NOTES OF THE WEEK.

When all the world was congratulating itself upon the formation of the Coalition Ministry we were alone in forecasting its failure. Our grounds, it may be remembered, were two. The personnel of the new Cabinet was neither individually nor collectively an improvement upon that of the old Cabinet; and if, therefore, the latter had failed the new would certainly fail all the sooner. And, in the second place, the Press, being now released from its party allegiance, would naturally turn, being what it is, to the exercise of its power in destruction. For the fulfilment of the second of these surmises we had not indeed long to wait. From almost the birthday of the Coalition Ministry, the Northcliffe Press, in particular, has set itself to pecking Ministers to death. And now it begins to appear that the Coalition is falling to pieces on its own account as well. England, it has been foolishly said, does not love Coalitions. But the fact is that Coalitions do not love themselves. If ever there were a Coalition that should have succeeded, the present Coalition was it. It was acceptable if not indeed long to wait. From almost the birthday of the Coalition Ministry, the Northcliffe Press, in particular, has set itself to pecking Ministers to death. And now it begins to appear that the Coalition is falling to pieces on its own account as well. England, it has been foolishly said, does not love Coalitions. But the fact is that Coalitions do not love themselves. If ever there were a Coalition that should have succeeded, the present Coalition was it. It was acceptable if not actually popular: it contained everybody hungering for office save, perhaps, Lord Northcliffe and Mr. Bottonice; and, if any man could keep a heterogeneous Cabinet together, it was Mr. Asquith. In spite of all this, it shows signs of collapsing from interior stress. Perhaps before the new year a fresh experiment in government will be tried.

At about the same time, namely, when the Coalition Government was first formed, we undertook to prove that a General Election even in the midst of the war was by no means the worst thing that could happen to us. Journalists of nerves write as if the end of the world would follow a General Election held now. And certainly we would not minimise its disadvantages. But we repeat that there are worse things, and that any one of, even all of them may occur if for fear of a General Election we allow ourselves to drift. A Cabinet, for example, such as the present is likely to become, is, in our view, a worse evil than a General Election. All the Ministers at sixes and sevens, each contradicting the other, everybody resigning, or threatening to resign, in turn, and every department getting in the way, or out of the way, of every other—can anything be worse? We might as well be steered by Colney Hatch at once. It is a worse thing than a General Election, too, to have a Cabinet so chronically in political crisis that collectively it can never put its mind to the great task before it. How can Ministers who are sitting on barrels of gunpowder with lighted matches flying about settle down calmly to a long view of the war? Feeling themselves on a diurnal lease of office, their policy must needs be diurnal, too. It is a wonder to us that the war is being conducted as well as it is. Again, a General Election is at least no worse than the continuance in power of a Cabinet that has lost public confidence, and is out of touch with the national mind. A war such as this, being essentially national and popular, depends for its success quite as much upon national sentiment as upon executive ability. Without popular support all the executive machinery in the world would creak and stop and rust—as we may one day see. And the case is none the better for the belief promulgated by the “New Statesman” (very new it is, to be sure), that there is not only no alternative to Cabinet government, but none to this Cabinet. Imagine men of the calibre of many of the present Ministry feeling themselves not only all-powerful but indispensable. Such a position would turn the head of a Cincinnatus, and how much more certainly the head of Sir F. E. Smith. It is a monstrous doctrine for the occasion, and does disservice to everybody. We should utterly repudiate it. The choice before us may be defeat or a General Election, and as between these two alternatives we have no doubt which every sensible man would choose.
It must not be forgotten that the present Parliament was never elected for a war at all. It is true that Parliaments are elected to discharge any national duty that may turn up; but the excuse can be made for the present Parliament that the greatest war the world has seen was scarcely within their purview when in 1910 members were returned on the petty party issues then agitating the country. Home Rule for Ireland, Disestablishment for Wales, and the abolition of Plural Voting were issues unimportant enough to warrant constituencies in their usual neglect of the personal abilities and character of the members they returned. But the war has come as a levitathan among minnows, as a world-issue in the midst of an assembly round the parish-pump. If members of the House of Commons in independent consideration will show that there is no Armageddon with them, Voting were issues unimportant enough to warrant a matter of the censorship, in recruiting—in every affairs of Labour, in ensuring a home-grown food-supply, in the conduct of the war, in diplomacy, in the matter of the censorship, in recruiting—in every department of executive control the most friendly mind can discover little better than failure, and the most vengeous nothing much less than chaos. It is all very well to say that the problems are of such a degree of magnitude and complexity that only supermen could handle them without mistakes. The actual mistakes made, on the contrary, are such as the most ordinary men, given reasonable leisure, would avoid. Take finance, for instance. It is scarcely conceivable that a mere father of a family faced with a sudden drain upon his resources would proceed as the Government has proceeded: to borrow, borrow, borrow without at the same time taking the utmost pains to reduce expenditure. The financial policy of the Government, as we have shown from time to time, has been that of the cretinous young spendthrift who has come into his father's fortune. The nation has been encouraged by it in riotous living at a time when the utmost lenience was required. The financial policy of the Government is revolutionary. And does it become them to reproach us for ours. Each must do the best that he can. If, for the purpose of winning the war, we project has failed not because its problems were too great for men's minds to solve, but because most of the minds in it were too small to solve them. The admission of its failure is therefore no ground for despair. It is, on the other hand, a ground for hope and resolution. England is not down upon its welts because the Smiths and Hendersons, the Churchills and the Braces have turned out to be what we expected.

* * *

One or two further objections that may be raised against a General Election may be considered. We shall be told for the hundredth time that it is unwise to swap horses crossing a stream. But how if we are not yet in the midst of the stream, but only still upon its near edge? While it was thought that the war would be over in a year at the most, the argument against changing horses had some weight. But for all we know at this moment the war may be in its initial, instead of in its closing, stages. Mr. Burns, we believe, told the Cabinet before he left it that in his judgment the war would last ten years. How if he should be right? Are we to endure the present Ministry, can it endure itself, another nine years? And, again, surely at some stage or another the nation must be given the chance of declaring whether it will continue the war on the present lines or with a fresh command. Suppose one's horses drop dead in the stream or prove unequal to the tug—are they still not to be changed? The people of this country are in the strange position of having a war upon which their existence depends bought for them by a self-elected and apparently rejuvenated Coalition. They cannot even concur in their own extinction. We can only say that if the horses are not swapped and disaster to the coach does follow, the animals themselves had better not reach land. The vexation of the people upon a Cabinet that prefers losing the war to losing their jobs will be terrible.

* * *

The argument that our Allies will be depressed if we change our political command has lost its force during the last few months. To begin with, only a Hummish ignorance on their part would attribute to us, on account of such a change, a slackening of purpose in the war. On the contrary, it would indicate a rejuvenated resolutio. Next, we should like to ask our Allies which they would prefer; a Ministry in England without cohesion or popular support; or a Ministry newly formed and fresh from the will of the nation. The answer is obvious. Finally, if we may say so without offence, any such reproach coming from our Allies would at least be but pot calling kettle black. The French Ministry has nearly fallen on several occasions, and M. Delcassé has resigned. Moscow, in Russia, is under martial law. Anybody who appreciates the meaning of these simple facts must realise that in comparison with our own political state, the political condition of our two main Allies is revolutionary. And does it become them to reproach us for a normal political event like a General Election whose own ways are abnormal to say the least? The comparison of all our conditions with the condition of Germany is not to be made, either, with any self-deprecation. Germany has troubles of which we know nothing. And for all the apparent unity of Germany—even if it were real—would we exchange our own dis- sensions, the parent of which is liberty? Let us agree that our task is greater than that of Germany in civil and military administration. The higher the organism the more difficult its function, and the more intelligence it needs. We ought as little to reproach our Cabinet for their state as they us for ours. Each must do the best he can. If, for the purpose of winning the war, we
think it right to change our Ministry by a fresh election, our Allies can have nothing to say. It is our affair.

Neither a reconstruction of the existing Ministry nor its reduction to a Cabinet of seven or eight appears to us any remedy for the present situation. A reconstructed Cabinet, unless it were allowed to co-opt members from outside Parliament (an improbable innovation), would have no better material from which to select itself than the previous Cabinets. One reconstruction has, moreover, already taken place; and on that occasion, as everybody knows, it was generally said that all the talent of Parliament was put into it. From a Parliament once skinned of talent, is it likely that a fresh skimming would yield better cream? Besides, what is manifestly as much a failure as the Ministry, is the House of Commons. A weak Government with a strong Commons could conceivably be made to get in or get out without the country being troubled with an election; but a divided Government and a dithering House of Commons is the very marriage of imbeciles. Compare the Commons' history of every single war England has hitherto fought with this her latest. Is ever in history you will find the Executive had to encounter a Parliamentary opposition of almost as much strength as the Government itself. And there is no doubt that it was a good thing. Mere men that we are, we can have too much unity—in other words, absence of criticism. No one can say that the House of Commons has not been during the present war patriotic in this sense; but to be patriotic in this sense is to be negligent of duty. The function of the House of Commons did not cease with the declaration of war; it then assumed the dimensions of a duty greater than ever. That the House of Commons has so far consented to play echo to such an Executive as has jobbed itself into office is proof that a new Ministry alone is not enough. We must have a new House of Commons. And what, we ask, is the merit of seven over three times seven as the number of the Cabinet, if the personnel is the same as now constitutes the so-called inner Cabinet? Mr. Asquith can, if he chooses, make a sub-committee to act with himself, and tell the rest of the Cabinet to accept its decisions. The mere nominalisation of a reality always available would make little difference to the actual control of affairs.

We must deal with the suggestion hawked about the country by Mr. Bottomley and others of his sort that a fresh skimming would yield better cream? Besides, what is manifestly as much a failure as the Ministry, is the House of Commons. A weak Government with a strong Commons could conceivably be made to get in or get out without the country being troubled with an election; but a divided Government and a dithering House of Commons is the very marriage of imbeciles. Compare the Commons' history of every single war England has hitherto fought with this her latest. Is ever in history you will find the Executive had to encounter a Parliamentary opposition of almost as much strength as the Government itself. And there is no doubt that it was a good thing. Mere men that we are, we can have too much unity—in other words, absence of criticism. No one can say that the House of Commons has not been during the present war patriotic in this sense; but to be patriotic in this sense is to be negligent of duty. The function of the House of Commons did not cease with the declaration of war; it then assumed the dimensions of a duty greater than ever. That the House of Commons has so far consented to play echo to such an Executive as has jobbed itself into office is proof that a new Ministry alone is not enough. We must have a new House of Commons. And what, we ask, is the merit of seven over three times seven as the number of the Cabinet, if the personnel is the same as now constitutes the so-called inner Cabinet? Mr. Asquith can, if he chooses, make a sub-committee to act with himself, and tell the rest of the Cabinet to accept its decisions. The mere nominalisation of a reality always available would make little difference to the actual control of affairs.

The conditions of a General Election that shall be a source of strength must, however, be defined. In the first place, the Coalition must be assured that the pick of the existing Cabinet shall be retained. They are, we suppose, Mr. Asquith, Sir Edward Grey, and Lord Kitchener. The selection of anybody else in particular is a matter for the determination of these three. Next it must be put to the constituencies that the Coalition Ministry having failed, a Coalition House of Commons must be formed to create another. The process is simple and, we believe, would be congenial. Let the various party organisations in each constituency agree together and unanimously upon a man to represent them and let him be chosen from any part of England, not necessarily in the locality. Suppose, for example, that Mr. Shaw or Mr. Sidney Webb should be willing to stand yet unwilling to 'woo' a constituency, could not a constituency select one or other of them and agree to elect him without a contest? We should, if we could, invite men of reputation to offer their services as members of any constituency that chose to elect them. Neither geographical accident nor the poverty of a promising representative ought to debar a constituency from as wide a choice of talent as the country affords. In this way, too, many elections would be avoided; there need, in fact, be nothing worse than a walk-over General Election. Then we should rule out as an issue the election the conscription of men unless it were accompanied by the conscription of Capital. Mr. Asquith, Sir Edward Grey, Lord Kitchener are all, it is understood, anti-conscriptionists in the first sense; they might stick to their guns by being pro-conscriptionists in the second sense. Finally, the responsibility upon every voter ought to be clearly defined. His vote is not for war or peace, but for victory or defeat. We venture to say that if the three men we have named chose to go to the country on such conditions, reserving themselves the right subsequently to select from the new Parliament anybody, whether in office or not, and confining the nation with themselves in the responsibility of seeing the war through, not only would the nation breathe more freely, but the war would speedily be brought to an end.

CONTINUITY

No sign is made while empires pass.
The flowers and stars are still His care,
The constellations hid in grass,
The golden miracles in air.

Life in an instant will be rent
Where death is glittering blind and wild—
The Heavenly Brooding is intent
To that last instant on its child.

It breathes the glow in brain and heart.
Life is made magical.
Unf
Body and spirit are apart
The Everlasting works Its will.

In that wild orchard that your feet
In their next falling shall destroy,
Minute and passionate and sweet:
The Mighty Master holds His joy.

Though the crushed jewels droop and fade
The Artist's labours will not cease,
And of the ruins shall be made
Some yet more lovely masterpiece.

A. E.
Foreign Affairs.
By S. Verdad.

The offer of Cyprus to Greece has been made publicly after having been made privately, and for the first time the Greeks have become aware of the nature of the compensation which the Entente Powers propose to pay to their country in return for military benefits received. As the times are difficult, no doubt most people will be inclined to waive the point about bribery. Between Greece and Serbia there is a distinct understanding in the form of a signed and sealed Treaty; and, in accordance with the provisions of that Treaty, it is the duty of Greece to come to the aid of Serbia whenever Serbia is attacked by another Balkan Power. Serbia has been attacked by Bulgaria; fighting has been in progress, not only within the boundaries of Serbia, for several days; and the aid which Greece should have rendered to her ally is overdue.

When we say Greece in this connection, however, it should be made clear what Greece is actually meant. The sympathy of the Greek people for the Entente Powers and their ideals is not due to any expression attributable to the Greek Prime Minister himself, notorious. The desire of the Greek people in general to attack the Bulgarians, who make no secret of their designs on Greek territory, is equally well known. Unfortunately, this is largely due to the supineness and stupidity of the Entente Powers in the last generation, Greece, like Bulgaria and Roumania, has been provided with a Royal family of German origin and, it need hardly be said, of German sympathies. The result is, naturally enough, that there is a considerable amount of German influence at the Greek Court; and German influence means, in case of need, German bribery. It is an open secret in Athens that at least two Greek ex-Premiers have been bribed, and there is some possibility that a third has also been influenced in this way. It is known, too, that the Queen of Greece is the sister of the Kaiser; and all these facts, taken together, do not make the path of the Entente diplomats less difficult. Yet there is a very general feeling—rising in London, and most pronounced in Paris, Rome, and Petrograd—that more might have been done by the Entente Powers to make the pro-German Greek Government realise what the point of view of the Allies actually is, and to enforce their interpretation of the facts on M. Zaimis. After all, it is M. Venizelos and not M. Zaimis who has the parliamentary majority at his command; and, although parliamentary majorities do not count for much in the Balkans, the fact remains that the policy of intervention advocated by M. Venizelos would find much more favour in the country than the policy of non-intervention advocated by his successor. How the Allies can enforce their point of view in this regard, or rather how they should set about it, is another matter; but I think a way can be suggested.

The Treaty binding Greece to Serbia forms an integral part of the Balkan settlement in 1913; and by virtue of the arrangements made—arrangements to which France, Russia, England, and Italy were parties—Greece secured certain territory which had been claimed by Bulgaria, viz., a few districts in Macedonia, the Struma Valley, and, above all, the town and port of Kavalla. It is obvious that if Greece fails in respecting her treaty obligations the remaining clauses of the settlement, so far as she is concerned, fall to the ground, and the Allies would be perfectly justified in informing the Greek Government that King Constantine had no further right to include the districts mentioned in his possessions. From the standpoint of international law we are justified in doing this. More, it is our obvious duty to do so; for Serbia is our ally and Greece is, at the moment, merely our doubtful friend. But there are, as we all know, the peculiar circumstances to be taken into account. A large Austro-German force is invading Serbia, and two sections of the Bulgarian army are also invading Serbia. On the other hand, the Allies have, for the present failed at Gallipoli; the Russians have not yet recovered themselves sufficiently to make another move forward; and the offensive in the West is, for the time being, suspended. The Italians, too, are making but slow progress towards Trieste and in the Trentino, though there are natural difficulties which make it easy for us to understand why this should be so.

So far as the Greeks are concerned, however, the Central Powers and their Allies have so far the upper hand, particularly in the Near East; and hesitation is explicable, if not excusable. The Greeks fear, and with some reason, that a victory of the Central Powers in the Balkan Peninsula, even if it be only a temporary victory, will lead directly to a Bulgarian attack on Greece herself, after Serbia has been crushed, and the Government is naturally desirous of keeping the Albanian army intact. The Greek army, in a fresh condition, would be more easily able to deal with an incursion from the north or north-east than the same army weakened by preliminary, and perhaps useless, fighting against the Bulgarians now. These are undoubtedly good reasons, but they should not be allowed to count. A display of force against Bulgaria by the Allies should be enough to make even the Zaimis Ministry willing to join in the campaign with the Allies; and assuredly once the people showed definite signs of wishing to attack the Bulgarians not all the Court influence would stop them. The merchants do not want a war, because they are making large profits, and the bankers do not want war, because, I suppose, bankers are naturally timid about the future of the international finance in their control; but the bulk of the Greek people ask for nothing better than to take the field.

Failing a definite statement by the Greek Government in the course of the next few days, it becomes even more imperative that the Allies' representatives in Athens should not allow themselves to be put off any longer. If Greece is unwilling to fight for her own territory, if she is unwilling to assist her ally to fight, then, clearly, the Greek army ought not to be in a state of mobilisation. It is too much to expect that British and French troops shall advance to Serbia via Salonika, leaving a potential enemy in their rear. If a satisfactory statement is not forthcoming by, let us say, the day for which this issue of The New Age is dated, it is our duty to issue an ultimatum to the Zaimis Cabinet, pointing out and emphasising the infringement of the treaty regulations with Serbia, and demanding the disbandment of the forces within a stated period—say forty-eight hours—on pain of having to suffer a blockade of the Piraeus. Such a measure could not be called harsh; for we are justified in doing it as the law stands. Furthermore, a display of force in the Balkans—wanted, I mean, from the side of the Allies. If we do not show our armed strength there, the Balkan nations will have some reason for holding the suspicion they hold at present, viz., that Germany is capable of thinking and acting rapidly; and the Allies merely talk and make fine promises. We ought not to have allowed this impression to get about the Balkans; but that is the impression which now prevails there. Even the Serbians had Nish decorated a full week before the French troops arrived there; and the whole expedition to Salonika, secret as it has been kept in parts, has suffered from some mysterious slowness. It is satisfactory to know that, since the defection of Bulgaria, our Foreign Office has been a great deal more on the qui vive than formerly.
On the Coaxing of Neutrals.

At the moment of her entering the war there were two courses open to Great Britain: (1) strictly to fulfil her obligations towards France and Russia, while devoting all her energies to the liberation of Belgium, the cause for which she declared war on Germany; or (2) to make the war her own on every front, requisitioning every man of military age and every available pound sterling in her vast dominions.

The second course was practically barred because at the beginning of the melee the majority of English people thought of Belgium only, the one clear point of right and wrong amid a cloud of vague contentions far too dense for honest minds to penetrate; and the sense of the majority of the English people is not negligible by those who value place and power in England. The first course, therefore, was ostensibly the one adopted, citing that undertaking as the standard which we must far surpass our undertakings, but so great was our fear of the war we could be led on to the destructive side in the Balkans than all our bribes and promises and empty threats. By the way, I sometimes wonder whether M. Venizelos is quite the faithful dupe our rulers think him, and not perhaps an actor in a little play of that which we have adumbrated in Roumania.

No, nothing is more futile than our wooing of wise neutral States except the Hymn of Hate our arm-chair heroes raise whenever any State takes part against us. Turkey, in those circumstances, was straightway to be pitchforked out of Europe, beg and baguage, even her Asiatic territory was to be divided up—part of it was offered as a bribe to Greece, according to the faultless M. Venizelos; we set up a rival Sultan in Egypt and made known our project to transfer the Muslim Caliphate; thus fully justifying all the allegations which our enemies had made against us at the Porte; and all this at a time when Turkey had, in spite of all, a secret preference for England, and would have fought like a lion against us, but for our covered policy. "Little did I think that I should ever find myself in sympathy with Mr. Noel Buxton, but I do most fully sympathise with the sentiments expressed in Mr. Buxton's recent letter to the Press upon the subject of Bulgaria. For one thing, the said letter shows the writer as no mere fair weather champion of a cause which he has long espoused. For another, what he pleads is good advice: to wit, that we should not exasperate by threats and journalistic abuse a nation which is not inherently our enemy. Let us take warning by the case of Turkey, turned from a lukewarm to a serious foe, from fighting in another's cause to fighting in her own, simply by the blind, insensate folly of some English arm-chairs. We have barely escaped from that which we have called an "assured policy.""

The truth is that for several years before the war our Government, having contracted alliances which, to its thinkers and to its unthinking public, seemed, considered England safe, and further efforts needless. In the beginning of the war the two great political parties met in conference. One has a traditional inclination for the French, the other for the Germans. It was arranged (as I am told by one who knows that country) that each party, working in its own traditional direction, should do its best for Roumania, while a neutral crowd was there to demonstrate for either side as it came uppermost. When one party was in power there was an apparent rapprochement with the Entente, our diplomatists crowed loudly, and there were demonstrations in our favour in the streets of Bucharest; upon the strength of which a loan was granted to Roumania. The loan secured, the Entente party fell from power and was succeeded by the German party, when the process was repeated on the other side. "It is better than fighting," say the Roumanians; and they are perfectly right. The laugh would be on their side if it were a laughing matter. But their design is sensible and serious; namely, to avoid the horrors of the fighting if they can. They have no overwhelming love for either group of contending nations; they say the history of the Entente involves a victory of Russia in the Eastern field of war, an increase of her power to vex the Balkans, it is as certain as the sun in heaven that Roumania will not come in on the side of the Entente. And whoever thinks so will deceive himself. So why waste time and money on Roumania?

Will not our rulers stop this ignominious pleading, and do something? Here, close to us, is Belgium, still a German province, and in a fair way to become, as far as Flemings go, a contended German province, while we are wasting thousands of magnificent lives and millions of money in an altogether hopeless effort at the Dardanelles—Belgium, for whose sake we went into the war! If we should turn the Germans out of Belgium, it would tell more in our favour even in the distant Balkans than all our bribes and promises and empty threats. By the way, I sometimes wonder whether M. Venizelos is quite the faithful dupe our rulers think him, and not perhaps an actor in a little play of that which we have adumbrated in Roumania.

No, nothing is more futile than our wooing of wise neutral States except the Hymn of Hate our arm-chair heroes raise whenever any State takes part against us. Turkey, in those circumstances, was straightway to be pitchforked out of Europe, beg and baguage, even her Asiatic territory was to be divided up—part of it was offered as a bribe to Greece, according to the faultless M. Venizelos; we set up a rival Sultan in Egypt and made known our project to transfer the Muslim Caliphate; thus fully justifying all the allegations which our enemies had made against us at the Porte; and all this at a time when Turkey had, in spite of all, a secret preference for England, and would have fought like a lion against us, but for our covered policy. "Little did I think that I should ever find myself in sympathy with Mr. Noel Buxton, but I do most fully sympathise with the sentiments expressed in Mr. Buxton's recent letter to the Press upon the subject of Bulgaria. For one thing, the said letter shows the writer as no mere fair weather champion of a cause which he has long espoused. For another, what he pleads is good advice: to wit, that we should not exasperate by threats and journalistic abuse a nation which is not inherently our enemy. Let us take warning by the case of Turkey, turned from a lukewarm to a serious foe, from fighting in another's cause to fighting in her own, simply by the blind, insensate folly of some English arm-chairs. We have barely escaped from that which we have called an "assured policy.""

The truth is that for several years before the war our Government, having contracted alliances which, to its thinkers and to its unthinking public, seemed, considered England safe, and further efforts needless. In the beginning of the war the two great political parties met in conference. One has a traditional inclination for the French, the other for the Germans. It was arranged (as I am told by one who knows that country) that each party, working in its own traditional direction, should do its best for Roumania, while a neutral crowd was there to demonstrate for either side as it came uppermost. When one party was in power there was an apparent rapprochement with the Entente, our diplomatists crowed loudly, and there were demonstrations in our favour in the streets of Bucharest; upon the strength of which a loan was granted to Roumania. The loan secured, the Entente party fell from power and was succeeded by the German party, when the process was repeated on the other side. "It is better than fighting," say the Roumanians; and they are perfectly right. The laugh would be on their side if it were a laughing matter. But their design is sensible and serious; namely, to avoid the horrors of the fighting if they can. They have no overwhelming love for either group of contending nations; they say the history of the Entente involves a victory of Russia in the Eastern field of war, an increase of her power to vex the Balkans, it is as certain as the sun in heaven that Roumania will not come in on the side of the Entente. And whoever thinks so will deceive himself. So why waste time and money on Roumania?
The German and the European.

By Dr. Oscar Levy.

V.*

The GERMAN: You remember our last conversation? I held the opinion that this war was a political war—a war for the Balance of Power in Europe. ... We Germans got too strong and the other fellows combined against us. You seemed to think otherwise.

The EUROPEAN: Pardon me, I did not, but I said that the reason given by you only touched the outward cause and not the inward one. You were quite different; this is the inner cause which distinguishes this war from all others. Wars for the Balance of Power there have always been: history from grey antiquity to our own day is full of them and at certain periods reports of nothing else. But these were simple wars, wars which had no spiritual meaning.

G.: You know, everything "spiritual" frightens me.

E.: Because you are a materialist.

G.: I agree and I am even proud of it. But what then is the inner, the spiritual cause of this war? I now remember, by the way, you gave me—on parting—the somewhat enigmatic answer "Moral muddle."

E.: I did. And I really think moral muddle the inward cause. Or intellectual bankruptcy, if you like it better. Or confusion about good and evil. Our entire lack of principles, due to the neglect of those sound principles which were laid down by our great men.

G.: That is to say, of your idols: Goethe, Heine, Blake, Stendhal, Gobineau—You even called these men "divine" and thought this war was the deserved punishment of our neglect of them. ... In your high-flown language, you considered our present trouble as "the expiation for our intellectual sins" or something like it, didn't you?

E.: I did, and I am sure that I am right. This war is the consequence of our contempt of the spirit, of our neglect of ideas. ... If the world despises the spirit of great and good men, it is no wonder that it turns evil and materialistic; it is no wonder that it stands in need of a moral purification and spiritual regeneration.

G.: Out comes the holy stuff again: "materialism," "contempt of the spirit," "expiation of sins," "moral purification," "spiritual regeneration," "the world has turned evil." ... The whole vocabulary of the Christian.

E.: But remember that I think the evil due to Christianity, while the Christian considers the lack of Christianness responsible. Remember that I attribute our materialism to our idealism. ... Remember that I attribute the evil not to the sinfulness but to the weakness of the world. ... Remember that I do not blame our immorality, but our imbecility. ... Remember that my spirit is not the divine spirit of a personal God, but the godly spirit of human personalities. ... You cannot despise these divine men, you cannot hunt them, neglect them, exile them, starve them, offend them, misunderstand them, crucify them slowly by your sneers and your silence, and that for generation after generation, without the world turning evil in the end. ... No divine spirit can endure such human, or better, inhuman treatment.

G.: Excuse me interrupting the graceful flow of your eloquent speech, but I do not see how your Gobineaus and Nietzsche's and Goethes and Byrons could have kept the world from war. If you read their poetry, you might have been all of them pretty belladonne fellows and certainly no lambs. The other day I came across the second part of Goethe's "Faust," which I had read several times before without however succeeding in understanding it. I don't think I fathomed its depth this time, but if I understood anything of it, it was the author's absolute contempt for all peaceful and goody-goody morality.

E.: Such as is recommended in our holy books. Well, if you understood as much as that, you would not penetrate to the inner meaning of that masterpiece work of your poet. He was, by the way, obscure on purpose: he only wished to be understood by a few. He did not think it right to tell everybody that a humble morality is something contemptible, for it is neither charitable nor reasonable to disgust humble folks with their little virtues. ... Goethe knew that and he veiled his thought. ... But this thought, I agree with you, was anti-humble and anti-peaceful and anti-religious.

You remember that once, in an unguarded moment, he called himself a "decided non-Christian."

G.: I do. It is, no doubt, this which makes him so dear to your heart, and likewise to mine—but I do not see under these circumstances how this teaching and that of your other "divinities" could have preserved the world from the evil of the present war.

On the contrary, very much on the contrary. ... These strong and hot-headed poets seemed to like the game.

E.: The game, yes, but not this game. ... This war is a war from weakness, not from strength. ... Note the continual excuses, the external explanations, the mutual incriminations of our statesmen, and you will see that nobody really wanted it. ... The laughing lion who loves his game is conspicuous by his absence. ... It is consequently not a war for power: modern nations are not healthy enough to wage a war for power. It is not this war that Goethe or any of our other poets would have liked. ... A Napoleon making war that appealed to them, because a healthy warrior and his victory are a benefit to the world. ... That's why the poets—the true and healthy poets at least—are not averse to war and even sometimes preach it; they are governed by healthy, noble and intelligent beings, and war is one of the means—under circumstances the only one—of bringing them to the top. ... If they remain submerged it is terrible for them, because a being that is prohibited from discharging his instincts withers.

G.: I feel inclined to agree, but you are evading my question and I have to come back to my old objection. If your poets and your supermen make war and if our underdogs and our vulgarians make war too, I see no difference between the two. How do you say that the neglect of Goethe's or Nietzsche's or Blake's teaching has brought upon us this war? It would have come to the same end whatever teaching we would have adopted. Let me remind you of the epigram which you conversed in another place:

"The strong make war, the weak drift into it." Where, then, is the difference if both behave in the same way? How could any of them have preserved the peace?

E.: There is a great difference. ... A strong and noble character can make war if he thinks it right, but he can likewise seek peace if he chooses to do so. He can be relied upon, in short, for there are things he will not do, even should he lose fortune, family, position, everything or life over it. Your slave, your herdman, your democrat cannot be relied upon for he is a weakling, intellectually and morally, and you never know what weak people will do next, you can never foresee to what cowardices and compromises they will not stoop to preserve their situation. A superman may be a dangerous enemy, but he can likewise be a true friend: an underdog can never be a true friend and becomes a most impossible enemy whenever he attains the majority and majorityship.

G.: But surely you are going too far. ... You really cannot call all our rulers and presidents and diplomatists underdogs. ... This is only another proof of your habitual vice of exaggeration.

E.: If they had not accepted at least some of the values of the underdog they would not be rulers. ... The underdog would not have suffered them above, for...
they are the vast majority, and many underdogs are not only the death of the hare (you remember your German proverb?) but likewise the ruin of many a strong and noble character. But whether our rulers are real underdogs, having entirely accepted the code of the dogs, or in small measure, is it the fear of having only outwardly and hypocritically conformed to it—of one fact I am quite sure: they are entirely innocent of that divine spirit, which was given to the world by our great men, of a spirit of which all rulers ought to be deeply conscious.

G.: Which spirit is that?
E.: The spirit of the free man.
G.: But who is a free man?
E.: A free man is a man who is healthy enough to disregard the rights of other and lesser people.

If that is the characteristic of a ruler, you need not worry about their scarcity—there are plenty of such free people about, and not only amongst the rulers, but even amongst their subjects. Only they don't remain free for long, but usually go to prison.

E.: I know they do. Faust, no doubt, would go to prison to-day for having disregarded the rights of Philemon and Baucis.

But Goethe thought him a hero, nevertheless, and that not only in spite of, but on account of his crimes against Philemon and Baucis.

G.: I doubt whether you read Goethe aright on this point. But if you do, I am glad to see that our judges do not share Goethe's prejudices and do not consider all our criminals as heroes.

E.: Goethe did not consider all criminals heroes. But he knew that there was no hero incapable of being, if necessary, a criminal. . . . And he likewise knew that there is a difference between criminal and criminal, that in (Blake's words): "One law for the ox and the lion is oppression." If our judges do not know that and send a Faust to prison, it is only another proof of their entire ignorance of the divine spirit.

G.: Another proof of their atheism, as you once—in your topsy-turvy manner—called it.

E.: Absolutely. The fact is that they are Christians and Democrats, and that as such they take good care that nothing "divine on earth" can ever raise its head. . . . They are the appointed exorcisers of the divine spirit, and they have been on duty now for 2000 years.

It is small wonder that only the Christian has it.

G.: I do not see many of them either.
E.: Well, I do. . . . Remember that Democracy is Christianity for the mob and you, too, will notice them. And note that this persistent character of these democrats, which is another hall-mark of genuine Christianity.

G.: Why that?
E.: Well, Christianity being a denial of life, every Christian only keeps alive by becoming a hypocrite, by becoming a mass of contradictions. . . . They talk of pity, but they are inwardly revengeful; they boast of brotherhood, but they are untrustworthy fellows; they do homage to peace and goodwill, but set the whole world agone through their fear of each other and the weakness of their mind and character. . . . You know my definition of a Christian? A man who promises everything and keeps nothing. . . . You know what a Christian reminds me most of? Of women. They, too, look very promising at once you marry them. . . . you know what I mean. . . . Besides, a Christian's character is also a woman's: pity and revengefulness, sentimentality and cruelty, peaceful appearance and quarrelsome habits, angelic talk and devilish action. . . . Well, I suppose there is no one who should not be too hard on them. . . . If there only were not so many of them!

G.: Women, you mean?
E.: No, Christians. They are even worse than women. A woman sometimes divines a great man and will give him a good word or a kind look; while a Christian will take no notice, or, if he take notice, will call him a monster or a devil. . . . Now women rather like devils and monsters, and that puts them highly above Christians.

G.: You are getting into a humorous vein, I sec.
E.: Well, I'm glad to say I can see the funny side of things. Laughter is a remedy against despair.

G.: There is a time when you have got you, my friend. You know, that's what I always suspected in you; inward despair. How could it be otherwise with you? You have a habit of looking at all things with the eyes of a critic, and critical people cannot take the world any longer in a natural spirit. I myself, as you know, am only an ordinary person and not a bit romantic—but, you know, my firm belief is that human beings must not become too analytic and critical, that they cannot live without any aims and hopes, without some sort of optimism, in short. . . . We must go on living and acting, and we cannot do that with perpetual gloom overhanging us. . . . We must try to overcome that gloom by all possible means, for we must never waver in the belief that after all things and events will run their proper course and that humanity is progressing to a better and higher end. . . . Now, I am sure, you don't believe in any progress, and I even suspect you of believing the opposite. Hence your pessimism. One must have some sort of hope.

E.: Faith and Charity.
G.: There you are again at your desperate jokes.
E.: So you really think me a desperate joker, a gloomy pessimist, a hopeless Nihilist?
E.: Let me tell you a story, a true story from my life. . . . You remember that Saturday last year when peace or war was still in the balance? I was in London at that time, and I could even watch events at their source for I was living near your Consulate. . . . Thousands of your young countrymen were waiting before it. . . . And note that inconsistent character of these democrats, which is another hall-mark of genuine Christianity.

G.: That I understand. But not from you. You are not a patriot.
E.: No, but I am a European patriot.
G.: You should have wept tears of misery then. But perhaps you did not know yet what was in store for Europe.
E.: I did.
G.: Then you are not only a hopeless Nihilist but a cynic as well?
E.: Don't judge me before you have heard everything. . . . Do you know that terrible feeling of oppression, lassitude or giddiness which gets hold of some people when the glass is low or when a thunderstorm is approaching?
G.: I have heard of such things.
E.: Well, now fancy someone living for ten, twenty, twenty-five years under the apprehension of a thunderstorm, an accident, which is always threatening but will never come down. Fancy him to be surrounded by people who are quite comfortable and do not seem to notice that anything is wrong with the weather. Imagine his vain attempts to get a breath of fresh air amid growing excitement, and it was nearing midnight. Suddenly an official stepped out of the door and read a message to the crowd, whereupon a salvo of "hochs" and "hurrahs" went up into the peaceful air of that respectable Russell Square. . . . "What is it?" I asked a man, who, waving his hat in patriotic glee, went on. . . . "Germans have declared war upon Russia." Tears came into my eyes—tears of joy.

G.: That I understand. But not from you. You are not a patriot.
E.: No, but I am a European patriot.
G.: You should have wept tears of misery then. But perhaps you did not know yet what was in store for Europe.
E.: I did.
G.: Then you are not only a hopeless Nihilist but a cynic as well?
E.: Don't judge me before you have heard everything. . . . Do you know that terrible feeling of oppression, lassitude or giddiness which gets hold of some people when the glass is low or when a thunderstorm is approaching?
G.: I have heard of such things.
E.: Well, now fancy someone living for ten, twenty, twenty-five years under the apprehension of a thunderstorm, an accident, which is always threatening but will never come down. Fancy him to be surrounded by people who are quite comfortable and do not seem to notice that anything is wrong with the weather. Imagine his vain attempts to get a breath of fresh air amid growing excitement, and it was nearing midnight. Suddenly an official stepped out of the door and read a message to the crowd, whereupon a salvo of "hochs" and "hurrahs" went up into the peaceful air of that respectable Russell Square. . . . "What is it?" I asked a man, who, waving his hat in patriotic glee, went on. . . . "Germans have declared war upon Russia." Tears came into my eyes—tears of joy.
the better. . . The first ray of hope in spite of the gloomiest of skies. . . You understand the tears of joy now? You understand that I am not a pessimist but an optimist, only an optimist with better reasons than you?

E.: Candidly, I don't understand you. . . I do not see how this war can bring a change for the better. . . I fear it will be a change for the worse. . . An immense amount of property will be destroyed, millions of lives lost and thousands of millions of pounds thrown away. . . It is an expensive way of clearing the air. It might have been done cheaper and better.

E.: Impossible. It was the only way. Oh, you would not say so if you had suffered from that poisonous atmosphere before the war as I did. A hundred times I have been asking myself: how could anyone go on living in such a stinking world! A world full of fat bourgeois, screaming women, starving poor, revolutionaries led by decadent dynasts, mad reformers, and impotent talkers! A world without health and beauty, without spirit and courage, without true joy and without true grief. A world aiming at wretched comfort, at last peace and happiness at any price. A world which had room for anyone, nursed everyone, pampered everyone, respected everyone, obeyed and honoured everyone— but hated and suppressed only one sort of being—a man. For such an age and there is no other that is a remedy and that is for it is only in times of danger that a man can show his value, and thus war brings men to honour again.

G.: So you are for war at any price, as others are for peace at any price. What a bloodthirsty creature you are.

E.: No, I am not for war at any price. I quite see the evil side of it; for there is nothing in the world which is not good and evil at the same time. I likewise recognize that some ages do not need wars. There are men, and there have been times in history, who or were by nature healthy, upright, daring in body and spirit, audacious in action, and, what is even more, in thought: such men, ages or races stand in no need of the war- tonic. But for our sick rulers, our self-satisfied, and without true grief.

G.: I am afraid you have been reading too much of your strong poetry—of your Byron, Blake, Stendhal, and Nietzsche. . . That's, at least, how I explain to myself your martial attitude. If however, other people hear you talk like that, they will say that you have become worse than a German. . . You remember, we are always reproached with being adverse to the peaceful development of Humanity, with having glorified Mars in poetry and prose. . . Some of our writers even called war, as you seem to do, a "biological necessity." Well, some hot-headed Germans may have thought so, but the majority of our nation, I am sure, would have preferred peace to war. And now it is as if you would think of him, has preserved peace for ever so long, and even now, in an address to his nation, he swears before God and history that his conscience is clear, that he did not want this war.

E.: May I be allowed, my German friend, to give you a kind piece of advice? . . . Never pay as much attention to mere opinions as to the speakers, for all views differ according to the mouth that utters them. . . Have you ever noticed that man and woman, speaking about love, do not mean the same thing? . . . Look at an expression on a man's or woman's face, it means "surrender." . . . In the same way, "war" in my mouth has not the same meaning as in that of a German. . . You do me an injustice, for you confound the sober thoughts of a kind physician with the unhealthy dreams of his patient. . . Frankly spoken: What do the wild thoughts or dreams of your thinkers and writers matter? What does it matter whether they praise war or praise peace, or, as they sometimes do, both in the same breath? You are not to be trusted in whatever you say or dream because you are the most unreasonable nation of Europe. And you are a representative of that nation—hence, no doubt, his last- ing popularity. . . I quite believe him, by the way, though very few people outside Germany will do so, when he says that he did not want this war. And I believe him, because I know the unhappy German character, because I know your unhappy history. It is the tragedy—or shall I say the tragic-comedy?—of all your men of action that they are driven to do things which they did not want to do. . . And in their misery of self-reproach they all appeal to their God and their conscience and persuade themselves that "it is quite clear." Your Emperor is only following glorious ex- amples. . . Think of Luther, who set the world afame with his attack upon Rome. . . And think of all the pangs of conscience which he had to endure when he saw the consequences of his deeds: the peasant revolt, the Anabaptists of Münster, the quarrels and wars with his own co-religionists. . . And remember his appeals to God and his conscience that he had done right. . . I have often thought of Bismarck and your Empire, a man outwardly happy and successful, who at the end of his life became the victim of the blackest melancholia, who repeated that he had caused three wars, who was haunted by the remembrance of their 80,000 victims, and who was even plagued with the greatest doubts about the lasting value of his creation? And think of his Lutheran confession in the end: "Doch das habe ich mit meinem Gotte abzumachen." ("But I have to settle that with my God.") So his conscience was clear, too, for he was sure, of course, to come to terms with his God. . . Even the Emperor E. . . of this caricature of Bismarck, whom Bismarck disliked, as one dislikes one's own caricature. . . "My conscience is clear, before God and history I swear: I did not want this war." . . . They all did not want it, and they all did it nevertheless. . . But you know, my German friend, what this means in plain language? They all did not know what they were doing! . . . No wonder then that, while you Germans as a nation are somewhat lax in religious matters, all your rulers, and that without any exception, stick to Jesus Christ like glue. . . And now you go and impotent talkers! A world without health and happiness, without true grief.

G.: Oh, what an avalanche of abuse! You know, if I had had an idea that you had such an inward dislike of everything German, I would never have allowed myself to be drawn into a conversation with you. . . One can only talk to people with whom one has something in common. . . I spoke to you because you posed as a good European, because your opinions were not those of the newspapers, because you were able to see good qualities in our nation, because you had apparently tried to reconcile . . . And now you go and with your own prejudices coming up, prejudices which are, no doubt, different from those of the crowd, but even more dangerous than those of our enemies. I openly confess that I am able to laugh about these madmen who accuse us of immorality, criminality, Machiavellianism, and Paganism. I laugh, because their lies are too clumsy to hurt me. But you are a more subtle opponent and your praise and fairness are even worse than all their vituperations and calumnies. . . No, no, you had better give me back my world of opinion! It is a good world and it is a grand world. . . . I am sorry, I repeat, that I spoke to you for so long. . . I am sorry that I shook hands with you. . . . Fancy you thinking all our writers mad dreamers! Fancy you thinking our glorious history due to men who did not know what
they were doing! Fancy you thinking us the mischief-makers of Europe for centuries. Is your opinion, I suppose, we ought to be exterminated as so much vermin, eh?

E.: Pardon, my German friend, whatever you think of me—don't think me a fanatic. Nothing, I assure you, is more foreign to my nature: I leave brutality and fanaticism to the patriots of the hour, be they French, German, English, or Turks. If I called your great men the mischievous makers of Europe, I am far from condemning them as so much vermin, for I happen to understand them, and all understanding excludes fanaticism. I know that these men were the victims of circumstances over which they have no control—religious people always—all I want to say, and do say, is this: that great men are not the victims, but the masters, of circumstances.

G.: It is a poor consolation to me that you understand them or excuse them. They are mischief-makers all the same—that's what you said at least.

E.: Great and innocent mischief-makers, I called them...

G.: That makes matters even worse.

E.: No, it does not, for all great mischief-makers have something majestic about them—and they certainly have their place in this wonderful universe of ours. I am not mean enough not to know it. I know as well as your poet Goethe, who in his "Faust" lets God the Father even speak kindly to the very Devil, a fact which the Devil acknowledges not without some sense of gratification...

G. (mockingly): Thank you, God Father, for speaking kindly to the devil, who this time is not a bit grated. His "mischief" weighs heavily upon his conscience, for the German devil differs from all others in possessing one.

E. (sincerely): But, my German friend, don't you see that it is not you I want to say, but mischief you have been doing, meets with my entire approval? Haven't I told you of my tears of joy over your "criminal attack upon your neighbours"? Haven't I spoken to you of my firm conviction that the war declared by you upon sick and neurotic Europe was the only means of saving this Europe? That your famous German cure of "blood and iron" was the only possible one for the poisoned body of our civilisation?... Far from wishing to excommunicate you, I mean to hold you, from the bottom of my heart... Far from condemning you so hool, I shall eternally sing your praise to Heaven... Far from hating you, I should like to kiss your hand; that is the hand of a blind Holder... the dice are thrown, at last—what a relief!... That Europe which we and our ancestors have known can be no more and will be no more. The hollowness of all the values it was based upon has been made clear to every thinking brain and seeing eye... You yourself, the people most influenced by these old values, have shown us, your unwilling admirers and disciples, where they lead to, and by giving this example you are not only the mischief-makers but likewise the physicians of Europe.

G.: Unconscious physicians, you mean; do not sugar your pills too much.

E.: Well, unconscious physicians, but what does it matter as long as we get cured? And we will get cured; may the cure take ever so long.

G.: So you think we are in for a long war?

E.: We are in for many long wars until the goal Europe is striving after is reached.

G.: And which is this goal?

E.: Europe is looking for new Masters, and it will find them in the end.
We speak of the laws of Manu, of the Mosaic Code, of the Code Napoléon, and so on. Was Manu, Moses, or Napoléon a tyrant? The tyrant, says Señor de Maetzu, is "power set free!"; here power harnessed to a purpose, and therefore not tyrannical, according to Señor de Maetzu's definition. But if we were not to tyrannize according to Señor de Maetzu's definition, it must have been free, which it certainly was not. Then where are we? Obviously, there is a contradiction here. But it is not a contradiction here. It is said that the consequence of my definition is that the power of Manu, etc., in promulgating their Laws, was not tyrannical but free. But my definition says that tyranny is "power set free." The doctrine of it is that if the power of Manu was tyrannical, it was free; and as it was not tyrannical it was not free. Tyranny, said I, is the liberty of others; liberty, our own tyranny. There is a contradiction because "A. E. R." has fallen into the common fallacy of "changing the premises." In his first clause he accepts my identification of liberty and tyranny, and says that the power of Manu was not tyrannical in promulgating his Laws, for it was "harnessed to a purpose." In his second clause he denies the identification of liberty and tyranny, and says that power set free is "power set free," acting in two opposite directions. When it hurts us we call it "tyranny," when it obeys our caprice, "liberty." As for the power still exercised by the Codes of Manu, Moses, and Napoleon, I will say, it is tyrannical in so far as it compels us to do good things; but it is "tyrannical" if it compels us to do evil things on the sole ground that they are commanded by Manu, Moses, or Napoleon. Who commands, demands; but that which is commanded is good only when it is good. And may the reader forgive me all this tautology?

Plato believed that he had refuted Protagoras when he said that the same idea had to be either cold or hot, although some men might think it cold and others hot. Celsus, Réaumur, and Fahrenheit afterwards invented thermometers, which seem to confirm Plato's opinion. If all men withheld their assent from truth, they would not on that account have diminished its value; they would only have diminished their own value. Nevertheless, Socrates records a decree that it is tyrannical to compel us to do good things, because he discovered objective truth. History says nothing which should lead us to believe that Socrates was physiologically a decadent. It describes him as one of the toughest and boldest soldiers in Athens, capable of all personal arguments, and dying the most beautiful death that ever closed the eyes of man. History will not be able to say as much of Friedrich Nietzsche.

But use the pen better stop. Those who believe in the primacy of things may use personal arguments when they are angry, just like those who believe in the primacy of men. But what the former cannot believe is that personal arguments invalidate a proposition. Nietzsche's theses must be examined by themselves, whether Nietzsche was mad or sane. The proposition that two and two are four is equally true whether it is traced in the sands or is sculptured in marble, whether it is said by a sane man or a madman; whether it is whispered by the lover in the dearth of his beloved, or is uttered by a drunkard strangling his mother in a fit of delirium tremens. And moral and political truths are not less true than the physico-mathematical. The difference is extrinsic to the thing. It consists, in the first place, in the fact that the physico-mathematical truths are useful to us, or at least harmless. But moral and political truths may be fatal to us if our position is based on lies. "A. E. R." is not right when he says that truth is "destructive of social life. He would have had said that truth is destructive when a society is founded essentially on lies. If it be true, for instance, that German society of the present is based on the mythical belief that its Great General Staff has foreseen everything, it is possible that the knowledge of the truth will destroy the German Empire. But this only provides one reason more for desiring its destruction.

Another difference consists in the method of proving truths. We can prove physico-mathematical truths by crucial experiments. Politico-moral truths do not admit of direct proof. Although they are as true as others, our belief in them cannot be of the same kind, because they are only susceptible of indirect proof, by appeal to Universal History. They are proved by way of examples, and examples are different from experiments in that they cannot be absolutely isolated from the context of social life. But their lesson is clear enough to confirm us in our thesis. For, what is one of the practical results derived from the position which we may denominate as the "principles of the primacy of men? We who affirm the primacy of things say that propositions of social power should not be given to men by virtue of subjective rights, but by virtue of their capacity for the function which they have to fulfill. Those who affirm the primacy of men say that the power of a society in the choice of those who are entitled to exercise this power is a power of a social chief. Others say, on the contrary, that the right of birth from which the social positions of power are derived, or that there are in some men certain gifts of Nature which give them the right to command, without the necessity of the jurisdiction in which their command is exerted. As for the position of the judicial system, it is clear enough, and it is evident that the right to judge is a right to pronounce on the cases of these enemies of studying things come even to say, like "A. E. R.," that: "To suggest that society 'gives' anything is really absurd. . . . If a man have not the gift of command, for example, civil society give him the power of a chief?" says Senor de Maeztu. The temptation is in the affirmative. Within the last few days General Munro has been appointed to command the expedition at the Dardanelles. Did he appoint himself? You may say that he has been promoted through the exercise of his personal power. Let us hope that he possesses this personal power; and also a special knowledge of the Dardanelles problem. But the officer who was entrusted with the landing at Suvla Bay has been superseded. Here is obviously a case in which society gave power to a man who did not know how to exercise it. And the Highest War Lord in Germany was not nominated through his "gift of command," but because he happened to be the eldest son of the Emperor Frederick III.

It is not difficult to discover why the system still prevails of conferring social power upon certain men by virtue of subjective reasons, such as birth; or romantic reasons, such as the gift of command, magnetism, etc. By this method there is no need to prove the practical results derived from the position of individualists, as there would be in an "objectivised" society, in which the classes would be exclusively constituted around things: railways, mercantile marine, national defence, agriculture, cattle-raising, industry, education, the post-office, scientific investigation, art, etc., and in which the hierarchies: apprentices, journeymen, masters, and heads of the Guilds, would be formed in accordance with the actual capacities of the men. You need not take the slightest trouble to choose as Minister a man for the simple reason that his great-grandfather rendered eminent services to the country; and five minutes' talk at a tea-party is sufficient to reveal to us the "brilliancy" of the "brilliant" man. The brilliant man. Oh, this most fatal and most feminine of superstitions! But to nominate a man for a function by virtue of his capacity to fulfil it, is necessary that the men who nominate him should themselves be acquainted with the function up to a certain point. Hence the difficulty of the Guild idea.

"Can any man be just?" asks "A. E. R." And he tells us the following story. I must thank him for it, as for the interest he takes in my writings. "Unjust?" said Shaw once at a debate. "Of course I'm unjust. I'm not God Almighty." Splendid; but that is precisely my point. There surely in the world one just man we should not need to inquire what just things are.
We should go to him and ask him for justice, or the newspapers; and when he had given it to us, we should say to the thinkers and the investigators: "You need not trouble yourselves or us any more. You may rest." The difficulty consists precisely in that there are no just men, no truthful men; but only just actions and true propositions among unjust actions and false propositions. How can it be that great men are coming to solve the problems of justice and truth for us? These are special functions, which can be fulfilled only by specialists. But I notice that "A. E. R." does not preach the just man to us, or the truthful man, or the probable. In a country which you love there was once a retired general in a provincial city, because he had personally the gift of command. His capacity for work was enormous. He possessed also the gift of persuasive speech; his patriotism was noble and exalted; his honesty immaculate. By virtue of all these merits, he was entrusted with the most honourable function of the country, that upon which the national existence depended. But precisely because this man possessed the gift of command, and because his other virtues gave him great prestige, he was able to impose his will upon that of the experts, and to "plunge his country" into an expedition which has cost it, uselessly, warships, human life, and money.

In another country which you do not love there was a general who had prepared for forty-five years to command. He had refined men of the capital. This old soldier—a grumbler and an authoritarian—spent the greater part of the day in drinking horrible mixtures of brandy and beer, letting the froth fall over his chin, his collar, and his coat. But this general knew one thing well, and one thing only. He had spent twenty or thirty years of his life in finding out the best way of taking advantage of the nature of the ground in one province of his country, so that, with a few troops, he might be able to hurl back the invading enemy. No one ever believed that an opportunity would arise in which this general could display his knowledge. His speciality was regarded as the mere knack of a craft. Nevertheless, there came a moment when the enemy invaded the very territory which this general had always had in his mind. The General Staff, whose best generals were busily engaged elsewhere, remembered the old crank, and entrusted him with the function for which he had been preparing himself during the best years of his life. And the result was satisfactory from the point of view of the General Staff.

But, of course, the Germans do not possess a monopoly of the objective principle. Why do you call your best service "The silent Navy"? Because in it the men are immersed in their problems and in their ships. You scarcely know the names of your naval commanders. That usually happens when things are all right. The Germans, on the other hand, have made of Hindenburg their national idol. Because he was able to win battles on ground he knew, they thought he could also win battles on ground he did not know; and they have invested him with social powers so vast that he can overcome the adverse opinions of other generals as good as himself. This error is probably going to cost the German millions of lives. Because a man is good in something, it does not follow that he is good in everything.

Noblemen are not the measure of things, but things are the measure of men.

Gilders of the Chains.

By Ivor Brown.

VII.—HAROLD BEGBIE.

The arrival of the German Empire synchronised prettily with the arrival of its most formidable critic, and it was in 1871 (if we may trust "Who's Who") that the causes of God, of Britain, and of Liberalism were enriched and for ever fortified by the birth of the infant Begbie. From this it may be deduced that last autumn Mr. Begbie was forty-three years of age. Now last autumn a battalion of Sportsmen was raised in Great Britain, and the promoters called for patriotic men up to forty-five. Was Mr. Begbie dead? Or was he so busy writing recruiting poems that he could not find time to recruit himself? What will you lack, Harold, what will you lack? Telling other people to do dangerous and unpleasant things which you are not prepared to do yourself is a common habit in Fleet Street, and a nasty one. But let us be charitable. Let us suppose that Mr. Begbie and his converts were not joining the great adventure, which he himself was advertising on the noble lines of "no fight, no kiss." Let us suppose that his veils are as varicolored as his verse, and his marching as lame as his metre.

It is not merely as a poet—and who would deny the highest tribute to the author of the Handy-Man and Prussian Vulture Scream of Culture, etc.?—but rather as a sturdy champion of a sceptic-battered deity and of that deity's Liberal politics that Mr. Begbie claims our attention. It is when our Mr. George is fitting some new Prussian chains upon the British people that Harold steps up to gild them; it was when the followers of the late Mr. Foote had consigned the deity to pot that Harold so cleverly demonstrated that we were all "earthenware" in "the hands of the Potter." And so when the Fleet Street batteries of Lloyd need powder and the great heart of George needs a puff, a wire, per chance, is sent to that rather Kaiserliches, Königliches address, Begbie, Hartfield.

Let us consider the published works of this notable gilder. They show signs of a terrific versatility. He has proved the existence of God in a dialogue and celebrated the Coronation of George V in an ode. He has colligated (sic) a Bed-book of Happiness and dealt with "The Unmarried Mother and the Unwanted Child" and written on "The Wolf and the Ordinary Man and the Extraordinary Thing; also Everychild, a Christian morality. Nor has he neglected the mission-field, having left us The Happy Christ and Other Sheep.

One gathers that the main object of Mr. Harold Begbie is to show that God not only exists afar and above, but works in our midst, and that his chief weapon of advance is the Great Liberal Party. He is, for instance, "a Socialist," and believes in fellowship. But his Socialism "is not the mechanical Socialism of a distracted political economy." O dear no, as that more excellent gilder, Mr. Robey, would remark. Personally I do not pretend to understand what exactly is meant by "the mechanical Socialism of a distracted political economy." But, as far as can be seen, Mr. Begbie dislikes hard thinking on the wage-system and its effects, and thinks we had better concentrate on Love. This is well borne out by one of his later poems, where he writes with evident approval of the working-man who remarks: "But whenever I have knocked against a German, common sense has made me hate him worse than Cain." If anyone disputes my assertion that this is part of a poem, is it not discharged in Firing Lines and Other Reinforcements?

You see the unshot of it all. We are to have Reform...
and Religion. Clear thinking about the economic basis of society involves "distraction." It might bring us up against some nasty conclusions very damaging to Mr. George and his capitalist masters. We might wonder whether those week-ends at Walton Heath were really all devoted to very important causes of the Poor, Dear Poor: we might ponder on the Riddell of the Links. No, we must not be sceptical either about George or about God. Again, the workers must want liberty and justice, of course, for the Liberal Party is a dispenser of these things they must demand actual things, honest, vulgar things like money and leisure in stated amounts, for then we are told that "Democracy is a greater peril than plutocracy when its activities are governed by the principles of materialism." Shame on you, South Wales. Mr. Asquith will not be dictated to on the way he spends his income, but the poor must eat less meat, mustn't they, Harold? It is as well to suspect rich men who accuse the democracy of materialism. But perhaps Mr. Begbie will follow the example of Mr. George and explain that he is not a rich man. Perhaps not . . . and yet . . . ask Hodder.

It is all so simple. If things are bad, if the wage-system has flung you into a festering slum and condemned you to slave in semi-starvation for a pillar of the Poor, Dear Poor: there is always religion. If the State, burdened and shackled by its horde of outcasts and sinners, would march freely and efficiently to its goal, must be at the hands of religion that relief is sought. That is the Begbie view. Socialism won't help us. Revolution won't help us. Only Faith can mend the Earthenware broken on you, South Wales. Mr. Asquith will not be dictated to on the way he spends his income, but the poor must eat less meat, mustn't they, Harold? It is as well to suspect rich men who accuse the democracy of materialism. But perhaps Mr. Begbie will follow the example of Mr. George and explain that he is not a rich man. Perhaps not . . . and yet . . . ask Hodder.

A Woman in Industry.
By Alice Smith.

The National Guildsmen who write for The New Age are hostile to the entrance of women into industry, and that mainly for two reasons: That industry is not good enough for us, and that we are raising complications in the business of emancipating the workers, and are thus a menace to the men as potential blacklegs.

As against these two reasons, I advance two why women not only should remain in industry but should enter in increasing numbers are, the will to live, and a capacity for mental development.

In support of the first, the will to live, I will quote my own case, which is typical of many women engaged in industry, and of many more who ought to be. I am a Lancashire cotton operative, born, with no male relatives who could afford to keep me, they having as much as they can manage to maintain their more immediate dependents. I am unmarried, and am not aware of any rush of applicants eager for the job of altering my present status in this respect. What, then, am I to do in case of being denied access to industry? It seems to me that there are but two courses open to me. One, the clearest and most merciful, to go to the chemist for a dose of poisons and the alternative, to go on the streets for a dose of disease. But I do not want either of these two alternatives. I have the will to live, and, bad as is industry under present conditions, I choose it in preference to these, and should put up a strong fight for my choice.

I will be perfectly frank on this matter. After a day's strenuous assertion of economic independence I often feel more inclined to sleep than to praise it; but, still, I know that this exhausted condition is not due to my sex. But to the present men, the social system, the devils, are just as tired. And there are things that are harder to bear than physical exhaustion, and one of these is mental bondage, a condition that goes hand in hand with woman's economic dependence on man. Probably the National Guildsmen think it madness for the part of women to prefer toiling in industry to being kept in ease and comfort at home (when it is possible), just as I might think it madness on their part to write for The New Age for little or no remuneration, when they might be getting fat cheques by providing tripe suppers at the Northcliffe refreshment bar, if I did not understand why they do it.

So, while my worship at the shrine of industry inspires me with no devotional ecstasy, with one arm around a man's neck and the other hand in his pocket, inspires me with positive loathing, and I choose the path of greater satisfaction which leads me to the industry and greater mental freedom. And because of this will to live, which includes the desire for self-expression, it will be impossible to keep women out of industry given the chance of the open door, and the employers have already opened the door to some extent in the past, and at present are actively engaged in opening it wider still. But all women do not regard themselves as chattel slaves, it may be argued. No, neither do all working men regard themselves as wage-slayes, to our pity, disgust or despair, according to temperament. And that brings me to my second reason for the inclusion of women in industry—our capacity for mental development.

It has been argued that women are potential blacklegs. Quite so. I have also known blacklegs of the other sex. But, then, women are more difficult to organise than men, they vary so much in the spirit of association. And no wonder, after their long record of isolation. Association is initiated for the promotion of mutual interests, and the women's interests have lain within the four walls of her home; therefore, the idea of association has not been engendered in her mind. But thought is not a sex function, neither do ideas come from some mysterious source inaccessible to women. We who have the faculty of thought get our ideas from

THE END.
material conditions (Hegelians, please note), and when
workers enter industry and into association with other
workers, they get the idea of association. The men
women enter industry and into association with other
arose through the oppression levied on all in common
were not born with the innate idea of combination.

Guildsmen that the women will postpone the millennium
Guildsmen advocate, first of all, the Industrial Union.
idea will take root;"

affairs. And that is where they would make
association controls the workers in the initial processes
organised in the same association as myself, and this
mule spinners are on strike. I fancy I can hear you
say, "I'll have blackleg. What did I tell you?" But
spinning frame, which is operated by females, huge mills
full of these machines that can go on working when the
mule spinners are on strike. I fancy I can hear you say, "It's the female blacklegs. What did I tell you?"
But wait, my spinners would be as likely to work during a ring spinners' dispute, except for one reason. They can't. The ring spinners are organised in the same association as myself, and this association controls the workers in the initial processes of cotton spinning, and they cannot work without us. It is our association that can stop all the cotton spinning mills in Lancashire. The moral is obvious. The women should have been organised with the men. To ignore them was a mistake, and, instead of the banishment of women from industry being a solution of the blackleg problem, I, for one, do sincerely believe that it will be an aggravation of the problem.

That women can develop a sense of industrial solidarity, with no thought of deserting the men in times of crisis, I can vouch for on the evidence of my own society. There are comparatively few men engaged in our particular department, and the members of the society is about the ratio of at least six females to one male. The male members do different work to the females (more dangerous and laborious), so that we could not blackleg them directly. But their work is not very skilled, and an intelligent man could learn it in a week or two. This, taken in conjunction with the fact that only a few are engaged in one factory, opens up possibilities of strike-breaking if the females were willing to work. But this never happens. We stick with the men always, with never a thought of black-

legging, directly or indirectly. And the weavers are the same. In that department male and female do exactly the same work for the same wages, and the preponderance of males is, I believe, even greater than in the cardroom, because there is no backsliding. And we have higher wages lists than many adult male workers in other occupations. I hope from the foregoing that the idea will not arise that Lancashire is a paradise for workers. It is not. There is work in Lancashire, my friends, as well as money. I am merely trying to show that the blackleg menace is not a matter of sex but of organisation, and that women are capable of organisation.

More Letters to My Nephew.

III.—CONCERNING POLITICS.—(continued).

My Dear George,—This Placentia Estate, so well ordered, so exquisitely situated, is Rafael's complete justification. He chose the better part when he forsook politics and settled here Yet, when I consider the condition of affairs at home and the type of politician who guides our destinies, I am jealous of this place and find myself ardently wishing that Geoffrey Raymond's acute brain and serene spirit were placed at the service of the Mother Country. This wish is accompanied by the desiqueting thought that there are probably others of equal attainments and fine temper who have retired or never entered public life because of the vitiating influence of impure economic considerations.

I think I told you in my last letter of a strange remark of Rafael's illustrating the confusion between politics and economics. He said that if he could discuss the humanities of education and technical instruction without the interferences of money he might return to England. I have since hit upon a passage in National Guilds' confirming Rafael's view, but I am quoting it with an interior purpose:

"We appear to be doomed to oscillate in our national education between the humanistic and the technical, between the civic and the industrial, between the literary and the commercial; with small satisfaction to either party, and with disaster in the end to the nation as a whole."

I do not think that the truth of this criticism can be seriously contested. It appears to me to be written by a man who knows education from the inside. It is a terrible comment upon the spiritual condition of England. But change the word "humanistic" into political and "technical" into economic. Now read again:

"We appear to be doomed to oscillate in our national life to oscillate between the political and the economic, between the civic and the industrial, with small satisfaction to either party, and with disaster in the end to the nation as a whole."

Is not the parallel complete? Is it not deadly?

Observe that the inculcation of the humanities is so beautiful that we should desire it; technical instruction is essential; political life is vital; economic development, if not equally vital, is at least a tremendous part of our national anatomy. We appear in these later times to have become so muddy-brained that we do not distinguish between these vital essences; we indiscriminately mix them in one crucible, "with disaster in the end to the nation as a whole."

I wish, my boy, I were as young as you, with your chances. A mission of national clarification, of definition and limitation of functions, inevitably leading to the release of the spirit from degrading bondage: if you are intent upon a public career compare such a mission with the mean and paltry shifts of petty politics. If you choose the former, God speed you; if the latter, may you be doomed.

The assumption still prevails in Great Britain that our political leaders are wholly free from the influence of the "interests." The assumption is of some value, because it is at least a recognition that spiritual con-
siderations (politics, rightly understood, is a nice balance of spiritual truths) prevail over material considerations. Alas! It is only an assumption. If we could buy our politicians in the illicit sense, we might rectify the evil, by changing them, or by a Fridge's purge. In that sense, however, our politicians are not really venal. The evil is more deeply rooted; they, one and all, believe in the essential justice and wisdom of the existing régime. The "interests" are dominant, because the politicians see no reason why they shouldn't be; protesting their independence, they bow to the fact; they welcome it. It is not hypocrisy; it is heresy.

The influence upon character of this hopelessly inconsistent posture of affairs is not far to seek. Why is it commonly said that political promises are mere piecemeal? Why are national treaties regarded as the first act in a drama of national perfidy? No proof is required. It would be easy to adduce several thousands of them at any general election. It suffices that there is universal incredulity in political promises. Politicians' assertions are regarded precisely as quack doctors! In plain English politics is a conspiracy of platform lies and screened intrigue. Gentlemen naturally avoid it. The vicious circle in which politicians move is beyond description. John Smith is a candidate, making certain promises. After a few years, he is reminded that his promises remained unhonoured. Asked for an explanation, he says that he did his best but the interests were too strong. "Then why didn't you resign?" "Oh, that would do no good, for if I am re-elected we are no better off, and if I am defeated we are worse off."

The first effect, then, of the subjugation of ideas by money is that a morally low type of politician gains ascendancy—some one by cunning and falsehood runs hack and hew our way up the winding stairway.

"When one regards the self-satisfied pumpkins and manikins who sit on the Labour benches in Parliament, it is impossible to realise that they are the illegitimate offspring of a movement which in the late 'eighties and early 'nineties drew to it a legion of generous young men to whom it seemed to be regeneration and life, after the deathly influence of the Gladstone period. Very willingly did they sacrifice themselves. Nothing was too humble for them to do. They freely spent time, money, and their own lives. To them it was no political adventure; it was a sacrament. Emancipation! Each and all, their elastic step betokened a new constitution in the waistcoat pocket. And none was of a more generous mind, none more enthusiastic, than Richard Tudor.

The last of an old and distinguished Welsh family, he carried his breeding lightly but palpably in speech and bearing. He was a Civil servant with a small private income. He lived simply; his wants were few. His main expenditure was on books and music. Who can tell what went into his spiritual and intellectual bearing. He was a Civil servant with a small private income. He lived simply; his wants were few. His main expenditure was on books and music. Who can tell what went into his spiritual and intellectual bearing. He was a Civil servant with a small private income. He lived simply; his wants were few. His main expenditure was on books and music.

When one regards the self-satisfied pumpkins and manikins who sit on the Labour benches in Parliament, it is impossible to realise that they are the illegitimate offspring of a movement which in the late 'eighties and early 'nineties drew to it a legion of generous young men to whom it seemed to be regeneration and life, after the deathly influence of the Gladstone period. Very willingly did they sacrifice themselves. Nothing was too humble for them to do. They freely spent time, money, and their own lives. To them it was no political adventure; it was a sacrament. Emancipation! Each and all, their elastic step betokened a new constitution in the waistcoat pocket. And none was of a more generous mind, none more enthusiastic, than Richard Tudor.

The last of an old and distinguished Welsh family, he carried his breeding lightly but palpably in speech and bearing. He was a Civil servant with a small private income. He lived simply; his wants were few. His main expenditure was on books and music. Who can tell what went into his spiritual and intellectual bearing. He was a Civil servant with a small private income. He lived simply; his wants were few. His main expenditure was on books and music.
and only deprives us of honour should we prove unworthy. Hints of a Gregorian chant remind us that we are passing into the Christian era. "Is it peace?" plaintively pipes the treble; "War and rapine and murder," thunders the bass, "not peace but a sword." Mankind is in pain and travail; the thought of it sombly beats against our hearts by an ever-recurrent minor note. Courage! The Marseilleise are marching on Paris. A new birth in a flood of blood! Horror gradually submits to brutal strength, which in the guise of a dictator strikes left and right. "How long, O Lord, how long?" Yet hope prevails; the kindly earth yields its fruit; man's labour is not in vain; beauty is not destroyed; its eyes shine, yet with saddened memories of monstrous wrongs monstrosity avenged. Birds sing; water mirthfully trills its way over the mountain ledges; the winds sing a song of cleanliness and regeneration.

For some years did Richard Tudor live this life, modest and uniting. Ambitious men exploited him, ate at his table, picked his brains and forgot him. But a time came when his gorge rose. Socialism had asserted itself; of its stimulating effect there could be no doubt. "Let us now be faithful in great things as we have been in small and we are at the threshold of a new era," he would say. Came the political lure. A prominent Labour Socialist paid him a visit. "The cause will keep them clean," replied the Labourist. "The cause can only keep them clean by keeping us out of it," insisted Tudor. "I want to do something before I die," said the Labourist. "I would rather die than do that," said Tudor quietly. "I am sorry you take that line," answered the politician, "because we think this division should be fought. Indeed, we have reached an understanding with the Liberals that if we leave them alone somewhere else they will leave us alone here."

"What's the name of the candidate? Judas?"

"My name has been suggested. My Union will find the money."

"Will you have a drink before you go?"

"Don't mind if I do," said the obtuse fool.

Tudor scornfully poured him out some whiskey and soda, standing stiff and distant whilst his guest drank. "Not half bad. So-long!"

Tudor saw the work of years, into which he had put his vitality, his brilliant brain, his mordant thought, his soul, shattered at one blow by a vulgar little ignoramus backed by a rich trade union. He lay back in his chair, crushed and heartbroken. I found him so an hour after. I felt as I sat beside him, vainly comforting, that some loved one lay in a coffin upstairs. "I'll write you from Funchal," he said. And he did.

Gorky's "Twenty-six Men and a Girl" has now been published in the "Readers' Library" by Messrs. Duckworth (2s. 6d. net). It is memorable—there is no doubt about that—but it is the sort of story one has no desire to remember. Much of Gorky is of the same kind, and belongs in literature to the order of frightfulness associated with the Huns. Power, yes; impressive power, certainly; but power gracious, lasting, immortal, never! Let me contribute my opinion to the discussion raging gently in these pages. Power is all of the same kind, but its intensity is demonstrated by its duration. For an immediate effect power in its frightful form is impressive; but to produce a lasting effect, or, rather, to continue to produce an effect at all, power must be winning, persuasive, seductive, that is, harnessed to noble ideas. Gorky's work is not in this sense of an intense degree of power; once exploded it is all over. He appeared, as we know, upon the European horizon about twenty-five years ago; and at this moment we may fairly ask, "Who was Gorky?"—for he is no longer. Would-be "powerful" writers should be warned by his example. They can never hope to be more frightful than Gorky, and hence they can expect an even shorter life in literature. Who was Jack London?

We ought to be getting a tolerably complete view of Russian literature. Most of the publishers are producing translations of one degree of merit or another, and between them nothing much will be left to be discovered. How soon shall we be able to form a good general judgment upon it? Negatively it already begins to form itself in my mind. To begin with, its range is really very narrow, being confined to types on the edges rather than in the centre of civilisation. Of culture in the Western European sense—Italy, France, and England are its home—there is less in Russian literature than even in German literature. I scarcely remember a wit or a scholar in all the Russian books I have read. Then, too, the affairs of the world seem never to blow about the pages of Russian authors. They have none of the elevation of the great, good Europeans. Tchekov is the nearest approach to a culture comprised in them, and he was little more than a very talented provincial. France and England will have much to do to bring Russia into the Western mood. It will take a century at least. I should like to know that our classics are being translated and circulated in Russia, even more extensively than Russian works are being circulated here. Russia has more to learn of us than we of her. Can Mr. Bechhofer tell us?

First published over ten years ago, Schopenhauer's essay on "The Basis of Morality" (Allen and Unwin, 4s. 6d. net) has only just reached a second edition. It is a glorious fallacy that does honour to Schopenhauer's heart. The category of moral acts was, in Schopenhauer's view, limited to those springing from compassion alone. All other acts, having an egoistic object, were utilitarian, wise or foolish, short-sighted or the reverse, but not moral in his special sense. I make, as my readers know, a somewhat similar claim for poetry. Poetry, it seems to me, is the very rare order of literature that springs from a very special kind of emotional mind, the momentary characteristic of which is a celestially creative imagination. But that is by the way. Schopenhauer undoubtedly derived his basis from the Upanishads, which he read in a Latin translation. Therein he found (and so may you) that the "mark" of the moral man is positively compassion and negatively harmlessness. But Schopenhauer mistook the effect for the cause. The compaction indicated by

October 28, 1915  The New Age  523

Readers and Writers.

Anthony Farley.
Indian thought as the quality of the sage was no more the basis of morality than the sweetness of a fruit is the basis of its mode of growth. It is simply a sign that the growth has attained to ripeness. Schopenhauer’s essay, it is well known, fell on stony Hegelian ground when it was first published. The stupid Danish Academy rejected it, and Germany neglected it. But the grounds of neither were philosophical! Note that Schopenhauer dedicated his essay to “Matri Carissimae.” In most writers such a dedication is an offence against taste; but both from the subject-matter of his work and from his own record Schopenhauer’s dedication is a tribute. I am warned to him for it.

“The Roadmender,” by “Michael Fairless,” has had an extraordinary vogue in England, and now a “Roadmender Book of Days” has been published (Duckworth, 2s. 6d. net). We need not go to America for our Ralph Waldo Trine, for here she is at our doors. Miss Gentle has, no doubt, made as good a selection as possible among the “thoughts” of Michael Fairless, but what a result! Platitude, platitude, all the way, with only one or two phrases from everyone. Here is the thought for to-day (October 28): “The sorrow of the rich comes in the main of being unable to find needs, real needs of their own, in body, soul, and spirit, to spend their money on.” Well, is it true? It is, of course, true in so far as that, but is it in any concrete, I submit that it is bunkum, real bunkum. Few of the thoughts, however, rise above the same level, either in idea or style. The whole is soporific.

Messrs. Fisher Unwin have a gift for sensationalism that a yellow journalist might envy. Their latest “scoop” is a novel entitled “Me,” of which the editor says that “the wonder seems that of two or astounding literary feats I have ever known.” The reasons are childish. The novel is a hundred thousand words long, and was completed in a fortnight! There are, I imagine, scores of writers whose “output” in quantity exceeds this almost any month of the year; and as for quality—— The writer is a woman, and her story is autobiographic. It is, in fact, “pure reporting.” And what merit is in that, in the first any more than in the third person? We have really had enough of these documents of undistinguished, insignificant life. Only exceptional people with an exceptional gift for both experience and writing ought to be allowed to publish novels at all, least of all autobiographic ones. At this rate, forty-six million novels might be the marks of its method of production. It is the revel of an ego in a mild confession. Not an incident or a phrase in it excites my smallest interest.

“Rest assured,” said one of our German friends—it was a long time ago!—“rest assured until your dying day that nothing in the world is so rare as a good judge.” And may I add that nothing in the world is so ignored! Despite my efforts (yes, I am quite aware of the implication), the world still listens to the opinions of a critic like Mr. Forrest Reid upon the poems of Mr. W. B. Yeats. “If Shelley is a great poet, he concludes his three-half-crown essay (Secker), “if Keats and Coleridge and Rossetti are great poets, then Mr. Yeats is a great poet also,—greater, I think, than any of these.” Oh, rubbish, rubbish, rubbish! Mr. Yeats has written a few improved-valentine lyrics with an added flavour of Bedouin love-songs (Tosti! Tosti!), and, when it is safe, I will give him credit for them; but greater than Shelley, Coleridge, or Keats—who is Mr. Forrest Reid to say so? Where is his diploma? If he wants to command respect for such a judgment, let him write these “Readers and Writers” for a month or so to prove his quality to us. I will stand down with pleasure.

R. H. C.
"Are you going to see Mr. Bilton this evening, my dear? He seems such a nice young man. Very much like his father was at his age. I do hope he won't go out to the front and get shot. So many nice, respectable young fellows seem to have gone out and got killed," Mrs. Bedley patted her magnifying-glass and sighed. Miss Bedley rose from the sofa and tidied her hair in the overmantel mirror. "There's quite a lot of dust on this glass," she exclaimed. "How tiresome Maud is getting lately. There seem to be no really reliable servant girls nowadays. Would you believe it? Mrs. Whitaker's maid has gone to the front as a Red Cross Nurse! Gave them a week's notice!" Mrs. Bedley shook her head sadly. "I'm sure I don't know what the world's coming to. Maud seems to have become very independent lately. I've noticed that," Mrs. Bedley sniffed.

"You know why, I suppose," interrupted Miss Bedley. "I've no idea," sighed Mrs. Bedley, "none whatever." Miss Bedley laughed. "Do you mean to say you have the Royal Field Artillery badge she wears on her blouse?" Mrs. Bedley shook her head. "Well," continued her daughter, "Maud's young man is out at the front now, fighting for his King and Country. That's what makes her feel so independent. She despises us really because we have no men-folk to go out to the war. If we're not out of it, that's what it amounts to." Mrs. Bedley smoothed out the newspaper which lay upon her lap. "If my poor, dear husband was alive, things would be very different." She spoke with emotion. Miss Bedley crossed over to the fireplace and rang the bell. "That's right, my dear," said Mrs. Bedley recovering, "tell Maud to clear away the tea.

"I don't know what we should do if Maud left us, all the same," exclaimed Miss Bedley. "She's very clean for a girl of her class." "Do you remember Daisy," remarked Mrs. Bedley. "Do I!" answered Miss Bedley. "Shall I ever forget her?" As she spoke Maud entered the room, joyously swinging a tea-tray. She crossed over to the table and cleared the tea things with unusual rapidity. Her vitality seemed to fill the room. "What on earth's come over you, Maud?" inquired Miss Bedley, endeavouring to resist the girl's obvious happiness. "Oh, Mrs!" exclaimed Maud with shining eyes as she skipped round the table, "I've just 'ad a letter from my George says his regiment's doin' grand, R.F.A. badge on Maud's blouse?"

Mrs. Bedley patted her magnifying-glass and raised her eyebrows. "Oh," said Miss Bedley loftily, "I'm very glad to hear it, Maud; and now will you bring in the small lamp and draw the blinds." Maud smiled and danced out of the room. "Remind her about the fish, my dear, when she comes back," remarked Mrs. Bedley. "It was baked to death last night—quite unearable. She's not such a bad cook," replied Miss Bedley, staring into the street. "Do you remember Daisy's vegetables?" Mrs. Bedley smiled. "Poor Daisy, I'm afraid she was quite useless." Maud came in with the small lamp, placed it upon the table, and drew the blinds. Mrs. Bedley gave an appealing glance in the direction of Miss Bedley, and her daughter avoided her gaze. "Anything else, ma'am?" asked Maud, brightly. Mrs. Bedley stared at the R.F.A. badge on Maud's blouse. "Be a little more careful with the fish to-night, Maud, will you? There's a good girl." Mrs. Bedley smiled. Maud promised to be more careful with the fish and went into the kitchen. When the drawing-room door had closed, Mrs. Bedley turned to her daughter. "Perhaps," she remarked, glancing towards the door, "Mrs. Whitaker's maid might take a solemn vow, as his only port in a storm, to read accurately what is written in his heart, and never to alter the truth in any particular. If the conversation is lively, and broken by frequent interruptions, he may hope for some glorious moments of naturalness, otherwise he will not be perfectly natural save at times when his love is a little less frenzied.

In the presence of the beloved, we scarcely retain the naturalness of our physical movements, in spite of the deeply engrained habits which our muscles have acquired. When I took Léonore's arm, I always felt as if I were going to fall, and I had to make a conscious effort to walk well. The utmost we can do is never to be more affected than we can help; it is enough to be conscious in the effort. The drawback, and may easily lead to the most dire misfortunes. The heart of the beloved, in such a case, no longer understands ours, and we lose that reflex movement of frankness which would now have the means of moving her—I had almost said, of attracting her. Not that I will pretend to deny that a woman worthy of being loved may see her destiny in that charming motto of the ivy, which "dies if it cannot find something to cling to." That is a law of Nature. Nevertheless, it is always a decisive step towards happiness for her, if she can bring happiness to the man she loves. My opinion is that a rational woman ought not to give her lover everything until she can no longer defend herself. The slightest misgiving as to her lover's sincerity of heart at once restores her a little of her strength, enough at least to put off her defeat for another day. Need I add that, in order to raise all this to the height of absurdity, it is enough to introduce gallantry-love?"
friend. He knows that, if what you say is true, you look down upon his pleasures, since yours are a thousand times more keen.

Among women matters are far worse, since the one great wish of their life is to inspire a passion, and since, as a rule, the confidante has also given the lover an opportunity of seeing her charms.

On the other hand, for one who is devoted by this fever, there is no more imperative moral need in the world than the need of a friend before whom we can discuss the ghastly doubts that assail our mind at every moment; for in this terrible passion, a thing is no sooner imagined than it exists.

A great disadvantage, he goes on endlessly debating the point. "In ambition, it is easy to have courage. The crystallisation that is not dominated by the desire of the thing to be obtained occupies itself in strengthening courage; it is entirely of the object in relation to which we need courage.

A woman may find her friend treacherous, she may also find her bored.

A princess of thirty-five, who suffers from boredom and feels the need of doing something, of intriguing, and so forth, who is dissatisfied with her lover's lukewarmness, yet cannot hope to inspire another love, who does not know how to employ the energies that devour her, and has no other distraction than fits of melancholy—such a woman may very well find an occupation, that is to say, a pleasure and aim in life, in making a real passion unhappy, a passion which someone other has the insolence to cherish for another than her, while her lover falls asleep at her side.

This is the only case where hatred procures happiness; it gives one something to do, something to occupy one's time.

At first, the pleasure of doing something, as soon as society surmises what one is doing, and the hope of success, which puts one on one's mettle, make the occupation attractive. Jealousy of the friend assumes the mask of hatred for the lover: otherwise how could one feel a frenzied hatred for a man whom one has never seen? One takes care not to admit to oneself the envy, for one would have first to admit to oneself that it is deserved, that, for instance, one can see the lover take their position at court by ridiculing one's good friend.

The treacherous confidante, while allowing herself actions of the blackest baseness, may very well believe herself solely animated by the wish not to lose a precious friendship. Bored as she is, she says to herself that even friendship pines away in a heart that is consumed by love and by its deadly fears; by the side of love friendship cannot keep its place through confidences; and what could add more fuel to envy than such confidences?

The only confidences that are well received by women are those accompanied by this frank reasoning: "My dear friend, in this absurd but ruthless war brought upon us by the prejudices which our tyrants have spread abroad, it's a case of 'Do me a good turn to-day, and I'll do you a good turn to-morrow.'"

I must make another exception in favour of confidences arising from a genuine friendship, begun in youth and not marred since by jealousy. The confidences of passionate love are gratefully received among lovers who are in love with love, and among young girls devoured by curiosity, by the thought of the love they have yet to bestow, and perhaps already inspired by the instinct* which tells them that this is the great business of their life, and that they cannot devote their attention to it too early.

Everyone has seen little girls of three years old already show an excellent command of feminine wiles. Confidences fan the flame of gallantry-love, but have a cooling effect on passionate love.

Confidences have their difficulties as well as their dangers. In passionate love, things that one cannot put into words—since language is too coarse to bring out the finer shades—exist none the less for that. As, however, these things are very subtle, we are more liable in observing them to make mistakes.

Moreover, an observer who is greatly excited observes badly; he does not make enough allowance for chance.

The wisest course, perhaps, is to make oneself one's own confidant. Write down this evening, with borrowed names but with all the characteristic details, the conversation you have just had with your beloved and the difficulty that troubles you.

In a week, if your love is of the passionate type, you will be a different man; and then, if you read what you have written, you will be able to give yourself a piece of good advice.

Among men, as soon as more than two are present and jealousy may enter in, politerords ordains that we must speak of no thing but the passions and the manners of the object.

When jealousy arises, the same habit of mind prevails. Each forward step of the imagination is rewarded by a moment of ecstasy. It is not surprising that such a mode of existence should be attractive.

When jealousy arises, the same habit of mind persists, but the effect it produces is diametrically opposite.

Each new jewel that you add to the crown of your beloved, weighs another, not only does it give you celestial bliss, but turns the knife in your wound. An inner voice cries out to you: "It is my rival who will enjoy this exquisite pleasure!"

The objects that strike you, without producing this first effect, instead of showing you, as before, a new means of making her love you, seem to procure a fresh advantage for your rival.

You meet a pretty woman galloping in the park, and you remember that your rival is famous for his fine horses, on which he can cover ten miles in fifty minutes.

When you are in this state, madness soon comes over you. You forget that in love "to possess is nothing, to enjoy is everything." You exaggerate the happiness of your rival and the arrogance which that happiness breeds in him, and you sink into the utmost depths of depression, in which the remnant of hope that is left only adds to your torture.

Perhaps the sole remedy is to look very closely into

The Venetian dialect has some descriptions of physical love which are Horace, Propertius, LaFontaine and other amatory poets completely into the shade. M. Burati, of Venice, is at present the first satiric poet in gloomy Europe. He excels above all in depicting the grotesque personal appearance of his heroes, hence he is often put in prison.

*A highly debatable question. It seems to me that, besides education, which begins when the child is six or eight months old, a little instinct enters in.

†A strange feature of love is that you cannot think your rival will recognise the perfection that you see in her.
your rival's happiness. Often you will see him peacefully asleep in the very drawing-room where your beloved is sitting, at the thought of whom your heart stops beating, when you see a hat resembling hers some distance away in the street.

If you wish to wake him up, it is enough to display your jealousy. You will perhaps have the advantage of teaching him the value of the woman who pretends love to you, and he will owe to you the love he conceives for her.

So far as the rival is concerned, there is no middle course; we must either joke with him in the most careless possible manner, or we must frighten him. Since jealousy is the greatest of all evils, we shall find it a pleasant distraction to risk our lives. For then our day-dreams are not entirely envenomed and turned to black (by the mechanism explained above); we can sometimes imagine ourselves killing our rival.

On the principle that you must never send the enemy anything that may increase his strength, it is essential for you to hide your love from your rival, and, under a pretext of a vanity which is as far removed as possible from love, say to him with an air of great secrecy, and with the utmost politeness, calm and straightforward manner: "I don't know, sir, why public opinion saddles me with little So-and-so. People are even good enough to believe that I am in love with her. As a matter of fact, if you want her, I would give her up to you with the greatest pleasure, but for the unfortunate fact that I should risk having to play a ridiculous part. In six months, make her as completely yours as you wish; but just now the claims of honour, which, I know not why, attaches to such matters, compel me to tell you, to my beloved is sitting—your beloved, at the thought of whom your heart stops beating, when you see a hat resembling hers some distance away in the street.

If you do not see her, she will make your declaration to him in a light-hearted manner, and I think that my line does no discredit to the line of Whirligigs.

Your rival, most probably, is a man of no strong passions, perhaps a very cautious person who once he is convinced of your determination, will hasten to surrender to you the woman in question, if only he can find some honourable pretext. For this reason you must make your declaration to him in a light-hearted manner, and wrap the whole proceeding in the profoundest secrecy.

What makes the pain of jealousy so acute is that vanity may help to keep it going, and, by the method of which I speak, your vanity has something to feed on. If you are compelled to think little of your capacity for inspiring love, you can plume yourself on your courage.

If you prefer not to take a tragic view of things, you must go away, and at some hundred miles' distance take up with a dancer whose charms, it appears to you, caused a chance interruption in your journey.

If only your rival has a vulgar soul, he will think you have found consolation.

Very often the wisest course is to wait, without making the slightest sign, until the rival, by his own follies, has ruined his prospects with the beloved. Except in the case of a grand passion, which begins in early youth and advances by slow degrees, a woman of intelligence can feel no long-lasting love for a man of vulgar soul. When jealousy follows upon intimacy, the rival must also show apparent indifference and genuine coldness, for if offended by a lover whom they still love, attach themselves to the man of whom he is jealous, and the game becomes a reality.

I have entered into some detail because, at these moments of jealousy, one generally loses one's head. Hence advice written long afterwards proves of service, and, as the essential thing is to make an outward show of being calm, it is useful to take one's cue from philosophic writings on the subject.

Since others have no hold on you, save in so far as they can either raise or dash your hope of joys that owe their sole value to passion, an air of indifference on your part, if successful, will at once disarm your enemies.

Letters from Russia.

By C. E. Bechhauer.

I have discovered a little farce by the "father of the Russian stage," von Vizin (1744-1792), which, though almost unknown, is a miniature of his two bigger and famous comedies. I will translate it in full.

THE CHOICE OF A TUTOR.

ACT I.

COUNT: In the country it is not a bad thing to get up a little early.

COUNTESS: Yes, but not for a count. Your highness ought to live like our king, we do not have to manage our affairs; thank God, we own three thousand souls, and it will last our time; and then I am not so educated as to be a good manager.

COUNT: True. Countess; and I do not know anyone of your father's line who would be able to manage affairs. The line of Whirligigs is zobe, I agree; but not one Whirligig can manage affairs.

COUNTESS: Certainly; I, although not a countess in my own right, am, however, of a good family of nobles, and I think that my line does no discredit to the line of the Counts Weakhead.

COUNT: Countess, friend, I rose early to-day because I am concerned for the education of our Count Basil. Everyone tells me that he should now have a tutor: where will you find one in the country?

COUNTESS: It seems to me, it would not be a bad thing to discuss it with our marshal. Although he is not very nice to ladies, yet for Count Basil's sake I am ready to speak to him; I only fear that he will give our son as instructor such a bear as himself. I mortally dislike serious faces.

COUNT: I doubt whether, Wisely, be capable to choose an instructor for the son of Count Weakhead and his countess, born a Whirligig.

COUNTESS: However it may be, I have already sent for him. I think that one Mr. Wisely will not be too proud to visit Count Weakhead. There, he has come already.

WISELY (enters): You were pleased to send for me, and I supposed that you perhaps called me on some business, and did not delay to come to you.

COUNT: I beg you to take a seat and converse with us about a very important matter.

WISELY (sitting): What can I do for you?

COUNT: We have a son of ten years; we wish to give him a tutor. You are our marshal; be so kind, advise us.

WISELY: The matter is important, certainly, when it concerns the education and consequently well-being of a young noble; but it is not such an affair that I used to have come to you.

COUNT: I feel that it was my duty to go to you myself, but my countess inconsistarily and without asking me sent for you; excuse the impatience of a countess.

WISELY: I am not at all offended; on the contrary, I am pleased that you would have come to me on this business. By my position I know all our nobles. Recently I made the acquaintance of a gentleman who not long ago bought a small village in our district—a Major Flatternot. F were he to consent to educate your son, would it not be well disposed?

COUNT (after a pause): Countess, speak! COUNTESS: A Russian tutor! I do not like that very much.

COUNT: Does he know French?

WISELY: Better than many of those Frenchmen whom you would be glad to receive in your house.

COUNT: What is his character?

WISELY: His name is Flatternot, and he is quite worthy of that name.

COUNTESS (sotto voce): Some rude fellow, to be sure.

WISELY: Is it really to be rude not to flatter?

COUNT: Almost.

WISELY: Allow me to assure you that from the person I recommend as instructor for your son you will have neither rudeness nor flattery.

COUNT: We, on our side, will neglect nothing to show him our respect, and will always call him "Your Honour."
WISELY: That is, you expect him every minute to call you "Your Highness."

COUNTESS: It seems to me that everyone should be given his proper title.

WISELY: But you consent to call him "Your Honour" for another reason.

COUNT: Which one?

WISELY: So that all should know that your son's tutor is a major.

COUNTESS: And is that a great thing? My son is a count, and so it seems to me that a major is not humbling himself to undertake his education.

WISELY: Mr. Flatternot certainly will not consider it a particular honour to be tutor to your son; and if he does consent to undertake this position, it will be certainly only in order to be useful to a brother nobleman.

COUNTESS: I think, however, that rank is merit.

WISELY: The least of all human merits. To be born a count is not difficult, and one may by right of rank be called "Highness" without having high qualities, such as zealfulness to be useful to one's country. You, your highness! how have you served the country?

COUNT: I was a sub-lieutenant in the guard, with a captain's grade on retirement.

WISELY: Do you not show yourself the vanity of your rank as count? I wager that your son, if he is taught by Mr. Flatternot, will have quite another sort of ideas, and will be worthy of the honour which the path of nature opens to him.

COUNT: I was unlucky in my service. I could not reach major, and am now obliged to rag about the country.

COUNTESS (sotto voce): This man is irritating me! If Mr. Flatternot reached major, then, I think, he will teach my son to reach the same.

WISELY: Have no doubt of that; he will teach your son to receive promotion in the service of his country, and not by bowing in great gentlemen's antechambers.

COUNTESS: Be calm, my dear, Flatternot is not pleased to come.

COUNT: I ask him from us. (Enter the young count and nurses.)

NURSE: Come here, Count dear.

SECOND NURSE: Please come here, your highness!

THIRD NURSE: Your hand, please, your highness!

YOUNG COUNT (running up to her and giving his hand): There, kiss it.

COUNTESS: Count Basil, friend, embrace me.

YOUNG COUNT (holding out his hand to her): There, mother. (Holding out his hand to Wisely): There.

WISELY: I, friend, do not intend to kiss your paw; give it to the Count, your father.

COUNT: And I don't want to.


COUNT: Shame before a strange person.

COUNTESS: Shame to love one's son!

WISELY: Shame to spoil one's son.

COUNTESS: You see, sir, that we are educating our son as seems proper.

WISELY: I see only that you are driving everlastingly "Your Highness" into his head.

COUNTESS: And it is proper to call him what he is.

WISELY: He is a child.

COUNTESS: And of what line?

WISELY: A Weakhead.

COUNTESS: I hope that he has much of his father's in him.

WISELY: That is the Weakheads.

COUNTESS: And of his mother's? (The young Count turns away.)

WISELY: There, that is your line, the Whirligigs.

COUNTESS: Count Basil is very lovable, is he not?

WISELY: I do not know if he is lovable, but I see that he is much loved by you.

COUNT: I am curious to be acquainted with Mr. Flatternot. When could that be?

WISELY: Now, if you wish.

COUNTESS: You would much oblige us.

WISELY (going out): I will drive to him at once.

COUNT: I think the marshal will soon bring us Mr. Flatternot.

COUNTESS: I can imagine no good from it, and would be furious with regret to hand over Count Basil into the hands of a Russian loot, like Flatternot, to be sure.

COUNT: It will be in our will to take Flatternot or not take him.

COUNTESS: Count, friend, let us go to our apartments, that our expected guests should await us half an hour and see that they have come to your highness.

COUNT: For Heaven's sake, do not advise me that, if you do not wish to be a widow quickly.

COUNTESS: But why?

COUNT: Mr. Flatternot, as I see it, is a man of merit, and certainly, being a major, does not wish to wait in a captain's anteroom; he will get furious and cut me up.

COUNTESS: He does not do this before the marshal.

COUNT: Well, you see, madame, that to-day rank alone is not much respected, and people who value it highly are thought fools; then is Flatternot likely to contain himself for the marshal when Mr. Wisely said to me himself, "There's no praying for fools."

COUNTESS: I cherish the hope that we shall get through without Flatternot. I received a letter to-day from Countess Polliest. She recommends me a French tutor, a Mr. Pelican, and we shall engage him.

COUNT: But first we will have a look at Flatternot.

COUNTESS: Maybe; I consent.

SERVANT (entering): I announce to your highness that the marshal has come with a strange gentleman.

COUNT: I'll go to meet him; but you, Countess, receive them here.

ACT II.

COUNTESS: Count, this is Mr. Flatternot. Mr. Flatternot, my wife.

FLATTERNOT (kissing countess's hand): I recommend myself to your highnesses' favour as a neighbour and nobleman of these parts.

COUNT: I beg you to be seated. Our respected marshal, no doubt, has already told you of our desire, just as we heard from him of your proposal to take charge of a young nobleman.

FL.: He has informed me of everything; but beforehand I ought to hear from you yourselves what education you intend to give your son: what you wish to teach him or to prepare him for which service?

COUNT: I wished to hear of this from you.

FL.: I would think to educate his mind as is fitting for a nobleman.

COUNTESS: Of the rank of count!

FL.: I do not understand; what difference do you find between the rank of nobleman and count?

COUNTESS: I find, sir, this difference, that a count should be more careful than a nobleman that no one should be lacking in respect to him.

COUNTESS: A count should be more delicate than a nobleman on the point of his honour. . . . (A page missing here in the original manuscript.)

COUNTESS: But I thought that nature and rank were the same thing.

WISELY: You hear, madame, that a natural count may be also a natural fool.

COUNTESS: And so Mr. Flatternot is not pleased that our son should know he is a count, and does not wish to give him the title of Highness.

FL.: I would not take upon myself the sin—do not be furious with me—to turn a little boy's head, like your son's, with fancies about his countship, Highness, and similar folly; but I will strive hard to set into his head and heart that he, as of noble birth, should possess, also, a noble mind.

COUNTESS: And that is not a bad thing. But what are you thinking about, Count?

COUNT: I am thinking of what I hear, and myself can think of nothing; but I know it's dinner-time, and I beg you, therefore, marshal, and you, sir, to eat with me.

FL.: At your service.

SERVANT: Dinner is served.

COUNT: Come.

ACT III.

COUNTESS (alone): Thank Heaven that dinner is over! I have come here to rest from the conversation of the marshal and Flatternot; Heaven protect us from such fault-finders! At dinner I received a letter from Countess Polliest; I did not manage to read it; now I will read it at my leisure. (Reads.) "Dear Countess,—If you wish, you can take Mr. Pelican now as tutor for Count Basil. The Frenchman is full of
FL.: But these political calculations demand a far more excellent mind than is wanted for mathematical calculations. One can value a hundred Eulers for one Colbert and a thousand Coberts for one Montesquieu.

WISELY: But why?

FL.: Because in mathematics from one certainty one goes on to another more difficult one, and the mathematician has before him all the discoveries of his predecessors; he needs to have only patience and ability to use them; but previous discoveries do not lead the politician on the right path. The mathematician reckons with figures, the politician with passions; in a word, the political sense is and ought to be incompatibly high. It is much more rarely met with than the mathematical.

WISELY: Oh, how blessed is that land where such a rare political sense sits upon the throne.

FL.: And how happy those who are citizens of such a land! (To the Count.) What are you thinking of, Count?

COUNT: I do not understand anything of what you both were talking about.

WISELY: And have you heard that there are now no counts in France.

COUNT: That is almost incredible; I did hear something, but I could not believe it.

WISELY: Do you really not understand the French troubles?

COUNT: I believe that they are great when they put counts on the same level as other people.

FL.: When your son goes to France, he will not be a count.

COUNT: Then I will not send him there—not for anything?

WISELY: I know that ugly face.

SÉRVAIT (enters): Countess Folliest has been pleased to arrive, with a stranger.

COUNT: I go to meet the benefactress of our house.

WISELY: (to FL.): I have not happened to speak with you of this; I should like to know your opinion of it.

FL.: It is not my business to decide your question; but I am ready to offer my opinion for your judgment. Here it is: nowhere and never have been or can be such laws as would make every individual man happy. It is indispensably necessary that part of the subjects should sacrifice something for the sake of the whole kingdom; consequently there cannot be equality of position. That is the invention of the lying philosophers who by their eloquent intellecualisms have led the French to their present situation. They, desiring to avert the abuse of power, are endeavouring to destroy the form of government by which France has attained all her glory. For all this, however much the attempt may and will cost them, they will never attain an equality of situation and make everyone happy. It is indispensably necessary that one part of the subjects will always require the sacrifice of another. That is what I think of the present French legislation.

WISELY: But if there cannot be laws to make every individual man happy, then what sort of legislation is left?

FL.: It remains to calculate that the number of sacrifices should be proportionate to the number of those for whose happiness sacrifices are made.

WISELY: So the legislator ought to be a great calculator.
Views and Reviews.

A Prophet of Woe.

I am always interested in books that are introduced to the English public by Dr. Oscar Levy. His taste is so definite, his point of view so well established, that it is certain that the book recommended by him will, in some way, reinforce his efforts to make us look at the consideration of vital problems. The complete translation of Nietzsche which he hurled into the maw of English thought lies exploding there, like one of H. G. Wells' atomic bombs which exploded for ever. Apparently he is determined to do the same with the works of Count Gobineau, a writer whom, until recently, I had been inclined to regard as an invention of the Nietzscheans. After "The Renaissance," we are offered this, the first,* volume of "The Inequality of Human Races"; and Dr. Oscar Levy, faithful to the function of master of the ceremonies of modern translations into English, introduces the work with a Jermiaid. It seems important to Dr. Levy that Count Gobineau was a pessimist; that, in spite of his polite bows to God and the Church, he saw degeneration. I think that the point is not well made, and that the distinction between pessimism and Christianity cannot be maintained. If Count Gobineau said that we should all be damned, Christianity says that we are damned already; and the most profound belief in the virtues of blood and race cannot inspire a better prescription for our present troubles than the Christian command: "Ye must be born again". That the prescription has usually been interpreted in the terms of "Purusha," the male principle,* as a mere phase of the intellect or change of the mind, does not alter the fact that it is valid also in the terms of "Prakriti,* the female principle," and, so far as the English are concerned, Emerson said that the "violence of these Northern savages exasperated Christianity into power." Christianity is irrelevant to the question at issue; and, if Count Gobineau did not believe in it, but used it only as a screen from the vulgar, the fact would not recommend the present book. Dr. Levy supports his good taste by a bad reason.

Nor am I really impressed by the pessimism of Count Gobineau. It may be the merit of the translator, Mr. Adrian Collins, but the prose of this volume has the lightness and limpidity that we usually regard as the chief qualities of French literature. I do not believe that it is possible to be pessimistic in French; like most Englishmen, I think that it is impossible to tell the truth in that language. But, apart from these French qualities of his prose, Count Gobineau removes too many obstacles to thought for it to be possible for me to regard him as a pessimist. If we know the cause of degeneration, by taking thought we may be able to find the cure. Pessimism would bring us to an impasse, and is itself an indication of degeneration. To sit down before the accomplished fact, to see the beginning from the end, and, in every process by which the effect was derived from the cause, to perceive inevitability, the steady march of Fate, and to say, "It must be so"—that is pessimism. But to know all this, and yet to believe that this is not the end, to cast about for the method by which our former mistakes may be remedied, all this implies that the will to live is unimpaired, and that civilisation may be made anew. This is optimism;* and, in my opinion, Gobineau possessed it. For the conclusion of this treatise is "that all civilisations derive from the white race, that none can exist without its help, and that a society is great and brilliant only so far as it preserves the blood of the noble group that created it; provided that this group itself belongs to the most illustrious branch of our species." Nowhere in this book, nor in modern history, so far as I find evidence, that the capacity for civilisation of the white race, as compared with the black and yellow races, has been lessened; and I decline to be awed by Dr. Levy's bogy of Gobineau's pessimism.

The real value of the book to English readers derives, I think, not from any positive contribution to our knowledge of racial questions but from its criticism of a point of view that has certainly prevailed in England since Darwin. There is no reason apparent to me why Darwin's idea of evolution by natural selection of varieties favourable to existence, or even Spencer's conception of it as a change from the simple to the complex, should have led to the assumption of a single origin and an essential unity of man. But it was so; and the idea that is now so prevalent of the spreading of a uniform culture over the face of the globe is based on a postulate of abstract Man responding typically to concrete environment. It is this assumption of Man as a unit which underlies and gives expression to all the usual explanations of the decline and fall of civilisations. Gobineau corrects the assumption by the appeal to the facts of history; he shows us that "fanaticism, luxury, corruption of morals, and irreligion, do not necessarily lead to the fall of a society. The result is positive that "the relative merits of governments have no influence on the length of a nation's life," and that "racial inequality is not the result of the fact of institutions." He insists that "civilisation is quite independent of climate and soil, and their adaptability to man's wants"; and, in my opinion, Gobineau possessed it. For the "Inequality of Human Races" was published), that we are not obliged to accept indiscriminate exogamy as a principle. We do not want to live for ever on this half-hatched planet; and infinite progress, by its very nature, must be metaphysical. But within the limits of the physical, Gobineau, by showing us the process of degeneration, has proved the possibility of finite progress. We have not found the limits of possibility yet, as his own comparison of our civilisation with former civilisations shows. We have this advantage over Gobineau (who wrote before the "Origin of Species" was published), that we are not obliged to accept his statement of the cause of degeneration. He attributes it entirely to the cross-breeding of races; as Mr. Ludovici says, he would like to prove that crossing between the Aryans and a judicious comparison of our civilisation with former civilisations shows. We have this advantage over Gobineau (who wrote before the "Origin of Species" was published), that we are not obliged to accept the inevitable conclusion of every man; that even glass eyes are hereditary; but a judicious study of heredity and racial affinities will do much to make clear the possibility of retracing our steps towards the state of degeneracy to which the Aryans race was formerly attained. The marriage question is becoming all-important to those who regard modern civilisation with disapproval; and so far as the other activities of man are concerned, we can tolerate nothing that limits them to the performance of a specific task.

We will not sacrifice the man to the function, not even in the name of philosophy. A. E. R.
REVIEWS

Ireland: Its Vital Hour. By Arthur Lynch, M.P. (Stanley Paul. 10s. 6d. net.)

Dr. Arthur Lynch has written a book that does not, in our opinion, throw any new light on Ireland; rather it illustrates some quite familiar theories of the development of national greatness. It is quite true that there is only one way of solving quadratic equations; but a man who cares less about solving quadratic equations than he does of maintaining the power of the Catholic or Protestant Church is not therefore susceptible to a plea for undenominational schools or universities, or for the abolition of religious tests for teachers. If this is a vital hour for Ireland, she has to make a quite definite choice; and Dr. Lynch might, we think, have assisted the making of this choice if he had more clearly defined the objective. He rewards the spirit of Sinn Fein as "full of promise"; but he says himself that Sinn Fein "promised independence to Ireland, fostering of industries and enterprises, the re-establishment of the Irish language, restoration of Irish traditions, and even of old Irish dress, and the re-constitution of the Irish nation." In short, the sort of man that Sinn Fein has as its leader is well sustained. Dr. Lynch is teaching him the wisdom of experience. That he regards the spirit of Sinn Fein as inimical to the free play of the mind, partisanship is an obstacle to the realisation of nationalism, priests and the partisanship, the priests, etc., must be eliminated, and the Irishman become a citizen, a nationalist, an ideal is not the pure scientist and mathematician of Dr. Lynch's dreams, not the essentially modern man who wants to ignore Irish history and take the problem as it is and solve it in quite modern fashion. It is for this reason of the education of a sculptor who sees more to the English than to the Irish. He wants to begin by destroying the prejudices of the Irish; Sinn Fein really desires that the prejudices shall be perfected in character, and shall be intensified by education. The free, or cosmopolitan, culture that Dr. Lynch advocates is in opposition to the intensive, or national, culture that Sinn Fein represents. The book, particularly the latter half of it, contains a mass of information about Ireland that does not seem to us to be at all well-digested; indeed, Dr. Lynch's great fault as a writer is his learning, and his lack of plan in presenting it. The book covers an enormous amount of ground, having chapters on Irish History, Actual Conditions, The Irish in America, Priests in Politics, Irish Organisations, Sinn Fein, Parliament, Industrial Development, Education, Literature, Science, Ulster; but its conclusions seem to us far too general to be valid. Like most men of scientific habits of mind, Dr. Lynch tends to regard only functional activity and to devote his energies to the elimination of impediments between a man and his objects. Prejudices, for example, are inimical to the free play of the mind, partisanship is an obstacle to the realisation of nationalism, priests prevent public affairs from being administered with sole regard to public welfare, and so on; therefore, the prejudices, the partisanship, the priests, etc., must be eliminated, and the Irishman become a citizen, a nationalist, a scientist, and, eventually, we suppose, that abstraction A Man. We do not think that the Irishman will eviscerate himself in this way, or abolish "all his pretty chickens, and their dam, at once fell swoop."”

Through Stained Glass. By George Agnew Chamberlain. (George Allen and Unwin. 6s.)

Since Browning died, the idea of art as a religion, the Sir Galahad conception of the artist, has not found too frequent expression; and Mr. Chamberlain's story has a smack of novelty for us in consequence. He tells us the spiritual education of a young man, the light of truth through the "stained glass" of his father's experience and character. "Grapes" Leighton is a man of the world, who, in his own phrase, has "lived seven lives," and tries to teach them to his son, or, at least, to teach him in the way of life, teaching him the wisdom of experience. That he becomes sententious at times is only to be expected; but his sententiousness bores only when he tries to be "clever," and is promptly corrected. He has the right ideas about art, and about marriage; but we doubt the value of his prognostications concerning America. However, the story is quite well handled; but not all his wisdom would have saved his boy from the pitfall of sex if the lady had not unwittingly shocked him by her beauty. Lewis, who could not model anything until he had felt it, could not imitate his father in his wisdom until he had learned by experience. The story is set in America, London, and Paris, and the character of "Grapes" Leighton is well sustained. Lewis is rather submerged, as befits a youth, but he promises well; and the book returns a certain density and purity of feeling in this story is very welcome.

A Brief History of the French Revolution. By F. W. Aveling, B.Sc. (George Allen and Unwin. 2s. 6d.)

There is no doubt about the brevity of this history; it is only 116 pages in length; but we are dubious concerning the validity of its claim to be a history of the French Revolution. It is true that, between the years 1789-1793, a Parisian mob stormed the Bastille, slaughtered the prisoners, brought the King and Queen to the guillotine, abolished religious tests for teachers, etc., and generally behaved like a pack of lunatics. But a recital of the atrocities is not a history of the Revolution; and, apart from the fact that they are very familiar, we think that they are unsuitable for school children, or, at best, for an "easy" book for the lower grades, and should be intensified by education. The Revolution represents, that it should introduce the scholar to the consideration of political, economical, and ethical principles, and should indicate to him how profoundly those that were announced during this period have since affected the thought and action of the civilised world. It is absurd to suppose that the French Revolution was only a series of mob-risings and atrocities, which Napoleon ended with a whiff of grape-shot; and, anyhow, the thing has been done once for all by Carlyle, who reproduced in literature the method of Kean in acting, and made an effect like that of "reading Shakespeare by flashes of lightning." The eight illustrations do not make amends for the poor writing and trite conclusions of this volume.

An Untamed Territory. By Elsie R. Masson. (Macmillan. 6s.)

Where Professor Baldwin Spencer has reaped, Miss Masson can only glean. But the Northern Territory of Australia is still so untutored that personal accounts of it have interest for the general reader. Miss Masson gives us plenty of triviality, wastes a whole chapter on "A Woman's Life in Darwin," for example, which is mainly occupied with the details of the kitchen and the methods of the preparation of the food; and writes another chapter on "The Slave Question"; and she only begins to be interesting on p. 51, where she writes about the varieties of human life and industry in Darwin. She does not leave Darwin until p. 68, and then only to "write up" a story that she has heard; she visits Port Essington, and writes another descriptive article of a voyage "Up the Kuper River," where the black children at the Mission had the measles; then offers us a sympathetic study of "The Blackfellows," and concludes with a cursory description of a tribe of wild blacks and some black fellows. The story of the Northern Territory is not profound, but even this flimsy account is interesting; and the volume is well illustrated by photographs taken by other people.
The following prospectus was printed "for private circulation only," but, a copy having come into our hands, we reproduce it here for the benefit of readers of The New Age:—

A company, entitled "Conscription, Limited," has been formed with a capital of £500,000,000,000, with the object of carrying on the war in a manner profitable to the shareholders.

The directors need hardly point out that the present method of conducting the war is inefficient and wasteful. In order to eliminate the waste of money, time, and energy, it is essential that the whole resources of the country should be applied to national purposes. This can only be carried out if the control of the wealth of the nation is vested in capable hands. The directors of this company include all who are prominent in business and finance, and any hesitating subscriber has only to consider that such names as Northcliffe, Bottomley, and Mond are sufficient guarantees of the capacity of the directorate.

The directors offer 500,000,000,000 shares of £1 each for subscription. Five fully paid shares will be allotted for every £1 of capital owned by the subscriber. Intending subscribers will see that by exchanging their present investments (probably yielding a small and uncertain return) for an investment that will prove of enormous value. Since the directors will control the wealth of the country, they will be able to reduce all forms of expenditure, such as wages, pay of the Army and Navy, separation allowances, etc., to very small proportions, and the gain to the shareholders will be immense.

The directors anticipate a dividend of not less than 50 per cent. for the first year.

Membership of the company is strictly limited to members of the upper classes; any one who does not possess the property qualification will only exercise this right where it is impossible to obtain the services of any of the above by the usual methods of remuneration. The directors anticipate very little difficulty in this direction.

Members of the upper classes are warned that it is essential for all to subscribe for shares in the company who do not wish to be reduced to the ranks of the proletariat. All the most important members of the upper classes have already signified their intention of subscribing, and directly the shares offered for subscription are allotted, the directors will initiate legislation which will confer the wealth of all who are outside the company.

A company with a membership similar to that of Conscript, Limited, will be formed in Germany and will work in co-operation with the English company. The directors are certain that this arrangement will result in an immense increase in the profits of the war.

For the information of intending subscribers, the directors beg to state that they do not intend to change the outward form of the Government of the country. Having convinced the politicians in the past at a comparatively small expense of trouble and money, they anticipate even less difficulty in the future.

The directors wish to correct an erroneous impression that has been prevalent as to the carrying on of the war. The directors declare with the utmost emphasis that they have no intention whatever of ending the war. The war has proved extremely profitable, even under the most disorganised of all forms of expenditure, and it will yield a harvest that is practically unlimited.

It has been objected that the prolonged continuance of the war will result in the extinction of the males of the lower orders. The directors have great pleasure in bringing to the notice of subscribers the fact that this is a consecration of the press to the service of the company. The present unruly masses, so easily swayed by cantors, will give place to the more docile Hindus and Chinese. Arrangements have been made for the introduction of Asiatic labour.

The directors pledge themselves to put the following measures into operation immediately:—

(1) All males between the ages of 14 and 70 will be compelled to enter either (a) military service, or (b) industrial service. Wages, rates of pay, and hours of work to be fixed by the directors.

(2) All females between the ages of 16 and 40 will be compelled to enter either (a) industrial service, or (b) amatory service. Wages and methods of employment to be fixed by the directors. (Note.—The benefits of amatory service will be strictly confined to members of the upper classes.)

Subscribers are again assured that all conscript legislation will apply to those who are not members of the company.

In conclusion, the directors are in a position to state that any mention of the formation of the company has been absolutely prohibited in all the organs of the Press.

MY FIRST CHANT ROYAL (concerning the Great Majority).

Villon (when Swinburne dubbed sad, bad, glad, mad) touched on the strange affair of last year's snow.

"Where has it gone?" he questioned, but he had never an answer,—none appeared to know.

There are who pin their faith upon the Styx

... Touched on the strange affair of last year's snow.

... Wind enough from the shoddy he purveys,

... And in return is great at dropping bricks.

... A magpie of the press, whom bunkeys greet

... So long there is no implement that flays

... From some gross hog whose patent boots he licks.

... And in return is great at dropping bricks.

... A magpie of the press, whom bunkeys greet

... So long there is no scourge to lash the cheat

... The Great Majority is incomplete.

... Whether souls are damned to endless heat,

... If England's noble lineage ne'er

... The Great Majority is incomplete.

... Or else your mind must be uncommon slow.

... So long a grocer,-a Yankee Chandler's fad,

... While slobbering parsons lard him with their praise,

... While politicians grovel at his feet

... While politicians grovel at his feet

... And gloat upon him with their shifty gaze,

... Or fill the Golden City with their lays,

... Or else your mind must be uncommon slow.

... The scribe perceives his hoard of shekels grow.

... The scribe perceives his hoard of shekels grow.

... Yet whether souls are damned to endless heat,

... Or else your mind must be uncommon slow.

... While politicians grovel at his feet

... And gloat upon him with their shifty gaze,

... Or fill the Golden City with their lays,

... So long a grocer,-a Yankee Chandler's fad,

... While slobbering parsons lard him with their praise,

... While politicians grovel at his feet

... While slobbering parsons lard him with their praise,

... And gloat upon him with their shifty gaze,

... Or fill the Golden City with their lays,

... So long there is no implement that flays

... From some gross hog whose patent boots he licks.

... And in return is great at dropping bricks.

... A magpie of the press, whom bunkeys greet

... For wenching rich upon the truth he slays,

... The Great Majority is incomplete.

... While politicians grovel at his feet

... While politicians grovel at his feet

... And gloat upon him with their shifty gaze,

... Or fill the Golden City with their lays,

... Yet whether souls are damned to endless heat,

... If England's noble lineage ne'er

... The Great Majority is incomplete.

... The Great Majority is incomplete.

... While politicians grovel at his feet

... While politicians grovel at his feet

... And gloat upon him with their shifty gaze,

... Or fill the Golden City with their lays,

... Yet whether souls are damned to endless heat,

... If England's noble lineage ne'er

... The Great Majority is incomplete.

... The Great Majority is incomplete.

... While politicians grovel at his feet

... While politicians grovel at his feet

... And gloat upon him with their shifty gaze,

... Or fill the Golden City with their lays,

... Yet whether souls are damned to endless heat,

... If England's noble lineage ne'er

... The Great Majority is incomplete.

... The Great Majority is incomplete.

... While politicians grovel at his feet

... While politicians grovel at his feet

... And gloat upon him with their shifty gaze,

... Or fill the Golden City with their lays,

... Yet whether souls are damned to endless heat,

... If England's noble lineage ne'er

... The Great Majority is incomplete.

... The Great Majority is incomplete.

... While politicians grovel at his feet

... While politicians grovel at his feet

... And gloat upon him with their shifty gaze,

... Or fill the Golden City with their lays,

... Yet whether souls are damned to endless heat,

... If England's noble lineage ne'er

... The Great Majority is incomplete.

... The Great Majority is incomplete.

... While politicians grovel at his feet

... While politicians grovel at his feet

... And gloat upon him with their shifty gaze,

... Or fill the Golden City with their lays,

... Yet whether souls are damned to endless heat,

... If England's noble lineage ne'er

... The Great Majority is incomplete.

... The Great Majority is incomplete.
Current Cant.

"Our duty as Christians is to conquer selfishness and support the Government."—GAY & HANCOCK, LTD.

"The miners keep down tools, but suppose they did the same thing in Flanders?"—Facts.

"Byron—the man and poet."—MARIE CORELLI.

"It takes a joint of beef to make a bottle of Bovril."—Daily Mail.

"Kill that insect, Tommy!"—Harrison's Nursery Pomade.—Tins of comfort at 4/6.—HARRISON, Chemist, Reading.

"I would rather at any time publish an article by an unknown writer..."—HOLBROOK JACKSON.

"Was Judas the first German?"—Public Opinion.

"A good editor is always a soulful man."—Proof.

"T. P.'s Weekly is a pocket university."—HOLBROOK JACKSON.

"Harry Tate has prepared the new 'Daily Mail' war maps up in his dressing-room and spends the intervals he has in studying the position of the rival armies."—Weekly Dispatch.

"Mis Christabel Pankhurst, who in the 'Suffragette' wields a pen as trenchant as a man's sword..."—ALEX. M. THOMPSON.

"Come, ye men of God—where are you?"—John Bull.

"He profits best who advertises most."—Proof.

"O Lord, our God, we thank Thee..."—British Weekly.

"Budget B.D.V. The silk picture cigarette. Ten for 4d. A penny more to keep the old flag flying."—Reynolds's Newspaper.

"Labour is settling down. Labour does not even blanch at the word compilation now."—W. HOLT WHITE.

"There will be no more strikes because we have taught the colliders and their wives to realise all that this war means."—Mrs. Pankhurst.

"A baby son has been born since my first statement, and mine are three of the bonniest children in three weeks."—A Town Mouse in "Sunday Pictorial."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

THE ARMENIANS.

Sir,—In your issue of October 21, Mr. E. F. Pound, under the heading "Super Neutrality," seems fully to justify the premeditated and organised massacres of Armenians, exposing his disbelief in all their accounts as being the inventions of the late Mr. Gladstone, and a detestation above all.

Your correspondent may please himself in detesting anyone or any nation—though he should certainly state the motives of his conclusion in such a public statement as a matter of fairness—but I consider there is a terrific difference between detestation and light-hearted justification, especially at the present juncture, of the cold-blooded and organised massacre of nearly a million unfortunate Armenians, men, women, and children, without mercy; to quote Treitschke, "a detestation above all, and criminal-minded exponent of the "blood and iron" Kultur, in support of his heartless view of the slaughter of nearly a million innocents, martyrs, and to add that he could personally do without all the inhabitants of Turkey, Greece, Bulgaria, Balkans, and the Near East in general, thus apparently professing indifference whether the same should, in reality, be the fate of millions of Christians and others of these countries, is indeed to utter too violent and sweeping a statement—unprovokable and unjustifiable by motives—to be tolerated without inviting utter indignation and disgrace. Surely no human principle whatever could justify the systematic extermination of a nation without distinction of men, women, children, leaving alone the said correspondent's advocating that the slaughter of one or two dozen carefully selected inhabitants of this city would be of advantage to the race at large.

When the late Mr. Gladstone said "to serve Armenia is to serve civilisation," and when he stood generally for the defence of the Christians of the very countries above stated, no one can deny that the greatest authority on the Near Eastern nations and affairs could not have done so had Armenians been detestable, or other inhabitants of those parts unworthy of existence. I need hardly quote here the praises paid by eminent German Near Eastern scholars and explorers to the Armenians' skill, blunt honesty, taciturnity, devotion to their language and church, when dealing with their life, language, and literature.

Whatever may have been Mr. E. F. Pound's likes and dislikes in this matter, he should not forget that, had it not been for the unhappy interference of the so-called Western civilisation, the intrigations and diplomacy of the great Western nations with the affairs of the Near-Eastern peoples, to-day the latter would have been happier, better, and more prosperous, and not mere tools in their hands.

ARSHAG BROADIAK, B.A.

* * *

MR. BELLOC AND THE CENSOR.

Sir,—Very few people will be found to contradict the statement that the most dangerous man in the Cabinet is Mr. Lloyd George, as Lord Northcliffe is the most dangerous man out of it. When I say "dangerous" I mean, naturally, dangerous from the point of view of our winning the war; for any steps we have been trying to take as a nation in this direction have been gravely hindered by the injudicious speeches and writings of the Minister of Munitions, and by the grossly unfair and distorted caricatures of our military and diplomatic position which misrepresents as leading articles in such papers as the "Times" and the "Daily Mail."

The connection between Mr. Lloyd George and his noble patron, Lord Northcliffe, is so close that the fall of one almost necessarily implies a corresponding decline in the influence of the other. All the more reason, therefore, why anything which can be proved to the public discredit of these irresponsible men should be made known to the world.

For several years certain rumours have been in circulation regarding Lord Northcliffe being burned at the stake, but these have been denied. What, then, is the story of the transaction that led to the bestiality of this barony? It may surely be taken for granted that if one-quarter of what we hear of Lord Northcliffe's perfidy is true, the publication of full particulars relating to the transaction in question would wreck the influence which Lord North-
claim to immunity is not only preposterous, but violently dangerous. . . . If we continue to allow, without sufficient public protest, irresponsible and indirect power of corruption combined was, briefly, war.

Sir,-The economic reasons for driving women out of the wage-system is a vital argument that we cannot ignore. More, however, remains to be done. Having treated of parturition so successfully, will the good doctor now proceed to examine the effects of saccharine on the human body? For these, and such as these, all readers understanding the modern principles of industrial unionism will be intensely thankful, and especially National Guardians.

ON THINGS FORBIDDEN.

Sir,—I would like to inform "Caliban" and any New Age readers who may be interested that a trade union for bank clerks has already been founded, and is doing its best to overcome the ignorance and apathy of this particular class of wage-earners.

We have already been attacked by Mr. Fred Hughes, but, nevertheless, are still of the opinion that such a union is more necessary, and is more in accord with the principles of industrial unionism than a hatchet-pitch of clerks from all industries only united by their black coats.

The address of the Union is the National Association of Bank Clerks, 415, Tudor Street, E.C. A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE.

THE SWEATED CLERK.

Sir,—I believe that many federations of employers have uttered the monotonous sentiment that this is a people's war. The leader-writers of the "Times" and the "Daily Mail" have repeated this platitudinous so many times that it is by now accepted as a truth. Yet one is surprised to find the reviewer of Mr. Brailsford's book uttering this platitudinous as if he had suddenly stumbled upon the truth in the dark. Now, sir, if we are to learn just what your reviewer means when he alludes to this war as a people's war—a democratic war. Also, I am anxious to learn in what way we have intervened in the foreign affairs of this country.

I believe that our Foreign Office has in the past had some control over the foreign policy of this country. Now it only remains to be proved in what way the people have controlled the Foreign Office.

I notice that the "Morning Post" recently remarked that the people of this country have not been writing dense ignorance of the actions of the Foreign Office for years. Again, the "Post" is reckless enough to assert that last year the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Prime Minister, and the Foreign Office, have published the "French Dispatch," the "Daily Mail," and the "Times" as a series of organs which have for months been endeavouring to shake the confidence of the British people in the prosecution of the war. Mr. Belloc, in his article, has made the point that the Foreign Office have done nothing to Hamsworth, and they have done nothing to the papers in which they have attacked them, and the question of the armistice is an issue which is being debated upon their own account. Public expression must be given to the now universal feeling that the Harmsworth
THE HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE.

Sir,—As a member of the little-known but influential Hospitality Committee, founded two years ago for the purpose of bettering amity between East and West, may I have an opportunity of complaining through your columns of an incident, not within my comprehension, which happened last year? Owing to certain complaisant put forward by Indian students here, the Hospitality Committee was established on the strict understanding that it was to be entirely independent of the Indian Students’ Department entrusted to the charge of Mr. C. E. Mallet. Had this not been the case, indeed, there would have been no object in getting a Fresh Committee together. Unfortunately, much to my astonishment, and to the astonishment of (lower-members of the Committee with whom I am acquainted, the first annual Report of our society appeared in the same White Paper as Mr. Mallet’s annual Report on the work of his Students’ Department, as anybody can see by consulting it. It is of no use crying over what happened last year; but I should like to make sure that what occurred once will not occur again. I have stated facts, and cannot, therefore, be corrected; but I am open to enlightenment.

* * *

SWINBURNE.

Sir,—On one or two occasions recently “R. H. C.” has suggested that Swinburne was certainly not a poet of the first rank, and that he belonged to the decadent school.

The particular place which Swinburne will occupy in the hierarchy of poets cannot be debated so soon after his death. His alleged decadence is more susceptible of discussion, and I am unconvinced that “R. H. C.” has proved his case.

Various interpretations may be placed upon the meaning of the word “decadence.” For my purpose I take it to be: Art which appeals to the Esthetic sense, with no corresponding action upon the moral sense. If “R. H. C.” wants a more concrete definition: Art which merely satisfies without inciting to action—ought to be sufficient.

Now, if any poet should be exempt from the charge of decadence, surely Swinburne is that man? He produced the same shock on the so-called Victorian culture that Nietzsche attributes to Dionysos when he broke in upon the contemplation of the Apollonians. Swinburne preached revolution, republicanism, and atheism to a society which had almost forgotten that man is an animal. Moreover, not even the charge of the lack of sympathy with past ages brought against so many revolutionaries can be brought against him. He was saturated, not only with knowledge of Greek literature, but with its spirit, he was a student of the period of greatest creative English art, and he deliberately adopted the phraseology of the A.V. His verse forms are not irregular or broken. Form was not sacrificed to content, as was the case with Browning. Sometimes in reading him it seems that the torrent of his words and ideas must break through the form, one idea and again we trace the mind of the artist restraining the violence of the inspiration. It is easy to give a dog a bad name and to hang him. The general public, who never read Swinburne, may pass him by, yet he is of one lineage with those who built up the English language. In his own words:

“a little fruit a little while is ours,
And the worm finds it soon.”

EVERARD G. GILBERT-COOPER.

Subscriptions to THE NEW AGE are now at the following rates:—

United Kingdom. Abroad.

One Year 28s. 0d. 30s. 0d.
Six Months 14s. 0d. 15s. 0d.
Three Months 7s. 0d. 7s. 0d.

All communications relative to The New Age should be addressed to The New Age, 38, Curzon Street, E.C.
Press Cuttings.

"The running commentary upon public affairs which The New Age gives to the working population is one of the most acute analyses we have to-day. In that analysis the real issues have been stated in the most cogent and determined fashion. The solution proposed is not hypothetical, it is concerned, though it is among the most interesting of the various attempts sincere men are making to settle the great quarrel between free men dispossessed and the tiny minority that control them. It is a great quarrel between free men dispossessed and the tiny minority that control them in a solution based on the revival of the Guild. . . . Meanwhile, in the absence of a Press which shall represent the great mass of opinion, the opinion of the majority, one is raised in the House of Commons (of all places!) has done wonders. One man saying that the attempt to compel one large group of the wage-earners to produce and profit under compulsion would make them immediately cease work has had a more sobering effect upon the Capitalist press campaign for compulsion than anything else—ancl now the thing is at an end. . . . HILAIRE BELLOC in "New Days.""

"The Trade Union Congress is not the Labour movement: it is the Parliament of Labour, and it represents what is perhaps more exactly the same way as the House of Commons represents the country, and with the same defects. It consists very largely of men who have grown old in the movement: it is almost inevitably consercative than those whom it represents."—G. D. H. COLE.

RENUCATION OR BARGAINING.

To the Editor of the "Times." "Sir,—You report that a Canadian firm has undertaken to supply munitions at cost price. Cannot we all in our respective spheres follow this example? Is there really any Englishman who wants to exploit the necessities of the State to his own advantage? If we were each of us invited to subscribe our names to a pledge:—'I bind myself not to make or to try to make any additional profit, direct or indirect, out of the war'—is there any man who would hesitate to sign? And if the people hesitated, would he long dare to face the scorn of his fellow-citizens?"

"Given such a universal pledge, would not many things which now are difficult and complicated be no longer so? Is there really any Englishman who wants to exploit the necessities of the State? Is there any man who would hesitate to sign? And if the people hesitated, would he long dare to face the scorn of his fellow-citizens?"

"The Railwaymen got a war bonus some time ago of 25s. a week, and though it was small, and the men accepted it in view of the national emergency. Since then the cost of living has gone up tremendously, and it is no exaggeration to say that tens of thousands of the men who work our railways are struggling along with their families in poverty. They have great difficulty in paying their rent, they have to stint themselves and their families in food and clothing."—The Independent.

Published by the Proprietors, The New Age Press, Ltd., 38, Curtisor Street, Chancery Lane, and printed for them by Bonner & Co., The Chancery Lane Press, 1, 2, and 3, Rome Passage, E.C., Agents for South Africa: Central News Agency, Ltd.