would you purchase material victory over the Prussian armies at the price of becoming morally like Prussia? We leave this question to be answered by our fervid patriots who so extol the British spirit versus that of the central Empires.

We are aware, of course, of the retort to the allegation that compulsory service means the Prussianising of the British character. Military conscription at least, it is urged, is not an exclusively Prussian institution. You have it in France, you have it in Italy, you have it in a sense even in Switzerland, though in its least objectionable form in the Swiss militia system. Let us consider this point for a moment. In the first place, it cannot be denied that the ideal perfection of organised national military service is that over which the Prussian Junker rules. The logical conclusion of the system euphemistically termed "national service" is Prussian militarism. The present war alone has shown this. Again, the tendency at least of all conscript countries is to develop the domination of a military caste. For instance, the temptation to cut the Gordian knot of Labour discontent by military methods has proved irresistible alike in France and Italy, in spite of their democratic political institutions. Will our conscriptionist friends guarantee us against the domination of a military oligarchy itself in this country? The difference between a voluntary and a conscript army is shown at once in the treatment of the soldier, with the aid of

military discipline. A conscript army is favoured by the capitalist classes for the fact that it is cheaper than a voluntary army. Why is it cheaper? Because the conscript is not a free man whereas the voluntary recruit is. Hence, under the ægis of military discipline, you can crush down all complaints in a conscript army, and, in a word, "do" your men on the cheap. This fact, as just said, explains much of the patriotic zeal of journals catering for the well-to-do classes in their campaign in favour of conscription. Furthermore, with all respect for our Allies be it said, their democracies have undoubtedly suffered pro tanto from the principle of conscription with which they are burdened. The numerous anti-military agitations in France within the present generation, and, not least, the formidable protest against the Three Years' Service which was only cut short by the war, are sufficient evidence of this. And have, after all, the military achievements of the conscriptionist democracies been so superior to those effected by the voluntary system of this country? Prusso-Germany, by reason of its logically complete military system, has, up to the time of writing, scored a greater measure, it can hardly be denied, of purely military success even if only temporarily, than all the other Powers put together. But of those other armies who shall say that the voluntary British forces have shown up less favourably than those of the other democratic countries with the doubtful blessing of conscription?

It is made a charge against Socialists that they inconsistently object to compulsion as such under circumstances in which it is dedicated by what is called the logic of events, while themselves postulating a system of compulsion for society in general. The answer to this supposed crushing poser is very simple. It consists in the discrimination between the compulsion of *persons* and the compulsion of *things*. Socialism is necessarily opposed to the former and essentially accepts the latter. The Socialist organisation of industry pre-supposes, obviously, a systematic ordering of industrial processes to which the individual worker must subordinate himself in his own interests no less than in those of society as a whole. On the other hand, the Socialist does not propose that a man should be laid hold of by the scruff of the neck and dragged into a factory if he is able and prefers to maintain himself in primitive fashion by eating grass and drinking rain-water. No Socialist would have any right as a Socialist to wish to hinder him earning his living in this way. But a person of that type may as safely be left out of account in dealing with Socialism as the miser who hoards money in his stocking can be left out of account in dealing with Capitalism. (The coercion of criminals, of course, is another matter and has special justifications not applicable to that of the ordinary citizen.)

We would point out here that moral suasion, like economic pressure, inducing the individual to a certain course of action, whether in any particular instance good or bad, right or wrong, is *toto cælo* separated from the direct physical coercion ordained by law and backed by its sanctions. For example, there may be any amount of moral or social pressure put upon a man or woman to marry; but this is poles asunder from a law or edict enforcing compulsory marriage. Similarly, the recruiting pressure exercised at the present time upon men to join the Army may be justifiable or not, desirable or not, in particular instances; but it is equally poles apart from the come-and-fetch-me compulsion which our conscriptionists would impose. It cannot be too strongly or too often urged in view of current misconceptions on this subject that Socialism as a doctrine and a principle not only does *not* involve the direct personal coercion of any individual, but is in its essence radically opposed to any such coercion. The coercion involved in Socialism and advocated by its adherents is, as pointed out, the indirect coercion of things, it may be of the property of the individual, but never the direct coercion of the individual himself.

E. BELFORD BAX.



## On Liberty and Organisation.

By Ramiro de Maeztu.

THE Liberal principle offers no solution of the problem of apathy; and this is the real origin of the anxiety with which some of the noblest souls in England are inquiring whether one of the most popular dogmas of British politics can serve them as a guide in the hour of crisis. It is true that it is not liberty so much as democracy which is being discussed, but this only means that the question has not been properly set forth. In the "British Review" Mr. H. C. O'Neill has asked, "Can democracy be organised?" and has answered, "No." His reasoning is based on the supposition that the spirit of modern democracy is that of liberty, "although to say this is to make a gigantic assumption." So gigantic, in fact, that it cannot be accepted for a single moment.

That a democracy may be organised is seen in the example of France, where there is scarcely an individual right which has not been sacrificed to the general determination to bring the war to a satisfactory conclusion. In the same number of the "British Review" as that in which Mr. O'Neill writes we may read the text of a recent French law the object of which is: "To prescribe that none shall escape from the sacred obligation of doing for the defence of his country all that his strength will permit him to do. Consequently, it is meant to place at the disposal of the high command the maximum of forces available." Here is an instance of a democracy capable of sacrificing individual selfishness to the common aim. Mr. O'Neill may object that France is not a pure but an imperfect democracy; but his article does not refer to pure democracies, but to those at present in existence.

Mr. O'Neill's argument rests on the following assertion: "The prime and final effect of democracy seems to be the changing of the centre of gravity in the State from the good of the people to the good of self." But to say this is to forget that democracy does not arise and cannot arise or maintain itself in existence except in the common will. Even Rousseau acutely distinguished between the "general will" and the "will of everybody." A democracy is not and cannot be an aggregate of isolated individuals with no common ends. Every type of society, and not only democracy, has arisen precisely from community of aims. In places where the individuals speak in monologues and act for purely personal ends there is no society at all. Every society is a society for common ends. In autocracies the formulation and carrying out of these ends are entrusted to the monarch; in aristocracies to a few persons; and in democracies it is the common will which decides. But the common will is not that of individuals, but that of the assembly of individuals.

At this point I would beg the inattentive reader to attend if he wishes to understand in what respect "the general will" differs from "the will of everybody." At bottom it is simply a case of differentiating the purely individual aspect of our will from its common aspect. We individuals do not meet together to fulfil purely individual aspirations. My own, for instance, might be to be loved by a woman who does not love me, and to increase my power of sustained thinking by two hours a day. It might perhaps occur to me to confide my troubles to a friend, but it would be absurd to propose that an assembly of men should apply its collective will

to them. An assembly of men can apply its will only to subjects which are common beforehand to the individuals taking part in the meeting. Without a previous identity of the thing desired an act of the common will is impossible. Democracy cannot remove the centre of gravity of the State to the individual ego, because the individual part of the ego necessarily remains beyond reach of the State and of the common will. In every man there is at once the solitary and the citizen. The solitary escapes not only the power of the autocrat, but the power of the community as well. The citizen and the city, however, are one and the same thing. The difference between autocracy and democracy is that in the former there is only one citizen who is perennially active, while in a democracy all the citizens are alternately active and passive—active in deciding the common will and passive in carrying it into effect according to their functions and talents.

To organise is simply to unite men under external rules for the attainment of a common end by means of the division of their labour. This definition covers the four elements of which every organisation is composed: the common end, the men who unite, the rules they must obey, and the work allotted to each man. The value of every organisation is the value of its elements—the importance of the common end of the men who are organised; the number and quality of the men; the fitness of the rules for the object it is sought to achieve; and, finally, the proper division of labour. Not one of these elements is influenced by the fact that the Government may be autocratic, oligarchic, or democratic. There are large and small autocracies as there are large and small democracies. In Germany the division of labour is greater than in France, but that is due to Germany's greater industrial expansion, and not to the German form of government; and the aim of the organisation to which we have been referring—National Defence—is identical in both countries. It may be said that the rules to which men have to submit are not so strict in a democracy as in an aristocracy. This is the only serious objection made to democracy. But it does not stand the test of analysis. When democracy organises itself to carry out an end whose execution calls for unity of command, the democracy achieves its object by entrusting its collective strength to the man who inspires it with confidence for the execution of this command. Thus it often happens that the officers of a democracy—a Joffre or an Abraham Lincoln—may exercise greater authority than the officers of a monarchy or an oligarchy. There are two reasons for this: in the first place, such officers rely upon the active co-operation of the people which has appointed them to their positions; and, in the second place, because they possess the knowledge that they are carrying into effect the common will, and this knowledge arouses in them a determination to make certain that their object shall be achieved.

A mystic autocrat may fortify his mind with the belief that God is guiding him, and the authorities appointed by the autocrat will harden their resolutions in a spirit of loyalty and obedience towards the sovereign. The same thing may happen in oligarchies possessed of the conviction of their governing mission, and in the authorities appointed by such oligarchies. But round about the autocracy, the oligarchy, and their authorities the masses of the people will lie like an enormous and mysterious note of interrogation. And so an autocracy or an oligarchy may be tormented by the doubt whether its will coincides with that of the people, and this doubt will blunt its resolution. On the other hand, the authority appointed by a democracy will not see in the masses a perplexing interrogation, but an explicit mandate, the evidence of which makes the authority inexorable in carrying it out. The law must be put into effect which prescribes that "none shall escape from the sacred obligation of doing for the defence of the country all that his strength will permit him to do," and the same public which affirms this act

will transform itself into an agent of its fulfilment, and helps the authorities to drag from their hiding-places any ambushes who may be endeavouring to avoid their duty.

This immense power wielded by the authority in a democracy is precisely what inspired John Stuart Mill to write his essay "On Liberty." Mill's liberalism was not so much directed to the defence of the rights of the individual against tyrant as against society itself: "There is a limit to the legitimate interference of collective opinion with individual independence, and to find that limit and maintain it against encroachment is as indispensable to the good condition of human affairs as protection against political despotism." And although Mill twice says that the individual "may rightfully be compelled" "to bear his fair share in the common defence"—for Mill was no fool—his essay "On Liberty" and his other works helped to make the strange opinion prevail that the mission of the law and of the State should be limited to seeing that individuals should mutually respect the liberties of one another. To wish to build up society, not on positive solidarities, but upon barriers which prevent the coercion of some individuals by others, is like wishing to establish marriage not on the sacrament, not on love, and not even on mutual obligations, but simply on the principle that the man and wife shall not open one another's letters, shall not ask one another awkward questions, and shall have nothing in common.

It is this principle of individual liberty, and not that of democracy, which is radically and irremediably opposed to all organisation, because in any organisation the individual can be nothing more than the organ of the common will. For Liberalism, on the other hand, the isolated individual is the source from which emanates all good, or, at any rate, the supreme good. And let it not be said that Mill's Liberalism is an antiquated thing. A Liberal such as Mr. Hobhouse, who declares himself to be an interventionist and even a Socialist, says in his book on "Liberalism" that "the function of State coercion is to override individual coercion," and in this idea coercion is always an absolute evil, and respect for the individual is the supreme good. There is no need for me to say that coercion is dangerous when it is used for evil purposes, as, for example, to punish thought, to put difficulties in the way of the production of wealth, and to impede the development of human values, either cultural or vital. Coercion is a good thing, on the other hand, when it sacrifices individual apathy on the altar of national defence, or the progress of thought, hygiene, morality, or national wealth. Nor is it a fact that coercion can only be justified as a means to an end, in accordance with the Jesuitical theory. Coercion is not an evil in itself. Coercion implies Power; it is power; and power is a good thing—an instrumental good and a good in itself.

Mill would have transcended in principle his negative conception of society if he had paid more attention to his own definition of the concept of Progress—"as the preservation of all kinds and amounts of good which already exist and the increase of them . . . for Progress includes Order, but Order does not include Progress." Mill, however, feared lest by progress would be understood nothing more than the idea "to move onwards," the metaphor of the road which Mr. Chesterton has recently deprecated. This led him to neglect his own magnificent conception of progress as a criterion of the goodness or badness of societies and organisations. But he was wrong. With his conception of progress he would still have guaranteed all the goods which he believed he was assuring to people by means of liberty—thought and character—but he would as well have avoided all the evils which individual liberty positively allows, such as indifference, apathy, frivolity, and the misapplication of human energies to such anti-social aims as that of leaving children rich enough to be useless if they please.

But this theme requires to be developed very much further.

## Research and the Guilds.\*

PERHAPS the best way to deal with Mr. Lipson's contribution to economic history would be to run through a file of contemporary reviews and to collect an assortment of clichés: and this I would do not because I despise his work, but because I admire it. Any ass remarks of any book, "This volume should be in the hands of every student." That is just why I dare not say it about Mr. Lipson. And yet it is most certainly true. No one who bothers himself about the economic aspect of our national life, and no one who has even a flickering interest in the growth and decay of the mediæval guilds and the transition to modern capitalism "can afford to neglect this excellent treatise." There, Mr. Lipson, is your cliché—from the heart!

The writing of economic history in this country has suffered from several notorious deficiencies. There has been too little genuine research into contemporary sources, research without which history is almost useless. There has been also—as always happens when reputation-hunting dons are let loose—a great deal of case-building, theory-fighting, and pedantic pomposity. Consider the vast logomachies about the origin of the manor! Mr. Lipson has steered clear of both these dangers. He has obviously worked hard at original and neglected sources, and his index of authorities at the end of the book is formidable in the extreme. On the other hand he has not devoted his time and space to refuting this man and that, to crushing Brentano or making hay with Thorold Rogers. Nor does he preach. Cunningham may lose breath amidst his tomes and pause to inveigh against Free Trade with all the savage idiocy of the "Morning Post." Rogers, in the maze of Work and Wages, may halt to regret the vanished age. But Mr. Lipson is primarily a chronicler, and only secondarily a critic. It is a faulty historical school which continually mingles and contrasts the past and present, merging fact with moralising and research with lamentation. Such an author is Mr. A. E. Zimmern in his "Greek Commonwealth," where he flits continually from Athens to London, and mars his excellent Hellenism by his excessive sentimentality. This may suit the Workers' Educational Association, but it is not history. Far sounder is Mr. Lipson's method—that is to say, the explanation of the aim and function of certain institutions and the consequent criticism of their capacity for fulfilling that function. Thus he reviews the economic phenomena of the Middle Ages in the light of their own aims and surroundings, criticising them neither as a Tariff-Reforming Nationalist nor as a Liberal Business Man, nor as a disappointed Socialist, but as one who endeavours with all the discretion and sympathy at his disposal to discover just how the mediæval system grew up, what it attempted, and how it failed. That one should lament the passing of the Middle Ages may be right and natural: but it is not for the historian. Has it not been written in the Dream of John Ball?

Mr. Lipson has only published the first volume of his Economic History of England, and carries us only to the close of the Middle Ages. He has admirable chapters on the Manor and the Open Field system, the break up of that system, and the transition to a town economy. Equally sound and enlightening is his treatment of the Woollen Industry, that Idea of the Bad which is the Platonic Form typifying the degradation of English craftsmanship, and he has much clearly arranged information on markets, fairs, and foreign trade.

But naturally National Guildsmen will be most interested in his description and discussion of the Craft Guilds or, as the author prefers it, Gilds. To these

\* "The Economic History of England: Vol. I—The Middle Ages." By E. Lipson, M.A. (Black. 7s. 6d. net.)

he has devoted a hundred pages and a vast amount of work. He has tapped "an invaluable series of town records, including the Letter-Books of London and the Records of Bristol, Colchester, Coventry, Leicester, Northampton, Norwich, and York," and the results of his labour are abundant. I know of no English work which contains a description of the Guilds so clear, so thorough, and so convincing as that in Mr. Lipson's chapter. Every phase of Guild life, from religious pageantry to details of administration and government, from pay and prices to livery and yeomanry is worked out with detail that is not pedantry, and brevity that is not ignorance.

"The Gild system answered to the needs of the time." That is the burden of Mr. Lipson's criticism. It was not destroyed by human wickedness, though he is quite unsparring in his treatment of the relations existing between the masters and the journeymen in many places and many misteries, but perished because it could not adapt itself to changing circumstance. "So long as the market was limited, and capital played little part in industrial development, the Gild system answered to the needs of the time. But when the market widened, and capital became more important, there followed an increasing division of labour and the mercantile and industrial aspects of the Gild were differentiated. The trading functions now began to pass to a special class of traders, and the master craftsmen were confined to the purely manual functions." It was no long step thence to the state where the craftsman came to lose his independence and to be a wage-earner paid by piece-work, but working in his own home, and employed by more than one capitalist. The Guilds being the product of economic evolution and not of individual and purposive creation, it was nobody's business to save them. Nobody planned: nobody defended: nobody foresaw. And so when the differentiation of function within the Guild, the substitution of a national for a town economy, the opening up of national trade and foreign markets had rendered the old craftsmanship incapable of meeting the new demand, the Guilds decayed and fell. Perhaps Mr. Lipson would have done well to have insisted more on the continual precedence of industrial over political growth. Trade became national before the national government was either aware of it or strong enough to control it. Under a town economy the economic and the political units were the same, and a complete control of industry was possible; hence the method of the Guilds. But when trade advanced, it outstripped political control, and the transition was not from municipal Guilds to national Guilds, as was right and seemly, but from municipal Guilds to national industrial anarchy. Similarly, just when the national governments were being aroused and strengthened in the nineteenth century, economics once more outstripped politics and trade advanced to the international. Hence anarchy again, the unrestrained and unco-ordinated exploitation of foreign raw materials and foreign dumping-grounds for the manufactured article, hence the keen rivalries and unchecked duellings of the financiers—Moroccan incidents, Chinese concessions, Persian and Bagdad agreements; hence, too, the price of anarchy—Armageddon. Some day political control will once more catch up economic development and Mr. Wells' supernatural authority will enter upon its jurisdiction, and then what will industry do? Let us hope that having reached its goal of maximum quantity, it will rediscover a thing called quality.

"The Gild system answered to the needs of the time." When it failed to answer, it faded away. In a way capitalism did answer: it used the possibility of travel, it employed the teeming resources of newly found continents. It built widely, but not well; but the world cried out for width, not quality. And now it, too, is breaking down: private profiteering answered the needs of a greedy and expansive age. But it does not answer the need of the national unit. Test the nation in the ordeal of war, test it as a unit for willing and doing not as a chance conglomeration of profit-seeking indi-

viduals, and the rusty machine of profiteering clanks, totters, and collapses. Every kind of adventitious aid may be applied by its desperate mechanics, but the engine flags and fails, soon to be scrapped. It cannot answer the needs of the time. Doubtless we may pass through a phase of nationalisation and of State capitalism: it is yet to be seen how far that can answer to national needs. As a National Guildsman I believe that that machine will itself break down and give way to a truer economy. It was not Mr. Lipson's task to discuss the future, but those whose interest and pleasure it is to do so will find comfort in his treatment of the Guilds. "From these mutual recriminations (of journeymen and masters) one clear fact emerges: the Gild system was beginning to work badly because it no longer answered to the needs of the time. The internal relations of the craft Gild were harmonious so long as the interests of the different elements of which it was composed coincided. But the expansion of industry had disturbed these relations, and in the effort to reconcile them a new adjustment of forces became necessary."

It was the differentiation of internal relations caused by economic circumstance, not the depravity of independent, self-governing craftsmen, that caused the decay of the system. Collectivists please note. At the same time I must not be thought to support an economic determinism which argues that national Guilds must come because State Capitalism will fail to answer the need of the times as surely as private profiteering. The need of the times may be determined by the will of the people: unfortunately people preferred the growth of adventurous capitalism to the conservative solidity of the mediæval Guilds: perhaps they may be content with the security of the servile State. We can only wait and see.

Mr. Lipson has many illuminating passages on points often neglected. "Gildship, like parliamentary representation, was originally not a privilege but a burden, and involved heavy responsibilities. The Guildsmen of the earlier Middle Ages were exercised not how to keep men out, but how to bring them in. We are apt, in truth, to see everywhere privileges where the men of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries saw only burdens." That is a fact worth noting by those who are interested in comparing the function of the modern Trade Union with that of the mediæval Guild. Mr. Lipson accepts the Webbs' definition of Trade Unionism, and is perfectly right in showing that on this basis the resemblance is small. But, revise your definition of Trade Unionism, pass from the historic concept to the idealist, and there are a hundred points of similarity and interest which are everywhere manifest. "Paradoxical though it may seem, the democratic spirit is always strongest in an oligarchical and privileged body." Here, again, is a warning and an encouragement for modern Guildsmen. It is in the privileged and monopoly-holding Guild that democracy will be most easily realised, democracy so long and so vainly our goal in politics. On the other hand, a prime cause of disruption in the mediæval Guilds was undoubtedly the oligarchy and the ever-widening separation between liverymen and yeomen. Our task is at present to bring the black-coated proletarians into touch and sympathy with the coatless; but our task will not end there. It would continue, should Guild organisation ever be attained, in the maintaining of unity between the high and low grades of skill in the industry. It is obvious that craft representation must go along with Industrial Unionism; the danger is that the crafts may take offence at some point of administration perhaps, and make of these associations antagonistic Trade Unions inside the industry. Thus they might pass into a permanent opposition, destructive rather than constructive, self-seeking rather than honourably critical. We want no new associations of disgruntled journeymen in our Guilds of the future. It is the oligarchical and exclusive spirit, the bane of Trade Unionism in the past, that may achieve this unhappy end. In the light of history let us beware.

IVOR BROWN.

## More Letters to My Nephew.

Love and Home Building.—(Continued.)

IX.

MY DEAR GEORGE,—In the business of home-building I am old-fashioned enough to believe, eugenists and cynics notwithstanding (eugenists are unconscious cynics), that love is the foundation. I hope that modern neurotic literature has left you untouched, that you are not tempted to experiment with love as you would with your vegetable garden, but rather that you should let your instincts have at least as much free play as you would your imagination. Just as you discipline your imagination, however, thereby strengthening and refining it, so, too, there comes a certain spiritual refining of love, inevitable in your culture and attitude. I suppose this is what the apostle meant when he urged his people not to be unequally yoked together. Of course, you or anybody else may make a mistake. If so, I can see no reason why you should perpetuate it at the behest of the priests, who, in marital affairs, are a danger and a pest. I have a strong prejudice, too, against the modern habit of obtruding one's sexual difficulties and experiences upon others. Blessed is the domestic union that has no public history. When I was leaving the parental roof-tree your grandfather's advice was simple and direct: "My son," said he, "give not thy strength unto women." He meant it, I think, in a narrow moral sense; but it is capable of a wisely wide interpretation. It may mean (and it is my advice to you): Do not let your sexual life divert or impede you in the business of life. I do not really care greatly whether you are ridiculously happy or reasonably unhappy in your relations with women so long as you steadily pursue your work and compass your career and ambitions. We must recognise, to be sure, that, should your domestic ship be driven on the rocks, a morbid public curiosity may drown you. Parnell, for example. I happen to know that his private life was clean. I think that Granville Barker must have had him in mind when writing "Waste." Personally, I know the charm of women; every healthy man does; but if the work of the world is to be carried on with verve and intelligence, the sexes must have their several functions. Woman's function is home-building. It is significant that the science and art of home-life has receded into the background during these years when the female suffragist and male suffragette have been on the rampage. Please don't assume that I would go back to the stuffy interiors of the Victorian period. Tout au contraire. We want the windows of home-life thrown open. I like Whitman's picture of a great city where the women walk in and out of the procession with the men. But see to it that it be a procession to the parks and not into the factories.

I sometimes wonder how many of your generation really know anything about a serenely ordered home-life—the skill and training needful, the science of food, the consummate art to evoke a sweet and stimulating atmosphere; the quick and appreciative understanding of the aptitudes and foibles of each individual member of the household, by no means forgetting the servants, for domestic service ought to be a vital part of our national economy. Ought to be, but isn't; and because it isn't, women are not yet citizens. Prior to the war we witnessed a curious phenomenon: a considerable group of women, with a far-echoing Press claque, backed by sweaters and Fabians, attempted a raid upon every department of men's work. In effect, they contended that home-work was so negligible that they could take it in their hobbled stride and, at the same time, work for wages in factories. They did not care a straw that they were reducing the standard of life. Indeed, they gloried in it; the Fabian women published a manifesto in which they proved that woman works for less wages than man, and, in addition, is a disgraceful slacker when it comes to joining the union that, at desperate odds, maintains wages. During this period there has been an unparalleled hunger amongst

working men for the sustenance of home-life. An American novelist—Owen Wister—has been drawing some comparisons. He was in Germany just before the war broke out. He saw something of Germany's home-life, of its serenity, of the physical and moral strength it gave to the Fatherland. It's a bore, but let me transcribe some of his impressions: "All of us were going about the country, among the gardens and the farms, or across the plain through the fruit-trees to little Freidberg on its hill—an old castle, a steep village, a clean Teutonic gem, dropped perfect out of the Middle Ages into the present, yet perfectly keeping up with the present. Many of the peasants in the plain, men and women, were of those who brought their flowers and produce to sell in Nauheim—humble people, poor in what you call worldly goods, but seemingly very few of them poor in the great essential possession. . . . Ten or twelve of us were acquaintances at home; everyone had been struck with the contentment in the German face. Contentment! Among the old and young of both sexes this was the dominating note, the great essential possession. The question arose: What is the best sign that a Government is doing well by its people—is agreeing with its people, so to speak? None of us were [sic] quite so sure as we used to be that our native formula, 'Of the people, by the people, for the people,' is the universal ultimate truth."

With one disquieting exception, he notes a massive Teutonic polyphony of well-being. He falls in love with Frankfurt-am-Main. It is "beautifully governed." "These burghers, these Frankfurters, seemed to be going about their business with a sort of solid yet placid energy, well and deliberately aimed, that would hit the mark at once without wasting powder. It was very different and very superior to the ill-arranged and hectic haste of New York and Chicago; here nobody seemed driven as though by invisible furies—the German business-mind was not out of breath." I need not quote all his eulogies; here is his conclusion: "Such was the splendour of this empire as it unrolled before me through May and June, 1914, that by contrast the state of its two great neighbours, France and England, seemed distressing and unenviable. Paris was shabby and incoherent; London full of unrest. Instead of Germany's order, confusion prevailed in France; instead of Germany's placidity, disturbance prevailed in England; and in both France and England incompetence seemed the chief note. The French face, alike in city or country, was too often a face of worried sadness or revolt; men spoke of political scandals and dissensions petty and unpatriotic in spirit, and a political trial, revealing depths of every sort of baseness and dishonour [observe that it centred round a woman] filled the papers; while in England, besides discord of suffrage and discord of labour, civil war seemed so imminent that no one would have been surprised to hear of it any day." That there is enough superficial thinking here to vitiate the main argument is obvious; but, when I come to think of it and compare my own impressions of Germany with this writer's, I think that German home-building accounts for much.

Now for that disquieting exception. On his way to Frankfurt he is delighted with the courtesy and charm of the passengers, except those who were coming from or going to Berlin. These were of a "heavy, impenetrable rudeness—quite another breed from the kindly Hessians of Frankfurt." Please remember that. It seems irrelevant; it is very much to the point. Mr. Wister's words are these: "A single little sharp discord vibrated through all this German harmony one day when I learned that in the Empire *more children committed suicide than in any other country.*" I am left wondering why this should be a "little" discord. It is unspeakably dreadful to me. But let our observer tell his own story. At Frankfurt they are celebrating Gluck's centennial. In the midst of it they remember the children, these kindly Hessians. So they stage an old opera, tuneful, full of boisterous, innocent comedy and simple sentiment, for the youngsters. "Children

by threes and fours, and in little groups, were streaming from every quarter, entering every door, tripping up the wide, handsome stairs, filling all the seats—boys and girls; it was like the Pied Piper of Hamelin. . . . The enthusiasm and the attention of these boys and girls, with their clapping of hands and their laughter, soon affected the spirits of the singers as a radiant day in spring affected me. I envied the happy parents who had their children round them; it was like some sort of wonderful April light." That hardly sounds like suicide; but I must hasten to the sequel: "It was on the seventh day of June, 1914, that Frankfurt assembled her school-children in the opera-house, to further their taste and understanding of Germany's supreme national art. Exactly eleven months later, on May 7, 1915, a German torpedo sank the 'Lusitania'; and the cities of the Rhine celebrated this also for their school-children." Mr. Wister sees a moral catastrophe: "In that holiday we see the feast of Kultur, the Teutonic climax. How came it to pass? Is it the same Germany who gave these two holidays to her school-children? The opera in Frankfurt, and this orgy of barbaric blood-lust, guttural with the deep basses of the fathers and shrill with the trebles of their young? Their young, to whom they teach one day the gentle melodies of Lortzing, and to exult in world-assassination on another?"

Have we here no explanation of those child suicides? I think so. The Prussian machine, with "heavy, impenetrable rudeness," has reached out and grabbed those children; with an eye on future gun-fodder, it has bashed and battered and bent their little brains to its purpose. *And the docile German mothers have not been strong enough to resist.* Every good mother has something of the tigress in her nature, particularly where her offspring are concerned. The Prussian hand has brushed away the unseen but real frontier, that spiritual web, that divides the child's world from ours; it has dragged them into premature touch with our adult realities; it has put pen and pencil into a child's hands that itched for toys and the rapt imagination that surrounds a child, at once its defence and its incense: yet these German women have not instinctively seized their young, holding them back from the grim mechanism; they have not even indignantly protested. Thus it has come about that the German child, its head throbbing when its legs should have been dancing, has gone into a corner, like a wounded animal, and killed itself.

There is, then, an aspect of home-building not lightly to be disregarded—the care and nurture of the child. I affirm that those who have ears to hear and eyes to see will agree that a child's mind is God's most exquisite creation. I remember, about the time that you were born, giving a lecture on education. A school-teacher came to me afterwards to say that I had overlooked one important factor. "What was it?" I asked. "The innate cussedness of the English schoolboy," came the prompt reply. Perhaps I had; but now, in maturer years, I wonder whether that innate cussedness isn't one of our greatest possessions. I have repeatedly noticed that the boy's refusal to assimilate certain kinds of knowledge is precisely the same instinct that warns a monkey against poison. More! During the past quarter of a century I have observed, with pleasure and amusement, that our educational system is gradually yielding to that "innate cussedness"; is, consciously or unconsciously, avoiding the Prussian method of breaking it to pieces "with heavy, impenetrable rudeness." The result is that the little beggar more or less goes merrily his own way, does not lose his spirit and abandon, retains his sense of humour, and assuredly does not commit suicide.

I grant you that this is only one side of the shield. Do not think that I am blind to other aspects, many of them grave and sinister. But the end we seek is not to be achieved by the Prussian method of indoctrinating and enforcing unquestioned obedience and docility. Least of all do we want docile mothers, who, without

protest, send their children first into a mechanised crèche, next into a mechanised school, and finally into a mechanised industrial life. How can they prevent it? By themselves graduating into an altogether higher degree of home-building, so that they shall know without doubt or hesitance when home-life is better and richer than school-life. If prison-life were made more attractive than civil life many of us might conceivably drop in. Our schools are worked on this principle; they coax the children to come in. There is nothing to brag about in this. Is it not, indeed, a tragedy of sorts that our school system depends upon outbidding our homes? Hardly a tragedy; a tragi-comedy; for if our home standards outbid the school standards, the schools, in their turn, must inevitably continue the competition. Behind the whole argument remains the ultimate fact that a nation whose mothers cannot protect their children cannot survive. Docile mothers are at a discount. Let us have a touch of the tigress. I should like a deputation of English mothers to corral the Fabian women's group and soundly box their ears. The sound would reverberate further than Jenny Geddes's flying stool.

Do you remember your old playmate, Doreen Bertram? She has grown tall and lithe and beautiful. You might do worse, you know! When she was a child, on a day I chanced to be dining there, she rushed into the drawing-room, her eyes dancing with excitement. "Mummy," she cried, "I was out on the common and I saw a poor old soldier. He had only one leg and his breast was covered with medals. He was so tired. So I took him by the hand and I helped him upstairs and told him to lie on my bed and rest." "That was very sweet of you," said her mother, "and did you give him anything to eat?" "Oh, yes; milk and cake and pickles; I got them from Nanny." "And when he had rested did you help him downstairs again?" "No, poor man; he died." At dinner we discussed the child's story. An old maid, who had specialised on education, took a severe view of it, denounced it as rank falsehood and thought she should be punished. "Not a bit of it," said the mother; "the whole story was very real to Doreen; I wish I could go back to the days when it would have been real to me." "But she knew it wasn't true," replied Miss Prunes and Prisms. "I'm not so sure," said the mother; "a child knows that its doll is stuffed with sawdust—it may even see the sawdust falling out—yet it fondly imagines it to be a living baby. I wouldn't destroy the illusion for anything you could give me." I think we all envied the little girl her mother!

Here, in the great solitudes, I vaguely remember those educational controversies that shaped my own and my generation's mind. They have left but little impression. Most vividly do I remember Jules Guyau, a French writer whose name seems to be forgotten. Like the Germans, he knew the value of music as an educational factor, but the point he most strongly emphasised was the regenerative quality of suggestion. Suggest to a child that it is naughty; it ipso facto becomes so. Suggest, and keep on suggesting, that it is capable of good and noble things; the miracle will surely be accomplished. Ay di mi! It's a long time ago! Is it a whimsical theory? Even if I am a back number, I still believe in it.

I set out to advise you about love and home-building and I have divagated into the subtleties of child life. Never mind; I'm coming to it! Have I been deadly dull—a veritable bore of a fusty and musty uncle? Forgive me. I was led into it by the thought of those German child-suicides. In the whole gamut of human experience, is there anything more genuinely terrible than a little child, hustled and hustled by damned Prussianised pedagogues, taking its own life? Perhaps the most bitter defeat of Germany will be, not the bullets we have shot into the quivering flesh of its docile sons, but the ideas it has driven into us—particularly of what to avoid. Your affectionate Uncle,

ANTHONY FARLEY.

## Readers and Writers.

It is very chivalrous of Professor Gide to enter the lists in our national defence against German criticism; but I do not know whether to thank him or not. In a recent issue of the "Daily News" he undertook to reply to Professor Sombart, who had written of us as follows:

A people of shopkeepers, incapable of any achievement of intellectual culture—either in the present or in the future—whose philosophy, ethics, and religion are unadulterated manifestations of the spirit of the huckster . . . whose politics, like its morality, aims only at utility. It has only been able to create two things, comfort and sport; and these have contributed to destroy the last vestiges of its spiritual life.

But, in the first place, it is no defence to cite, as Professor Gide does, the great names of Newton, Milton and Shakespeare. These cannot be said to be achievements of our present. And, in the second place, we had better admit that there is some truth in the indictment. It is not, of course, altogether true; and to pronounce us incapable in the future of any intellectual achievement is to adopt the child of a mere German wish. But that we are for the moment and have been for twenty years incapable, as a nation, of maintaining, still less transcending, our intellectual traditions is not alone a German discovery. Matthew Arnold announced it, and we have seen his forecast fulfilled. Let us confess our sins, the more certainly to amend our ways. It was not so long ago that I remarked in this column that other nations have some right to reproach us. Germany in particular. If Germany has never equalled our English culture at its best, Germany can yet maintain that, while she has been striving to do so, we have been falling away. After all, the question is one of fact in great part. If it can be shown that there are more people in Germany who understand and appreciate our *English* classics than there are in England itself, the verdict would be against us obviously. And I am afraid that either there are, or would soon have been. The majority of cultured Germans certainly know our Newton and our Shakespeare better than the majority of our own educated classes. As things were going, in a very little while I believe that most of our classics would have been comparatively neglected here as they became more and more familiar to Germany. If that is not a proper ground of reproach to us I do not know one. To fail even to understand, let alone to rival or surpass, our past achievements is surely almost a definition of decadence. And we were rapidly approaching that state. Unfortunately, too, the rot had gone so far that people were not even ashamed of it. We were all decadent together. Time was when for an educated man to have to confess ignorance of his national classics was a moral torture to be avoided by all diligence. Within the last ten years we have seen many leaders of literary opinion glory in the confession. If they, what shall mere readers be willing to confess? It is not surprising that they made a merit of absolving themselves from reading any classics whatever. Whether, as has been suggested, familiarity with our classics should be made obligatory on British citizens after the war I am not prepared to say; but only for the reason that I should not know how to enforce the regulation. Otherwise the same penalty should sanction the duty as now sanctions correct pronunciation and good manners, namely, ostracism from polite society. And the plea that no pleasure was taken in acquiring familiarity with the classics should not weigh with me either! No pleasure is taken for their own sake in exercises designed to make people healthy, beautiful, expert or polite—why should it be demanded of the exercises necessary to intelligence? Do you think the life, even of a professed student of literature and the arts, is all pleasure, and that never a disagreeable book needs to be read?

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We can laugh at Germany as much as we please for her perspiring efforts after culture. Her efforts are not

successful yet, but they will be if cause and effect remain as we know them. We, on the contrary, are merely resting on our oars; but we too shall have to pull again and perspire as our forefathers did. And we have not begun yet—in earnest. Certainly there are signs that people generally have been reading a little more seriously since the war began. I am told that the serious magazines (the best of a bad lot) have increased their circulations within the year. And no less certainly, I believe, more serious works than ephemeral will now be published. But the renaissance has not got very deep as yet. Why, the "Little Review" of America has had occasion to jeer at us! One of its contributors had the notion the other week to compare the respective "entertainments" offered on a single day by the capitals of the belligerent Powers, and much to the disadvantage of London and Paris. In Berlin three operas, "Don Juan," "Elektra," and "Lohengrin," and three plays, "Faust," "Peer Gynt," and "Schluck und Jan" were being performed. In Vienna there were on the same day no fewer than five classical concerts, one opera ("Carmen"), and three plays by Molière, Ibsen and Kleist. The Petrograd announcements were surprising: five grand operas, three Russian ballets, three considerable plays; and literary lectures on Futurism, Poetry (by the Grand Duke Konstantine), Maeterlinck, Dostoevski, and Nietzsche. Contrast these with Paris and its "La petite Functionnaire," "Mam'zelle Boy Scout," "Mariage de Pepeta," with "Cavaleria Rusticana" in splendid isolation; or with London and its "Veronique," "Mme Sans-Genes," "Rosy Rapture," "The Girl in the Taxi," "For England, Home and Beauty," and so on. Does that look like meeting culture with culture?

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The mention of Russia reminds me to make a note on Mr. Bechhöfer's letter of last week. I am gratified to discover that Mr. Bechhöfer has taken my hint to him to meditate patiently before coming to a conclusion about the soul of Russia. His "Letter" is full of observation and reflection, and contains a good deal of the necessary material for a just judgment of Russia. But his conclusion is still a little hasty. Russia as "the Dionysos of the nations" is certainly a respectable diagnosis; but I should hesitate to call it satisfying and final. It assumes more definition in the conception of Dionysos than we can claim to possess; and thus explains "x" by a scarcely less indefinable "y." And it omits to set Russia in relation with the rest of Europe. If Russia is the Dionysos, are all the other European nations Apollan—for Dionysos and Apollo are presumably a comprehensive dichotomy? However, there is time yet to define Russia. She is still doing it herself.

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Another small bone remains to be picked with Mr. de Maetzu. Here I would compromise if he be willing. Love, I would plead, is no more invariably his sudden absolute event than it is my gradual approximation; but sometimes one and sometimes the other. Allow, if you please, that a frequent form is "love at first sight," love as a slow awakening is still not excluded as a fairly common fact. And the case of Manon Lescaut is, I contend, an instance of the latter. Mr. de Maetzu rules her postponed awakening out of court on the ground that pain had intervened. But of whatever the process of awakening consists, the fact that it is a process and not a sudden fall into love is illustrated by the case. Oh, yes, Manon belongs to me! The doctrine, therefore, which my critic deduces from his conclusion must needs be as one-sided as his conclusion itself. If only love absolute exists certainly we ought to admire those who can pack and be off on the second instant of the first meeting. But unless experience suggests that love can *sometimes* be won by waiting, how comes it that we still do not altogether despise those who continue knocking at the door? The translation of Stendhal's "L'Amour," however, is in preparation for publication in these pages; and as the first instalment, I believe, will appear next week, our discussion can be postponed.

R. H. C.

## Shaw on Napoleon: An Italian View.

*A criticism from the "Corriere della Sera" of July 15, 1915, of a performance of "The Man of Destiny," at the Olimpia Theatre, Milan, translated by PAUL V. COHN.*

AT the opening of last night's performance, before the actors began to speak, the house broke into one great cheer when Luigi Carini, in the guise of the Napoleon of Lodi, pale and long-haired, appeared behind the foot-lights. The applause was an act of homage both to the actor and to the father: to the father who at the call of duty had torn himself away from the bedside of his son, wounded by an Austrian bullet, and to the actor who has always practised his art with so much talent and sincerity. After this outburst of feeling, the horizon grew clouded. From the first, "The Man of Destiny" provoked but few smiles; the lengthiness, the monotony, the lack of movement gave one a sense of impatient boredom. At one point the usual lunatics who consider the performance of a new comedy as a sort of personal challenge clamoured for the ringing down of the curtain. Others protested, and expressed their disapproval of these hotheads. Meanwhile, on the stage, the actors were at their wits' end. At last, Emma Grammatica, with great presence of mind, suppressed a portion of the scene. In this crippled state, and obscured by the quarrel—now indeed grown less violent—between supporters and opponents, "The Man of Destiny" reached its conclusion.

It is true that the audience showed lack of self-restraint, but the same charge must be brought against the author. Bernard Shaw's lack of self-restraint is notorious. He may be described as immoderate both in length and in brevity. Often in one and the same comedy you will find one act interminably long-winded, and another as thin as tissue-paper. But he is always Bernard Shaw, that is to say, one of the most fantastic spirits of modern literature, and he certainly deserves a hearing.

"The Man of Destiny" is not a masterpiece. It is not even a profound comedy. It is an unconscious parody of profundity. In this piece, the author's originality is not instinctive, as in almost all his other plays, but forced and pig-headed. He does not create here or break fresh ground: he contradicts. His contradiction, moreover, is essentially petty. It is in the tone of some back-biting old woman that he sets forth a tiny episode in the career of no less a person than Napoleon. Napoleon, the man born at the opportune moment! Destiny itself works towards his greatness. With marvellous force, his genius utilises for its own ends all favourable circumstances. Shaw, however, says, "No. Destiny plays no part here. It is Napoleon who bends adverse circumstances to his will."

This may seem like a glorification—but wait a moment! Let us see how the hero dominates and modifies events. From Paris some of his personal enemies send him a letter which Josephine has written to Barras. A love letter, of course. Josephine, no one knows how, has got wind of this, and sends a friend post haste to Italy to intercept the compromising letter. The friend disguises herself as an officer, outwits the officer charged with conveying the mail to Bonaparte, and gets hold of the whole packet of letters destined for him, including Josephine's fatal missive. The lady, however, is discovered. In vain she tries to get rid of the documents. She makes fruitless efforts to seduce the great general by coquetry, tears and flattery. She is compelled to hand over the stolen goods. But she gives Napoleon to understand that among these letters is one which compromises Josephine, one which, so soon as it is known that he has read it, will inevitably lead to a rupture, perhaps to a duel with Barras, and thus will seriously jeopardise his own career. At first,

Napoleon is mad with rage and jealousy. Then he realises that, if he is to reach the lofty summit of his ambitions, it is better for him not to know, or at any rate it is better that France should not know that he knows. The letter is destroyed. He has read it, but this will never be known.

Such, roughly, is the plan of the comedy, the scene being laid in Italy, at the village of Tavazzano, two days after the battle of Lodi. The characters are: a *soi-disant* Napoleon; a lady whose motives for risking so much to save Josephine—for whom she repeatedly shows a profound contempt—are not very clear; a vain and stupid young officer; and a cunning landlord interested in politics, as is natural for a genuine descendant of Machiavelli.

I am not concerned here with historical truth. The truth is that, especially during the first Italian campaign, Napoleon's love for Josephine was ardent and absorbing and tortured with dark jealousies. Still, an artist is at liberty to traduce history, if only his illicit relations with fantasy give birth to works of beauty.

Here, however, there is no question of beauty. When Shaw tells us that Napoleon, in order to win the imperial crown, was content to wear on his head a less glorious ornament, he has given us something of a lampoon, but he has not furnished us with the essential notes of a character. For all that, the subject has dramatic possibilities. It can be represented as a powerful conflict between love and ambition. To make it comic is beyond Shaw's capacity. The figure of Napoleon is already formed, stamped, consecrated in the minds of men. There is no chance of raising a laugh at Bonaparte's expense. While the joke is being hatched behind his back, he suddenly turns round with his steadfast, serious face, his coldly glittering eye, his tousled mane of hair; and the futile laughter died away. He is master of the situation. He takes possession of our souls.

In conflict with Napoleon, the playwright looks preposterous. We see an immeasurable difference in their statures. Shaw by himself—whether he is running down women, or denouncing marriage, or showing up the defects of medicine and surgery, or attacking current morality with that bitterness against all laws, written and unwritten, which comes naturally to an Irishman, since Ireland was for two centuries the victim of injustice and oppression—seems to us a keen observer, a clever and elusive controversialist; but in handling Napoleon he cuts a poor figure. In his other comedies he can present as he will the moral or social hypothesis against which he takes up the cudgels; but when the hypothesis is called Napoleon, Shaw cannot represent him at pleasure as mean and grotesque, any more than he could bring on the stage a blond beard or a porous nose.

Thus "The Man of Destiny" is all built upon an error, an error not so much historical as dramatic, since it robs the playwright of all mastery over his audience. Mistake is heaped upon mistake. The packet of letters passes from hand to hand with exasperating monotony. A dozen times Napoleon is on the point of opening it; a dozen times he abandons the idea. In Napoleon himself, in the lady, in the landlord, in the officer there is not a single sympathetic trait. The whole dialogue is indirect, slow, digressive. The frequent strokes of keen observation—among them a pungent satire on English egotism which was suppressed yesterday evening—are mere wanderings from the point. All these people are passionless, compounded solely of cautious and frigid intellectuality. Shaw's interesting buffoonery here degenerates into low comedy, as in the character of the officer. This part should have been entrusted by the company, not to their leading juvenile, but to their best comedian, in order that the audience should not have been left for a moment in doubt as to its broadly farcical nature. The whole play is weak and incompetent, not so much from the standpoint of traditional stagecraft as from the standpoint of dramatic expression.

## Impressions of Paris.

It is easy to go to Dieppe quite seriously, but it is not so easy to stop there. In the first place you will not want to. Prices are very high as nearly all the hotels which are not shut are militarised, and the few pensions open charge like hotels royal and are moreover haunted by extraordinarily coquettish nurses. Fancy an English nurse painted and powdered! They look prettier, but somehow, shocking. One is prejudiced perhaps. Wounded, wounded everywhere, and gangs of soldiers and military traffic and camps. I lit on a melancholy house with a view of the sea. As it looked it was—cheap; that is four francs a night for a room, buy your own candles and make your own bed. Two English lady professors, quite *comme il faut*, had willingly agreed to those conditions and times were so bad that servants were out of the question. Melancholy was too dear at that price, not to mention working by candle-light. "Peoples come here to sits by the sea and goes to bed early." I popped in on the Consul in a friendly way. He (the nicest one I ever met) was very astonished to see me, and asked what I, as my pass calls me, a journalist, was doing in forbidden Dieppe, and had I got a White-Paper-Military-Permit, and hadn't I better go and see Colonel Greenleaf as it really was dangerous! I didn't mind—it sounded like a well-bred excursion to the country. But I changed my mind on the doorstep and took the train with a smile to somewhere on a big river, I mustn't say where, or perhaps Colonel Greenleaf will be after me. It is all full of soldiers here too, they guard the bridges and do everything they ought, except ask me what I am up to. I am up to finding a spot with some really fresh air. From the train as I passed down to Dieppe, this spot looked heavenly fresh. As a matter of fact it is about as stuffy as Paris and nearly as irritating as Dieppe under heat, rain and wind. Before I started, the Commissaire, evidently pained to part with me—it is one of his life-dreams to get me finally *en règle*; I am sure he only let me go on discovering that I should have to return to his district and see the Préfect about a change of address, or perhaps because he knew I should certainly be turned out of Dieppe—said: "What do you want to go away for? Paris is better than everywhere else." I believe him now, and am very glad to be carrying nothing but a hand-bag. A friend of mine has solved the change of air problem. He goes a long train journey, arriving at the station before anyone else so as to secure a window seat, returns the same day and goes to bed for twenty-four hours. My phantom journey to Bordeaux was in its way a perfect holiday, but the flying run to Dieppe through cornfields and woods and over rivers would have completed my summer cure if I had only had the sense not to leave the station but just to cross over to the return train which was waiting. I should not have seen the cat flung into the dock to drown slowly (not without protestations from some of the dockers!) or have heard the three innocent peasants here roaring with glee in the fields over the tale of some unhappy animal who "couldn't run any further. He died of hunger." By the way, whoever said that people cannot travel third-class in France? They can! At least I did; and the others looked and spoke very like people. In fact they were charming, did not pretend the carriage was full but positively lifted one in, and handed up the bag. Oh, I know what it is—there are no cushions on the seats. I did not notice at the time! It might be rather bad for a long night-journey, but Dieppe is only two and half hours from Paris in even these bad times, barring accidents. Coming here to this river place took six hours though it is between—I mean, not so far as—'Ware Censor!—anyway it ought not to have taken more than a couple of hours on the slowest train, but there had been a break-down on the line and we kept being pulled up within three inches of advancing engines and goods' trains. We had our heads out of

the windows half the time, ready to jump and do the futile things people do to try and escape destiny. A little girl instructed me in French baby-language. (This is for women only.) She left out all the l's and softened the j's to z; saying: "Zolie fleur" for "Pretty flower." She quacked perfectly like the ducks, and when they fought with each other cried out: "I'se batty" for "Ils se battent."

It is evidently very difficult to be veracious about Love, or even intelligible. What a droll of an idea that Love is a glorification of Woman! If I, a woman, love—is this for my glorification? No; if for anyone's, for the man's. But love is not for anyone's glorification. It serves nothing but action. I maintain that its centre is in Infinity, like Beauty. The "illusion," that is to say, the exaltation, is everything. As for disappointment in Love, this is inconceivable. One may be disappointed or satisfied in affection. But who that has loved would exchange the exaltation of transient love against permanent affection? Not I, for one, however transient were the first. The transiency of love in no way lessens its quality, which is of one only and fixed degree. Lovers will never mistake admiration, affection or any other crystallisable sentiment for Love. The one soars, with its wings lifted up; the rest brood. We must not try and twist the meaning of things by changing their names, or by calling domestic affection Love: the lovers will laugh at us.

In the books and poems written by lovers the *persons* exist as certainly they were seen by no one else. All which could not stand the fire is burned: what we read is therefore a description, though for ever inadequate, of Love itself: or, as in the "Divine Comedy," the poet is driven to make of the person beloved, some admired human quality, an imaginary perfected soul, and such-like quietistic refuges from present discontent. The best testimony of Love may very well be in works which have outwardly no love-symbol, in lives lived more ecstatically than anyone out of the secret can account for. "Love-tragedy" is a misnomer. Love was never the cause of a tragedy. Of course, if Eloise and Abelard had never loved . . . let us say this is to talk of a nothing! The tragedy was that they were interfered with by other human beings. Their love had made their lives a grand comedy. No doubt that the world thinks that it could get along very well without Love; but the point is that Love will not leave the world. In countries where marriages are made between young persons, Love is nearly always made a tragedy, but Love will not be denied, though you bring mortal fire to its elected ones. In very strict or commonly moral countries the reality of love may precisely consist wholly in the fact of loving, and the person adored may be allured away almost unwillingly—the adventure finally being the lure. In such countries Love appears more passionate simply because of the obstacles; but Love is the same everywhere and in all ages, and does by no means disdain to visit persons who are free of all human interference. There are no rules available to meet or avoid it.

It is surprising that a writer should say in one line that: "In Love there are no approximations," and yet continue to talk as though it depended on whether two persons could endure each other's faults for a life-time. Why, the Reason has begun to work—with its scale of approximations, affection, gratitude, prudence—all the rest of the serviceable sentiments. And so long as people mis-call Love, so long will the pride, envy, un-verity, or cruelty of the unelect make lovers outcast except in rare cases, and feign to mourn or really mourn over the results of the persecution. Happily, the very idea of Love is powerful enough to enlist a great number of sentimental good people, without whose aid probably few lovers could take a step, since the prudent of this world are of the advice that Love is at its most respectable, a bad thing to marry on. "Desirable" novels are those which deal with a "Lover" long tried and found furnished with all the sterling (and note the word!) virtues. On the whole, a very sound business-principle!



I do not think it can be said that people "seek" Love. The young, in free countries, take it as a part of their birthright along with all the other happinesses of action. And it certainly would be a bad thing to belittle this ideal, even as we do not belittle the ideal, though unrealisable for the most part, that every soul may be saved. We know no more as to who shall be loved than as to who shall be saved. Repeat it—that there are no rules! The thief is inscribed as among the elect of Paradise; and Love has as little concern for our ordinary standards of what is loveable, as the Recording Angel for our notions of merit. But do not, do not, let us confuse the matter with domestic affection, because this is to be either totally ignorant or else unvarnished, in either case, mischievous. Herein lies a world of men's and women's melancholy, for whom Love never comes, and who are not trained to arrange their condition so as to make domesticity agreeable. One might easily travel on into the latter subject, but all I could say would amount to a reproach of women whose business, if anything is, this is, and who have lagged ages behind culture in this matter. One of the canons of feminine culture should be, "Little dress-money, and much house-room." Dear, dear, thereby hangs many a tale of woe. I am going out now!

This big, sunny river is remarkably clear. On the other parapet a woman in white is walking; and so many feet down, below ever so many more feet of shadow, there she is walking upside down.

ALICE MORNING.

## Views and Reviews.

### A Defence of Aristocracy.\*

MR. LUDOVICI has undertaken a difficult task. At a time when all the great European Powers, except Germany, are professedly fighting for democracy (whatever it may mean in practice), a consideration of the opposite principle is not easily to be obtained. The unfortunate history of the previous attempts made in this country to revive the spirit and ideals of aristocracy, notably by Bolingbroke and Disraeli, is not of happy omen for Mr. Ludovici; for apart from the fact that he is neither a Bolingbroke nor a Disraeli, he does not exemplify the doctrine that he advocates. He permits himself to use a licence of speech that a sound taste would repudiate; he is frequently garrulous in exposition, is seldom clear in definition, and, were it not that he gives voluminous examples, the purport of his thesis might easily be misunderstood. In a word, he lacks continence. But the measure of Mr. Ludovici's failure to exemplify his own teaching is the measure of its necessity to us; the confusion of taste that he exhibits is, as he argues concerning all confusion of taste, due to the fact that aristocracy has been repudiated for so long by the people of England. A people has grown up who have never known direction by a superior mind, taste, and physique; and Mr. Ludovici, like most of us, is affected by the generation in which he is doomed to live. That his sympathies extend to the aristocratic ideal, is so much to the good, more than that could not fairly be expected from one born among people who have forgotten the meaning of "flourishing life" expressed by taste and safeguarded by power.

That the subject is unpopular, one fact mentioned by Mr. Ludovici in his preface will convince us. "There are in all only nine books mentioned under the heading 'Aristocracy' in the 1909 edition of the London Library's catalogue [four of them are purely partisan publications], while the corresponding list under the heading 'Democracy' numbers in all eighty-five volumes." The unpopularity of the subject in literature is probably only

an index of its unpopularity among the public, and that, in turn, is capable of an historical demonstration.

Disraeli told us in "Coningsby" that "you will observe one curious trait in the history of this country; the depository of power is always unpopular; all combine against it; it always falls. Power was deposited in the great Barons; the Church, using the King for its instrument, crushed the great Barons. Power was deposited in the Church; the King, bribing the Parliament, plundered the Church. Power was deposited in the King; the Parliament, using the People, beheaded the King, expelled the King, changed the King, and, finally, for a King substituted an administrative officer. For one hundred and fifty years Power has been deposited in the Parliament, and for the last sixty or seventy years [written in 1844] it has been becoming more and more unpopular. In 1830, it was endeavoured by a reconstruction to regain the popular affection; but, in truth, as the Parliament then only made itself more powerful, it has only become more odious. As we see that the Barons, the Church, the King, have in turn devoured each other, and that Parliament, the last devourer, remains, it is impossible to resist the impression that this body also is doomed to be destroyed; and he is a sagacious statesman who may detect in what form and in what quarter the great consumer will arise." The last depository of power, as all democrats will agree, is the People; and with the help of the People, one-half of Parliament has been destroyed, or, what amounts to the same thing, has been rendered ineffective, and the other half is certainly in difficulties at this moment. But, as Disraeli said, "It is not in the increased feebleness of its institutions that I see the peril of England; but in the decline of its character as a community." If the People is to be the last depository of Power, and the doctrines of Democracy, with its hatred of power, are to direct that inherited distrust of power to its logical end, the People will become unpopular, and try to abolish itself; and Mr. Ludovici's description of Democracy as Death will be justified.

The difficulty of discussing questions of principle in England is that our apparent examples are misleading. If we talk of monarchy, we are confronted with a system that has not known a King for nearly three hundred years. If we talk of religion, we are confronted with a Church which is "a doll," in Emerson's phrase, and whose "religion is a quotation." We retain estates, but rob them of their reality; and then protest that the principle they expressed has failed. The principle of aristocracy, for example, is closely allied to the principle of hereditary succession; yet we are confronted with, and supposed to be confounded by, a House of Lords that has been a sham for more than three hundred years. "The pretence is that the noble is of unbroken descent from the Norman, and has never worked for eight hundred years. But the fact is otherwise. Where is Bohun, where is de Vere? The lawyer, the farmer, the silk-mercator, lies perdu under the coronet; and winks to the antiquary to say nothing; especially skilful lawyers, nobody's sons, who did some piece of work at a nice moment for Government, and were rewarded with ermine." So said Emerson; and the facts that about one-half of the existing peerages were created in the nineteenth century, and that for three hundred years at least the peers of the realm have been largely recruited from the ranks of the capitalists, should warn us against confounding the House of Lords with the principle of aristocracy. The House of Lords is the House of Commons—and so is the House of Commons.

To a people with this history and these tendencies, aristocracy can at this moment only be an ideal; and if Mr. Ludovici is compelled to defend aristocracy by attacking our aristocrats, he is no less compelled to adopt the rôle of the mere propagandist. We have no present examples of aristocracy, and Mr. Ludovici is compelled to draw upon history for his illustrations.

\* "A Defence of Aristocracy: A Text-book for Tories." By Anthony Ludovici. (Constable. 10s. 6d. net.)

His re-habilitation of Strafford and Charles I is the most remarkable and effective passage of his essay, and touches the English aspect of the problem most nearly; and if his examination of the relation between Puritanism and Capitalism lacks novelty, it none the less demonstrates clearly what he and Nietzsche mean by a transvaluation of all values. Once in modern history, the values of "flourishing life" were transvalued and subverted by Puritanism; and the "merrie England" of fact and fiction became the England that we know, which is especially proud of its "Black country." A philosophy of suppression was imposed not only in ideas, but in habits and customs, and even in matters of diet. The teaching of Nietzsche, that whom the religious fanatic would save he first makes tame, is here demonstrated to be correct, by the quotation of the actual laws and ordinances passed and enforced by the Puritans. Judged by Rousseau's test, the increase of population, the Puritan philosophy of Death has given us the best form of government; but this democratic test does not satisfy even the democrats, who are busily restricting the birth of many of their kind. Judged by the aristocratic principle of quality, not quantity, of life, we may say that no more disastrous revolution of the life of a people was ever made than that forced upon England by the Puritans.

But here we are, debauched by three hundred years of Puritanism, poisoned by its food and especially by its drink, corrupted in taste by its teaching, and finally left to our own devices after the life has been nearly strangled out of the nation and its leaders; and what is to become of us? We admit all that Mr. Ludovici says in criticism of our country; England, like Swift, has died from the head downwards. Have we finished our course? We think not, and even Mr. Ludovici apparently thinks not; or why does he write his "Text-book for Tories?" There is hope for us yet, in our opinion, in a direction other than that in which Mr. Ludovici looks. The whole head may be sick, but the whole heart is not faint; and the English people, after all, are not all clerks and waitresses, suffering from anæmia and pyorrhœa. Revolutions are not made with rose-water, nor by burning incense before the shrine of our ancestors; and Mr. Ludovici's dandiacal disdain of the labour movement prompts us to a quotation from a writer he dislikes, Carlyle, defending a man, Cromwell, whom Mr. Ludovici detests. "Small thanks to a man for keeping his hands clean, who would not touch the work but with gloves on."

For the labour movement, in its possibilities, is the only phenomenon of flourishing life that this country presents. Grant that it is confused in taste, apparently democratic in direction, it is the only symptom of a surplus energy, of a Will to Power, that is manifest. That it wishes to make secure the sustenance of the nation by itself assuming responsibility for the provision of that sustenance, is not merely an aristocratic desire but, if successful, will itself provide the first condition of the rise of an aristocracy. Mr. Ludovici himself predicates that the aristocrat must be lifted above the mere struggle for existence; Thorold Rogers taught us that revolutions are born of prosperity; and hear Disraeli arguing against the economical theory of revolutions. "I know no period when physical comfort was more diffused in England than in 1640. England had a moderate population, a very improved agriculture, a rich commerce; yet she was on the eve of the greatest and most violent changes that she has as yet experienced." "That was a religious movement." "Admit it; the cause, then, was not physical. The imagination of England rose against the Government. It proves, then, that when that faculty is astir in a nation, it will sacrifice even physical comfort to follow its impulses." If the democratic decadence was ushered in by a period of physical comfort, why should not the aristocratic resurrection be preceded by the same phenomenon? The English genius prepares itself for all great changes by filling its bread-basket; and low as

that process is, if it be the limit of the ideal, it is yet a necessary process even for the realisation of Mr. Ludovici's dreams. A starving people desires change, not permanence; and the only change that is at present possible is that the working classes should become responsible for the provision of their necessities of life. That is all that the economic revolution implies; by giving stability to the base, it tends to render the superstructure permanent.

This, then, is the first step; "feed my lambs"; and do not forget that the quality of the food will influence greatly the development of those fed. In 1844, Disraeli could truly say that "England is perplexed at the present moment, not inventive," but he could also prophesy that "that would be the next phasis in her moral state." We are in that stage now, and never was direction more needed than at this moment. Mr. Ludovici's book helps us by avoiding the confusion incidental to political discussion, and by putting forward the Nietzschean standard for the judgment of all polities and policies whatsoever. He describes aristocracy not in the terms of political science but in the terms of life, none too precisely, as must be admitted. "The principle of aristocracy is, that seeing that human life, like any other kind of life, produces some flourishing and some less flourishing, some fortunate and some less fortunate, specimens; in order that flourishing, full, and fortunate life may be prolonged, multiplied, and, if possible, enhanced on earth, the wants of flourishing life, its optimism of conditions, must be made known and authoritatively imposed upon men by its representatives." The making known is all that is possible at this time, and Mr. Ludovici's book serves this purpose very well; but there is no question at present of imposing that optimism of conditions. If we want an aristocracy, we must create it; and as the first principle of aristocracy is, as Mr. Ludovici finely shows, summed up in Napoleon's phrase, "Respect the burden," we turn most hopefully to those who are respecting the burden. We find that they are the burden-bearers themselves; alone among the classes of England, the working-class has retained its self-respect, and is beginning to enforce the principle of "respect the burden" upon those other classes. Judged by every one of Mr. Ludovici's tests, the labour movement alone offers the prospect of the realisation of his ideals; it is to that movement that his teaching should be directed, and the aristocratic principles and ideals recommended.

We have said nothing about Mr. Ludovici's exposition of the various ideas that have to be transformed; the exogamic and Christian idea of love, for example, with its consequences of corrupted blood and confused taste; because we feel that these conceptions cannot properly be attacked until they stand in the way of a real development. As an intellectual exercise (Mr. Ludovici will detest the description), they are quite interesting and are in place; but, at present, they tend to confuse the prime issue. When we have something to conserve, we shall turn our attention to the best means of conserving it; when responsibility has been assumed, then the best means of maintaining it may be advocated with most hope of success. At present, we must use the forces that we find operative, however ignorant we may be of their origin. We must tolerate, even, the continued existence and the multiplication of machinery, in spite of its deleterious effects on the nation; because, at present, there is no other way of supplying the wants of the nation. If we have to choose between the sin against life and the sin against beauty, then, reluctantly, we shall sin against beauty, being aristocrats in the first degree, and believing that life is the first condition of beauty. The life of the "rude mechanicals" is not the best life, but it is the best that we have; and from it alone is it possible, in our opinion, to develop the finer types. It is not to the Tories, but to the Trade Unionists, that Mr. Ludovici's appeal should be directed; and to their attention we recommend it.

A. E. R.

## REVIEWS

**British War Poems.** By an American. (Harrison and Sons. 6d.)

Sincerely American encouragements to us to go in and win at all costs. The verse is respectable, however, and the author seems to dislike the Germans. Perhaps he is an ambulancier, too modest to let us know that he is with us in body as well as in spirit.

**Songs to Save a Soul.** By Irene McLeod. (Chatto and Windus. 1s. 6d.)

We have jeopardised our salvation by only reading about half. Some few have a magazine lilt in them, but what feeling there is is the pretty, flattering, self-dissection beloved by women. My hands, my feet, my little white body and my heart and my soul are all sung to, not forgetting my lover, who is permitted to pipe a fair record on occasions.

**The Common Day.** By Stephen Southwold. (Allen and Unwin. 3s. 6d.)

Thin, introspective, resigned verse babbling often and with a religious tendency; but the poet has now gone to the war: wherefore we will waive our glaive.

**Poems.** By Margaret Radford. (Allen and Unwin. 2s.)

It is *not* a sign of modesty to entitle a volume of 180 pages "Poems": there are hardly so many as that in the whole literature. The author makes a witty enough epigram or two, and has a talent for description, though more prosaic than poetical.

**Songs of Chaos.** By Herbert Read. (Elkin Mathews. 1s.)

Mr. Read has seen the Dawn "all naked." Also he plucked a wild and wayside rose and gazed in long delight . . . but oh the rose fell in the stream and sailed away from me! He borrows Nietzsche's phrase for his volume, but his rhythms suggest a dancing tar rather than a dancing-star.

**War Time Verses.** By Owen Seaman. (Constable. 1s.)

He had to do it, of course, but it need not have been so shocking poor. Fancy telling England to be glad, whatever comes, at least to know you have your quarrel just. England is you and I, reader, and we have our quarrel just! Be glad to know! We nurse no malice, Seaman; thank you much, because your head-piece hearing "Punch" grew duller, Lent to your frontispiece the comic touch of cuckold's colour. Be glad to know!

**The Contemplative Quarry.** By Anna Wickham. (The Poetry Bookshop. 6d.)

Man prefers to kiss her than talk philosophy, so she asks Oblivion to steep her senses in forgetfulness that she may forget her loneliness. It would seem a poor triumph to dismiss Man if Oblivion has to be called in to take his place! Miss Wickham declares: "I have no physical need of a chair. . . but it is needful that I feed my wit, With beauty and complexity even when I sit." A beautiful and very complex chair might here find some reason for its existence while the lady reposed "upon a stone or on the ground." The trouble seems to be that if you marry in the ordinary way you only "bear a boy who is like Uncle Harry." It is very probable, indeed; but, surely, anything rather than Oblivion!

**Spring Morning.** By Frances Cornford. (The Poetry Bookshop. 1s.)

Impatience begins to invade our tolerance. I. I. I. ! Nothing but I from all these rhymsters. This one is the only person, except the Sun, who saw that the poplars in France were really "golden ladies come to dance." Neither the peasant girl nor the dog nor the cows saw anything but poplars. "I had a little dog and my dog was very small." He got lost, poor animal! Another time she "wakened on her hot hard

bed, upon the pillow lay my head," and she could hear her watch ticking, and although she was not ill, but apparently only Mary-annish, she asked Death to come quick come quick, *ibid*, seven times. Rub-bish!

**Songs.** By Edward Shanks. (The Poetry Bookshop. 6d.)

Encore. "Last night the wind blew suddenly past my window." He strove to rise and was bound by an impotent terror! But he too is now going to the war, and his last printed verse on "Drilling" is, if still a little morbid, worth all the rest. There is no possible doubt whatever that the idea of going to the front squares the mental shoulders. I in uniform becomes We.

**The Quest of Beauty.** By H. R. Feston. (Blackwell, Oxford. 1s.)

"I well remember how one night I came into my little room." He "fumbled with the lamp" and apparently got it lighted, because he saw a letter which made him repeat after having read it: "I well remember now that night I came into my little room." He can do better than this, but is all too lonely of nights, like the rest.

**Or in the Grass.** By Madeleine C. Rock. (Wilson, Glasgow. 2s. 6d.)

More than half I; but even this with some poetical feeling. The descriptive verses, as usual, are prosaic. Several of the little pieces would be worth quoting. We give one.

He hardly walked—he whistled  
When he went up the road,  
But coming back—O love alack!  
He scarcely walked—he strode.

It is a wonder truly,  
She could have eyes so dim,  
Often say I, he will not die,  
He'll whistle heaven to him!

**Sonnets and Lyrics on the War.** By Bertram Dobell. (Dobell. 1s.)

The author, at seventy-three years, died just before these verses on the war were published. They are wonderful work from so old a man. We quote the first sonnet, "The Shadow of War," and would like to quote several other pieces full of spirit, satire, and humour, and although sometimes sad, as age is sad, straightforward and clean of all sentimentality.

Threescore and ten and three more years have I;  
Some joys and many sorrows have I known;  
And now, so near my end, I thought to die  
In peace, nor over such vast ruin moan,  
Such madness as doth now mankind possess;  
I dreamed not that such vileness on this earth  
Could be as now in naked hideousness,  
By foulest passions fostered, springs to birth.  
Of man I have ever striven to think the best,  
Hoping he would at last his nature free  
From the base passions which his soul infest;  
But now that cheering faith is lost to me—  
I think I could have welcomed death that I  
Might not this world's calamity descry!

Mr. Dobell took the common view of Nietzsche, but for one or two mistakes of this kind, his statement of the feelings of an old Englishman should not go unread.

**Ballads of Old Birmingham.** By E. M. Rudland. (Nutt. 2s. 6d.)

The Lord Mayor of Brum writes in his preface to this book— "As a live dog is better than a dead lion, so is a busy street better than a ruined temple." A very proper sentiment indeed for a Lord Mayor, and one can only rebuke him bitterly for lending his name to this resuscitation of mouldy old legends. Some of the ballads are not very bad, and some are almost good, and as they are crowned by a tribute to the Right Honourable "Man of us All," as the author calls him, perhaps there is no great harm done to the busy brains of Brum.

"Tid'apa." By Gilbert Frankau. (Chatto and Windus. 2s. 6d.)

Recommended to our masculine readers. Truly a "remarkable satire."

**Vagaries.** By Charles Granville. (The Dryden Publishing Co. 2s. 6d.)

Pleasant, level verse for the most part, but one or two of the lyrics fly. The piece entitled "What Will'st Thou?" is somewhat remarkable among modern verse.

**Windrush and Evenlode.** By Henry Baerlein. (Methuen. 1s.)

The writer writes of everything and anything in a happy-go-lucky way with a clever little talent unspoiled by genius.

**The Small Hymn Book.** Edited by Robert Bridges. (Blackwell, Oxford. 2s. 6d.)

As its title implies—a collection of devotional verses.

**Casus Belli.** By Charles Cammell. (Humphreys. 2s. 6d.)

A satire directed against the wickedness and folly of war.

**Straight and Crooked.** By James H. Cousins. (Grant Richards. 1s. 6d.)

Some of these verses are charming, notably "The Bubble-Blowers" and "A Pair of Sabots."

**Songs of Simple Things.** By Judith Foljambe. (Curtis and Davis. 1s.)

Words, words, words. "Ah! Moon, who loves! Ah! Moon, who dies!"

**Vidyapah.** (The Old Bourne Press.)

"Songs of the love of Radha and Krishna, translated by Ananda Coomaraswamy and Arun Sen, with introduction and notes, and illustrations from Indian paintings." The latter are very interesting, and beautifully produced, but the verse makes not the least addition to English literature. The vocabulary selected is painfully sentimental and the rhythm holds by nothing discoverable. Oriental translators should copy our ancient tradition in translation which safelier risks being cold than hot. The least over-urge in feeling and down goes dignity. This-wise, Professor Murray has very nearly made a lady of Euripides.

**Maria Again.** By Mrs. John Lane. (The Bodley Head. 3s. 6d. net.)

Mrs. John Lane has returned to her Maria in none too good a temper. She seems to be more concerned to make Maria ridiculous, to reprove the snobbery of the social aspirant, than she is to write an interesting character-study. Even the opening chapter, wherein Maria attempts to write her own conversations, instead of letting Mrs. Lane obtain such credit as might appertain to the reporting of them, is devised to make Maria ridiculous. All the servants give notice, and therefore Maria retires from literature. Mrs. John Lane never varies the mood: Maria, who is supposed to be so "caustic and witty," is made ridiculous in every one of her exhibitions. If she denounces the "harem lady" it is shown that she is a harem lady herself; if she is dubious about the propriety of riding in the motor-car of a "creature" the splendour of the car settles the question for her; if she goes to be photographed everything that could make her ridiculous is recounted, and the final touch is given when we are told that the invitation to be photographed for nothing was sent to her by mistake. Even at her best she is not a pleasant character; but with Mrs. Lane emphasising her petty economies, her petty pretensions, and bringing every one of her activities to a ridiculous end, she becomes an intolerable idiot. If Mrs. Lane really can score against Maria in this way, Maria must be the dullest-witted among the suburban ladies, and no further record of her sayings need be made.

## Pastiche.

### A TRUE STORY.

The Geni next transported me to the inner room of a Women's Club. Among its wretched inmates I discerned one more miserable in appearance than the others; for though she was fashionably attired, there was a wildness in her bearing, and a gleam in her eye that caused me serious alarm.

"There you behold," said the Geni, "yet another instance of the vanity of human wishes and aspirations which seek to set aside the eternal laws."

"This woman once led a simple and god-fearing life, till she fell under the influence of a famous sage of the last century. I mean Euthemius, who based his theories on the principle of equipoise, and so lucidly explained the working of the law of compensation."

"Desiring only to be approved by him, this misguided creature diligently followed those studies wherein it is written women shall not excel. After many years of arduous labour, she attained to a state of comparative erudition. She disdained to attract the attention of the philosopher by lawful and natural means, but sued for his favour by poems in Sanskrit and a medical treatise in Middle Egypt hieroglyphics."

"The second stage of her downward career was reached when she began, under the sage's direction, to study economics and politics. She attended all his lectures, and reviewed all his books. She even produced two unanswerable arguments against Women's Suffrage, now, in a happier age, forgotten. She outraged decency and the laws of nature in her desire to be a fit mate for so wise a man."

"The end came swift and terrible. Euthemius, in a moment of relaxation, informed her that ever since he had known her he had thought how pretty she was."

MENDACIUS.

### A BALLADE OF F. B. MEYER.

Deep adoration blossoms in my heart  
For one in whom all virtues intertwine.  
Some men bow down their souls before Mozart,  
Some worship Amaryllis, some the Vine,  
And some—Enough, enough! Beyond my ken  
The idols of mankind—bright lamps whose shine  
Lures on the fluttering moths . . . again, again!  
Myself, I worship Meyer—he's divine!

There is no man who plays a nobler part;  
No man so genial or so benign,  
So quick to feel the lure of life and Art,  
Casting his pearls before unheeding swine.  
Yet keen withal to censure vice in men,  
To warn young women where to draw the line,  
(Accusing God of coarseness now and then)  
Myself, I worship Meyer—he's divine!

He knows the evil in the human heart  
(And little else, some say). He loathes each sign  
Of sex—the radiant eyes, the tears that start,  
White arms that fold the sergeant of the line,  
Safe home awhile. All soldiers he would pen  
In Nonconformist hostelries (no wine)  
Till they were ready to meet Death again.  
Myself, I worship Meyer—he's divine!

### ENVOI.

Prince! I believe you said that certain men  
Should be placed foremost in the firing line!  
Is your dyspepsia coming on again?  
Myself, I worship Meyer—he's divine!

STEVENSON PARKER.

### A DREAM.

Those tame, mealy mouthed people of Fleet Street could tell you nothing about the beginning of the end of the great war. When the big thing happened, their mechanical little brains went wrong; their little wooden souls split—they were useless.

They were just ordinary regiments of men drawn chiefly from the manufacturing centres. For some weeks they had been at the front, doing nothing, when a strange feeling of unrest came over groups of the men. There was something sullen in their attitude as they waited for something to happen. They did not discuss the ethics of War. They discussed the hardship of lying about on cold wet ground with nothing to do.

One gusty eve as Night was drawing her curtain across the countryside, a stalwart man who came from Yorkshire,

having gazed at his rifle for an hour without speaking, rose up to his feet and was heard to say: "I'm going home."

His words were handled like jewels by his comrades. Up and down the lines of waiting men they went. As they came back they had changed to, "We're Going Home." They chanted these three words as they gathered their belongings and made ready to march. One enthusiast found a lump of slate on which he wrote their final note, "We've Gone Home." He propped the slate up with stones so that it stared up at the night sky. And the wind and the moon made the shadows of the branches dance across the writing on the slate.

Indignant protests came from superior officers; but these were silenced. One melancholy old colonel was so shocked when he saw the men swing past him that he put a bullet in his head. Many superior officers followed his example.

Like rays from a searchlight the news spread across Europe. Regiment after regiment took up the cry, "We're Going Home." And they did. Railways and boats were seized upon. The majority of officials were too staggered to attempt resistance. Gradually, the fighting force of the Empire returned to England.

In a month the drums of war had been silenced. When asked the reason for their hasty return, the troops would reply in a dreamy sort of way, "We thought we would come home," and then relapsed into a sully silence.

Fleet Street went purple in the face, and foamed at the mouth, and ordered the men back to the front. The men seemed too dazed to take any notice.

Mr. Asquith died of apoplexy. Mr. Lloyd George got into the habit of getting hopelessly drunk. The Reverend Father Vaughan accepted an engagement at the Alhambra, where he sang comic songs.

In a word, England was not England.

HARRY FOWLER.

#### TO THE PRESENT DAY.

When chaos melted into formal shape,  
And daedal sculpture 'neath Apollo's hand,  
Insidious grew decay before that rape  
And wild irruption of the Thracian band.

Like as some awful python changes skin  
Convulsively, and leaves upon the grass  
His ancient habitation faded thin,  
And in bright gear towards the woods doth pass:

The woods, his haunt and ever fresh demesne,  
Where nature spreads her gauds before his skill,  
Where waits his prey, his peril and his gain,  
His first and last, his tale of good and ill:

So turned the world entortured, and again  
Instant for harmony, yet finding none;  
So killed and knew revival of the slain,  
So saw the pompous Pharisee undone.

And at this hour the wrestlers wake anew;  
Each issue lies at hazard for your voice—  
Money and murder, outlet for the shrew,  
Profit of slavery—is this your choice?

J. A. M. A.

#### SARDONIC MEDITATIONS OCCASIONED BY A PERUSAL OF DIVERS INFLAMMATORY PRINTS.

With lusty whoops the "Times" and all its kin  
(New Jeremiahs setting evil right)  
Point shaking fingers at our load of sin:  
"Lo, where the rotters rot, the blighters blight."

"Lo, caitiff clerks and errand boys still don  
The sheeny necktie and the patent shoe.  
They, as of yore, put fancy waistcoats on,  
And seek and find them flappers whom to woo."

"Away with them, and every butterfly  
That scorns what our sagacity hath said.  
The country's making for the dogs . . . and fie  
On Mr. So and So, and Lord Y. Z."

(And so on.) But you ask: What do they here  
Still perched upon their little cardboard throne,  
Still soiling foolscap as in yesteryear,  
Concerned with all men's duty but their own?

O blind accuser! See you not, that all  
Who in His offices still twirl the pen  
('Tis why their prose doth either limp or crawl)  
Are more than ninety-six or less than ten?

P. SELVER.

## Current Cant.

"The human side of Lloyd George."—"Strand Magazine."

"National Register. How to fill up your form."—"New Statesman."

"When the clock strikes."—A. G. HALES.

"Lipton's tea is always placed first for flavour."—"Daily Mail."

"Write to 'John Bull' about it."—"Star and Echo."

"Playing the game."—AUSTIN HARRISON.

"The novel as a tonic."—MRS. DE HORNE VAIZEY.

"One of the most courageous men in London is undoubtedly Old Moore."—"T.P.'s Weekly."

"How I wish women could take the firing line."—MOLLY RUSSELL.

"The Americans strike one as an intensely religious and even superstitious people . . . Materialism repels them."—CECIL CHESTERTON.

"The Bishop of Yukon when caught by an early winter on his return to Dawson City, kept himself alive by eating his boots."—"Nature."

"Very wonderful are the articles which are appearing in the popular press."—GEORGE R. SIMS.

"Shall we all button and unbutton to the end of life? Unless the War releases those who suffer from the tyranny of the little things of life we are doomed to despotism by buttons."—ARNOLD WHITE.

"Hoist your slacks, Jack; dance the hornpipe, and if, perchance, you meet a pretty girl in a foreign port—well, give her a kiss, and think of the Missis."—HORATIO BOTTOMLEY.

"Smith's Widow Weds. Licence taken out on the day of his execution."—"Sunday Pictorial."

"This War lies heavy on the people's hearts. The House of Business in a hundred direct and subtle ways is made conscious of the fact. . . . This Store's impressionableness is proved."—SELFRIDGE AND CO.

"Mr. Wells and his recent work seems to put a full stop to the age of materialistic thought."—"Standard."

"O men in the trenches and watchers at home, have faith in God. All that He has desired these long months of pain is that England should once more learn the value of the human soul."—"Superman."

"Every man from the Czar downwards who has had to do with Germany knows that it is impossible to trust a German."—"Daily Sketch."

"What is to be done with the miners? In their present state of mind it is almost impossible to reason with them. Every concession by their employers leads to fresh demands."—"Standard."

"George Smith left no property. The money he had in hand, amounting to about £50, which he had obtained from one of his most recent victims, was handed over to the conductors of his defence."—"Reynold's Newspaper."

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

## DE MORTUIS.

Sir,—I admire Mr. Ainley's loyalty to Mr. Barker, although I must confess that, to me, it seems like returning good for evil. In his preface to "Twelfth Night," Mr. Barker expressly exempted his actors from criticism, and took upon himself the responsibility for their performance. That Mr. Ainley should now modestly assume responsibility for his own shortcomings under Mr. Barker's direction, denies to Mr. Barker the proud title of "producer" that he claimed for himself, and robs him even of the infamy of having eviscerated Shakespeare. Even if Mr. Barker's methods of production were not well known, the idea of him as a drill-sergeant would be a pleasing and fitting legend to attach to him; it is one of those characteristic stories which, if not true, ought to be true of him. For he took a cultured and poetic actress like Miss Evelyn Millard (who once played Francesca to Mr. Ainley's Paolo with the sure touch of genius), and made her in "Twelfth Night" play like an amateur. That Mr. Ainley should rank Mr. Barker with Mr. Benson is one of those little perversities of judgment that, in a different mood, would excite me to controversy. I leave it alone with this remark, Mr. Barker has discovered and developed no actors comparable with those introduced to the English stage by Mr. Benson. It may be true that "wild horses" would not drag from Mr. Ainley all that he owes to Mr. Benson and Mr. Barker; in the first place, there are no wild horses in England, and in the second, if there were, they would not afford the most effective means of eliciting the information. But I can tell Mr. Ainley what he owes to Mr. Barker; he owes to him an attention to and development of minute detail in acting that, in the purely intellectual atmosphere of Mr. Barker's productions, seemed meticulous. The total impression was not that of a person, but of an elaborated technique interesting enough in a school for acting, but not in a theatre. That development of detail remains with Mr. Ainley; "Quinney" is as full of it as his room is of bric-a-brac, in fact, I cannot recollect even having seen a performance that was so crowded with detail as is Mr. Ainley's performance of "Quinney." But my jubilation was due to the fact that, free from the sterile influence of Mr. Barker, Mr. Ainley expressed the spirit of the man, gave him feeling, and thus invested with meaning the whole elaborated technique of his presentation. I rejoice that Mr. Ainley is alive again; I rejoice no less that Mr. Barker's influence is dead; but Mr. Ainley is much deceived if he thinks that he has risen again without having first been dead. It is not possible, more especially to an actor who, in my opinion, has suffered under Granville Barker.

JOHN FRANCIS HOPK.

## GEORGE GISSING.

Sir,—Is there anyone else, besides myself, who will protest against your reviewer's opinion (in your issue of August 5) that "George Gissing was an English Philistine to the tip of his pen, an author who was satisfied if he got his hero out of difficulties into comfort"?

Has your reviewer ever read "New Grub Street," a novel in which the hero, the only man of worth amongst a crowd of nonentities, is broken on the wheel by the imbecility of the British Philistine, male and female, who have not the slightest idea about the mischief they are doing?

The book is as good as a Greek tragedy and—*pace* the classical pedant—much nearer to our understanding. It is written, *not* with ink, but with blood—with blood that, I am afraid, came from Gissing's own wounds and sufferings.

Far from being a Philistine, George Gissing is the only non-Philistine novelist in English literature of the nineteenth century, Benjamin Disraeli perhaps excepted.

Is there no one else to defend the memory of this great English author except an alien enemy?

OSCAR LEVY.

Glion (sur Territet), Switzerland, August 10.

## A QUESTION TO MR. CECIL CHESTERTON.

Sir,—Mr. Chesterton is always making insinuations against various people and organisations as to the quarter from which they were financed, and the point of my question about the costs in Isaacs v. Chesterton was whether Mr. Cecil Chesterton paid them himself out of his own resources, which is the only fund a plaintiff in a libel action could attach in ordinary circumstances. I

shall be surprised to know that Mr. C. Chesterton was personally able to pay all the costs in the Isaacs v. Chesterton trial. That the costs were paid I do not doubt; but as Mr. Chesterton is so ready to impugn the bona fides of others, it would be interesting to know by whom that defence was maintained and by whom the costs of the Prosecution were eventually paid.

The passage quoted by Mr. Chesterton, of course, is wholly incapable of defamatory meaning as defined in the *Capital and Counties Bank v. Henty*; it is a mere vague innuendo against no one in particular about the sources of the finance of an organisation which was not a legal entity and could not sue.

C. H. NORMAN.

## WOMEN IN INDUSTRY.

Sir,—May I, through your columns, make my curtsy to National Guildsmen, and, without rejecting their chivalry, submit that women cannot feed their stomachs on flowery speeches and gallant bows?

For some considerable time, in this country at least, there has been a large surplus of women over men, and the same condition might still prevail in the future, unless, of course, this can be regulated by National Guilds. To talk about keeping these women out of industry is nonsense. Do these gentlemen intend introducing polygamy, or State, or, rather, Guild, maintenance for spinsters?

I do wish National Guildsmen would not confuse us with children. It is probably their way of being chivalrous, but it's rather disconcerting, and, if I may wax so bold, damned impertinent (will National Guildsmen allow women to swear?). We have had more than our share of nursery government, and are tired of being led by the hand and told what is good for us and what isn't. Surely we have the right to some voice in the shaping of our destinies. To condemn all women, irrespective of their individuality, their abilities and their aspirations, to remain in the home is as stupid as it is cruel.

The assertion of National Guildsmen that the employment of women in industry is bad vital economics, and, consequently, bad industrial economics, is utterly fallacious. There are few industries in which women mainly are employed which are more strenuous than rearing children, scrubbing floors, washing clothes, cooking, and all the other innumerable activities which abound in the home. This is no argument against work in the home, but it is an argument against the assumption that industry is injurious to women. Of course, there are certain branches of industry which are not adapted to the constitution of women. The extremest feminist in her wildest moments would not advocate mining, dock labouring, or road digging as suitable employment for women, but the manufacture of clothing, the production of certain foodstuffs, teaching, and clerical work, etc., given decent conditions and hours, would neither lower the vitality of women nor injure the race. The present conditions of female labour, especially that of married women and widows, who in addition have their work to do in the home, are certainly deplorable, and undoubtedly the cause of a large percentage of infant mortality. But the root of the evil is not so much the form of labour as the low wages and long hours, and the consequent low standard of living. It seems to me that the only way out of the difficulty is for women to organise industrially, not to form women's trade unions, unless in an industry especially appertaining to women, but to unite with every worker in a particular industry, and so aim at control; at the same time demanding equal pay for equal work, in order to abolish unfair competition, and so ensure that the best worker will be employed, and not the cheapest labour.

C. ROWEN.

Sir,—Your correspondent, Gladys F. Biss, misunderstands on so important a point the purport of my letter (which dealt with only one aspect of a large question, and was made by compression somewhat dogmatic) that I must ask to be allowed to explain myself further. When I spoke of "a status for women corresponding to their value to the community" it was to their value as mothers that I intended to refer. I thought it obvious that women's chief claim to the consideration of society rests on their indispensability to its existence, though they have a secondary value in industry which might also be taken into account. (For although men may be justified in saying that they could carry on the whole of the world's industries without our assistance, the fact remains that they have never yet done so.) It was in the hope of drawing from Guildsmen some hints as to the form which

the recognition of woman's true economic value might take in a Guild State that I entered upon this controversy. Hitherto Guild writers have offered us nothing but stale goods: the dependent family whose income is "earned" by the husband and father. This system has been tried and found wanting. It fails to express the true relationship of man and woman, which is one of mutual dependence on each other and of the community. Women do not need to be reminded of its faults. They only tolerate it because their sexual and maternal instincts are stronger than their desire for freedom. Such consideration as a woman now enjoys she owes to individuals, and not to society, which regards her only as the appendage of a man while she is engaged in the work which is, socially speaking, the most valuable. When, on the other hand, she takes up wage-paid occupations, she finds that she has acquired some sort of independent status, and women are not slow to note the contrast. What they are learning by their entrance into wavery is not the achievement of "Olympian feats of genius," nor even any marked degree of skill in industry, but simply the lesson of freedom. They are beginning to value themselves, and a kind master is no longer the highest goal of their desires. Sooner or later they will not only demand freedom within the home, but will combine to secure it.

To recognise that capitalism, willing evil, has wrought some good is to admit no more than is true of the greater part of human progress. Throughout man's history he has been forced by his stomach into courses good for his soul. I would not, however, go so far as to assert that the only possible road to women's emancipation is through the wage system. I maintain that it is the obvious road, and that, so far, no other has been pointed out. While this is the case, it is useless to talk of barring the doors in the way of women's advance. If Guildsmen can invent a shorter cut and spare some women the passage of the Inferno, they will earn the gratitude of feminists. But they must make it clear that it is to freedom they would lead us. One possible course, which I would suggest is worth serious discussion from the Guildsman's point of view, is the endowment of motherhood.

W. Anderson asks what I mean by the exploitation of sex. I may have expressed myself badly, but it is surely clear that the sexual function, like labour, is capable of being exploited. Like labour, it is a part of personality. To use it by force is tyranny; to traffic in it is degradation. Women alone have suffered in their sexual relations what men and women alike have suffered as workers. The phrase "in the case of men" was, I admit, a slip; it should have been "in the case of workers." Women as wage-earners do not constitute a separate economic class; women as women do. Our sex has two quarrels to settle—one with the capitalist, the other with the male—and we cannot afford to let either lapse. Hence the thorny nature of the woman problem.

IDA G. HYETT.

\* \* \*

Sir,—I am a member of the National Guilds League. Whether this entitles me to write myself down a "Guildswoman" or not, I am not quite sure. In fact, on this point, as on sundry others, connected with National Guilds, I am not clear whether the terms and definitions used apply to the wicked Capitalist Present or to some Utopian Future. Also (Gladys F. Biss may rejoice to hear) I am "wife to a Guildsman."

May I have a round with Rowland Kenney and W. Anderson? Mr. Anderson first:—

My point was simply that I find it impossible to reconcile the paragraph I quoted from "Notes of the Week" with the writer's other dogmas on the subject. If he believes the cause of men and women in industry to be "one and the same"; if he urges women to "get economic power by combination, by establishing a monopoly of their labour and by exerting their collective strength," why does he in every other line he has written on the subject merely *oppose* women being in industry at all?

I am a Guildswoman not because I am interested in Utopian discussions, but because Guild Socialism embodies (under a "literary" sort of name) a practicable scheme of industrial unionism. There appears to be a tendency on the part of some National Guildsmen (including the Most High) to regard Capitalism as a sort of trap into which an unsuspecting people has been lured. I do not share this attitude. Extraordinary as it may seem, the Guildsmen, it appears to me, are in spiritual affinity with the Suffragists on this question—for who has not heard that "Man" is responsible for the present muddle?

Much that is labelled "feminism" is merely ignorance about economics and the evolution of society; and this

also applies to a good deal of "anti-feminism." In whichever way one regards Capitalism, however, we agree that it must give place to something else, and the Guilds League has certainly got hold of the right end of the stick in advocating Industrial Unionism. But we must be careful to differentiate between sex questions and economic questions, always being especially wary when approaching the economic side of the sex question or the sex side of the economic question. And if the League is going out to the workers advocating the clearing-out of all women from industry then it stands a pretty big chance of being writ down without more ado as a collection of middle-class cranks—"women-haters," as opposed to the notorious "man-haters" of the Suffrage movement.

"The general movement of women into wavery" is only a menace to working class emancipation *when it is opposed*, when women are ignored by the trade unions and left for the Capitalists to fatten upon. "Opposition," at the present time, is reactionary in its *results*, whatever it intends to be in theory.

Now, for Mr. Kenney:—

He begins in fine "Rebel" style by telling us how revolutionary he is, and how, if we do not let him say his little say he won't play. So he says it—in a truculent vein which reminds one of Ben Tillett praying for the death of Lord Devonport.

The only suggestion in all the article, that matters a twopenny damn, is the suggestion that the Unions should treat women labour precisely as they sometimes treat Non-union or potential blackleg labour:—"refuse to work with it." I agree—not because it's woman labour but because it's cheap labour. You will never get the workers to clear women out because they are women. They will not be "feminist," and they will not be "anti-feminist." If the workers won't do it, and they won't, then the only thing is for the "State" to do it, and as the State is the Capitalists—well! it's hardly likely to do it.

If we can organise 100 per cent. of the workers on all the railways, men, women, old men and boys, during the war, we shall be in a position to demand shorter hours in order to re-instate the railwaymen who come back from the front. If we don't, if we let these girls, with their cheap labour, swamp the railways, without making any attempt to organise them, then it's going to take years of work, arguing about whether women are efficient, or whether they ought to do this, that, or t'other, years of work getting them out (even if it could be done), and fights without number against crank feminists and Marx knows what!

You can only wield the industrial union weapon if your union is blackleg proof; and that can never be unless men and women are organised together.

Mr. Kenney's idea that married women are "cleared out" of industry is naïve to say the least of it—especially from one who has a knowledge of conditions in Lancashire! The worst sort of blackleg labour to fight is married women labour, the sort that "helps" the family income. That is why in asking for the same wages for the same work, for men and women, we are fighting to keep out this deadly peril.

On one point I find myself in complete agreement with Mr. Kenney—the simplicity of the problem.

It can be stated in two lines as under:—

Can women be used as blacklegs?

Answer: Yes.

*Simple Solution.*—Then we must organise them with us in our own unions.

"When women organisers of women ask what about the women now going into industry, should they not be organised, what should be done with them?—the reply is that that is their funeral, not ours." A truly lordly reply, Mr. Kenney, and a highly intelligent attitude to take up. But it is an attitude that will more likely lead to your funeral—and that of the National Guilds League.

WINIFRED HORRABIN.

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## Press Cuttings.

"Of course, we are all wrong about our treatment of coal. All minerals should be State property, the property of the people. Because a man owns a field, and because coal is found a thousand feet beneath it, there is no sane reason why he should have a right to it. And because another man sinks a shaft and finds coal, it does not become his. Nor can the man who digs out the coal constitute himself owner by his work. From first to last, the people connected with coal are really only employees exploiting a natural article which is national property. Establish that principle firmly, and we shall advance a step towards a better situation. The colliery owners, the workers and distributors are to be regarded as servants of the State, dealing with State property for the national good. *In effect, they would be an industrial army governed by discipline, rules, and rates of pay. Just as is the army.*"—"Daily Sketch."

"There is no human nexus between the poor oppressed agricultural labourers and their shareholding employers. Aggressive economic right is asserted by the employer, and the spirit of the claim is reciprocated in emphasised degree by the new votaries of freedom. I recall that the last published utterance of Cardinal Manning was that 'political economy must ever be subject to political humanity.' But there is little of it in the Welsh coal trade. A big-hearted humanity and deep sense of duty abide with some employers and is instinct with many managers. But they are as sparkling gems in a black atmosphere. Out of the gloomy depths of Glamorganshire ugly black heaps of rubbish have come to 'uglify' the scenery, and to make an eternal setting to the home-life of the toiler. Out of the same depths have come glittering mountains of gold to give seat and setting to the fortunate few. But few of them have seen fit to streak the dark heaps of the pit-waste with a little from their own glittering piles. I could name, alive and within 50 years, quite a few millionaires in South Wales, not one of whom has ever troubled to return a thousand pounds to sweeten and to raise the village life of his workers. Herein lies the ready ground for mischievous crops."—Clement Edwards, M.P., in the "News and Leader."

"We cannot in war take risks which it is perfectly safe to take in peace time, when the legitimate automatic safeguard of a marked rise in prices will always suck food to these shores as a powerful pump sucks water. We do not mean by this that the Grand Victualler should be always interfering with trade, or, still less, should keep down prices, which is usually the very worst way of dealing with the matter. High prices are the best remedy for scarcity. What we want him to do is to keep a vigilant watch, and to see, as we have said, that promises are made good, that the flow of the reservoir is unchecked, and that the reserve is never trenced upon under what we may call normal war conditions, but is kept absolutely intact for some extraordinary crisis. The National Granary, so to speak, must be bulging with corn and meat and cheese and all the other supplies of food. Unless we end the war with more food in the country than there was when we began it, we shall know that we have run unnecessary, and therefore criminal, risks. . . . For fear of misunderstanding, let us say once more that we do not desire in the very least to suggest unnecessary interference with the natural action of supply and demand in regard to foodstuffs. We fully realise how perfect and efficient is the interaction of these forces under normal conditions, or even under abnormal. The Grand Victualler to the nation should therefore interfere as little as possible with the natural flow of foodstuffs."—"Spectator."

"The long and the short of the matter is that as long as the Government permits employers to reap inflated profits out of the necessities of the nation, so long will employees feel themselves morally entitled to demand their share of the loot, and to insist on getting it. It is a case not of human depravity, but merely of human nature. The scramble may not present a very edifying spectacle, but who is to blame for that? Mr. Runciman's Bill will, it is to be hoped, prevent retail prices soaring up next

winter in the way they might otherwise have done. But it will not alter the fact that the coal trade, especially in South Wales, is enjoying a period of enormous prosperity, and that the proposed maximum prices will not prevent particular owners or particular districts from making huge war profits. That, unquestionably, is the foundation of the whole of the trouble in South Wales. If the Government had taken over the Welsh coal mines under the Defence of the Realm Act, placing their administration in the hands of a committee of three actually concerned in their management, abolishing profits altogether during the war (though giving reasonable compensation), and taking all employees, high and low, into the Government service, and appealing to them to double their output, we do not believe that there would have been a shadow of trouble."—"New Statesman."

"The real work of the I.L.P. in a time like this should have been devoted to looking after the exploiters and profiteers, to put some check upon them, and to have compelled the Government to take action: instead of which they have thrown the workers to the wolves and handed them over body and soul to the few 'Get-Rich-Quickly' party to be exploited and plundered, while they are enmeshed in futile bleding about the causes of the war. If Sir Edward Grey had only done this or that, etc. Is it not pitiable? Can futility go further? The I.L.P. have missed the chance of their lives. They have been led by the nose by two or three impossible crackpots, who have muddled and blundered all their lives in everything they have had a hand in. The workers have looked to their leaders for light and leading. They have asked and looked for bread, and they have got, not stones, indeed, but wind, wind and impracticable and impossible tommyrot. The Labour Party, as a party, have failed in not compelling the Government to govern. The I.L.P. Section of the Party is impossible in everything that is essential to the workers' interests at this moment. To win this war one thing is essential and necessary, and that is for the Government to stop the exploiters of every kind. If not done we shall fail, because there is every evidence that the workers are now conscious that they are being exploited in every way possible."—H. BARKER.

"Whitehall planted. Bourneville watered, but Cadbury reaps the increase.' Such is the ideal of Capitalism for the future. *Against it the workers have but one defence—the activity of an awakened and class-conscious Trade Unionism.* It alone can challenge the debased conception of 'Democracy,' which has come to mean no more than 'government of the People by the bureaucrat for the Capitalist.' We have seen Syndicalism arise to combat not only the degradation of a wage-slavery made permanent by the laws of Servile State, but also the hardly less shameful surrender involved in the acceptance of a State Socialism which offers the worker no responsibility and no control. The Syndicalist went wrong when he sought to swamp all social institutions beneath a network of industrial groups, and when in his zeal for man as a maker of things, he ignored the fact that man was a buyer of them also. It was a natural reaction against the mean outlook of the Collectivist, who envisaged society as no more than an association of consumers enlisting the activities of hired servants, and by its insistence upon the need that the workers should seek out their own salvation it challenged the servile advice of the social reformer to 'open your mouths and shut your eyes and see what the fairies will bring you.' *But the Trade Unionist should regard the State neither as a master nor as an enemy—but as a partner in the future with his industrial guild.* It is the task of the leaders to lead the workers to this goal; it is the business of the rank and file to see that they do."—"Leeds and District Weekly Citizen."

"Of course, if we were a businesslike people there would be no war profits to tax. But as we are anything but practical in our methods of administration there are war profits and war profiteers. . . . As for the war profits on coal, food, and the other necessities of the community, the process of exploitation is so cleverly worked and so complicated that taxing is but a very poor method of getting at the worst offenders. Prevention would have been far better than any curative process."—"Daily Sketch."