

THE NEW AGE

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THOUGH no one would guess it who has the acquaintance of daily journalists, and though, it must be said, they are modestly sceptical of it themselves, the power of daily journalism is enormous. By its means (consisting largely of repetition), not only are lies and half-truths concerning public affairs put and kept in circulation, but simple and beneficent truths of the utmost value to the nation are, by the easy means of never mentioning them twice, denied any circulation at all. We are all aware of the sudden spasm that seized the Press a few weeks ago to popularise the notion of the Conscription of Capital for the purposes of the war. We are all now aware of the equally sudden silence upon the subject that has fallen upon them one and all. But what a phenomenon of democracy, or government by newspaper, it really is if we come to think about it. For here is a proposal of the utmost value, full of common sense, easy to be understood, and, as we believe, necessary to the sequel if not actually to the conclusion of the war—yet, after one brief mention, it is set aside as if it were a poisonous fallacy. It is exactly as if Hans Andersen's child, having remarked that the Emperor wore no clothes, and seeing the consternation of the court, had retired recanting into silence. The explanation in our own case, however, is rather sinister than naïve. The power of the Daily Press is the power of the rich men who own and control it. It follows, therefore, that however beneficent nationally any truth may be, its circulation will be impeded if it threatens at the same time the interests of the privately wealthy.

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Being little disposed, unlike Hans Andersen's transformed child, to recant our original remark on account merely of the consternation it has produced among capitalists, we choose rather to repeat it and to declare

that it is not only just that our wealthy men should pay for the war in actual loss of their capital, but, sooner or later, it will be necessary. Its justice may be seen from the following considerations. In the first place, it has always been the defence of private wealth (maintained, be it remembered, by the whole constitutional authority) that its accumulation in this form ensured the nation an ample reserve for precisely such an emergency as a great war. The argument (to be found in Pigou, for example) ran that, however apparently fair it might be that wealth should be equally distributed over the whole population, only its accumulation in a few private hands would secure its saving, since the majority would certainly spend it as fast as they got it. Hence the expediency of maintaining a wealthy class. But if, now that the contemplated contingency is upon us for which private wealth has been permitted, the nation that has forgone its share all these years is simply to borrow its vicarious savings under promise to repay with interest, what justification is left of the system that has obtained? Surely all our cunning economy in delegating to a small class the responsibility of saving for the nation has been thrown away if, when we need to draw upon the fund, we are met with the demand to pay for our own savings. And, in the second place, the notion our wealthy men have of making profit out of the war is particularly obnoxious both to common sense and to justice. The very idea of it, indeed, is repugnant to human nature. For what does it imply save that it is all one to our capitalists whether the money they lend to the nation is expended productively or unproductively? It cannot be denied that the diversion of labour from the production of exchangeable goods to the production of perishable and unexchangeable war munitions is and must be a loss to the nation as a whole; but if it is agreed that the war is necessary and that, in fact, the production of goods cannot go on as usual, why, not only the nation as a whole must put up with the loss, but the capitalists whose plant is put out of productive action should suffer loss as well. As it is, however, the nation is to suffer loss and to incur a colossal debt, while the capitalists are to be guaranteed not only against loss,

but compensated for forgoing the profit they would have made if peace had continued. This is as sensible as if an earthquake should occur in England and everyone disturbed by it should receive from the rest of us (a) full compensation for loss; (b) interest on the capital destroyed; and (c) an amount equal to the highest profits the capital would have earned for its owners if it had never been touched. Nay, the case is worse; for not only is the war a calamity affecting a few, it affects everybody; but at the same time its deadliest effects ought to be and can be confined to the treasure-chests of the wealthy.

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No hope can be entertained that the foregoing considerations, simple as they are and easily as they might be added to, will of themselves induce our capitalists to submit to paying for the war out of the national savings entrusted to them. But, on the other hand, necessity may yet compel them where reason and justice are powerless. For it stands to reason that the nation cannot much longer continue mortgaging its future production by means of loans without threatening to impose upon the coming generation a burden it cannot bear. We have only to reflect that up to date the annual sum the nation has had to promise to pay its capitalists is some two hundred million pounds (£5 per head of the population per annum); and to add to it the fact that the war is not yet over, and may not be for another year or two, to realise that in a very little while the nation will have pledged itself to pay to a handful of financiers a much greater sum than either it can pay or will pay. Come an annual Budget of five, six or seven hundred millions (and, as the war is going, the figure may easily amount to this) and even Englishmen who have been taught to measure their national wealth by their national debt will begin to ask whether a perpetual mortgage on their production is really endurable. Then we might expect, in a revolutionary form, the very action we are now advising in a peaceable constitutional form: in short, the repudiation of the national debt in place of the present conscription of capital. That is one possibility. But another is this: that, foreseeing the possible resistance of the nation to fresh debts on account of the war, our capitalists may attempt to bring the war to an end before its national object has been achieved. In that event we believe that the nation would make short work of the capital question, and perhaps of the capitalists themselves. For if it is to be a choice between concluding the war and conscripting capital, we have no doubt whatever that capital will be conscripted. Let only our financiers talk of ending the war to save their capital, and we shall see that not all the paid silence of the Press will prevent public opinion from discussing and settling the question.

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For the present, however, not only is the subject taboo in the Press, but, by reason of its association with the word Money, it is largely taboo in general society. There is a black magic in the word that seems to induce in the common mind a state of cataleptic idiocy. It is a word of power, a spell, a cabalistic formula, a mantram, an abracadabra; and its secret is, of course, the secret of Plutocracy. Money, however, has really no significance that needs to be reserved for the understanding of initiates. On the contrary, as in most such instances of mystification, the plainest common sense is sufficient to penetrate its mystery. For money, whether in the form of currency or credit, is no more than a promise to deliver goods or services. Note that, gold apart (and what a mystery has been made of gold!), money is not goods, nor is it service; but it is only a symbol of a mortgage upon goods and services, whether existing now or to be produced in the future. From this point of view what is the whole "credit" of the City but the possession of promissory notes drawn upon industry in general? And when the State borrows

credit in the City, no more esoteric action passes than the transfer from the City to the State of mortgages upon production. You may ask now how it came about that the City possesses these innumerable mortgages upon production; and, again, be amazed with us that a nation in its senses should reckon as a part of its wealth the mortgages a small class of people have upon it (which is to count both a house, say, and the mortgage on it, as doubling the value of the property)—but these questions, though interesting, are irrelevant to our immediate object, which is to ask why these mortgages, now in private hands, being, as they are, neither goods nor services in themselves, should not be cancelled and extinguished as the war consumes the realities they stand for. Otherwise, see the position into which we are putting ourselves. On the one hand, there is no doubt that we are consuming goods and services at a prodigious rate, and unproductively—that is, in a manner that yields no return. Economically, in fact, our conduct of the war is tantamount to throwing into the sea the goods and services of two years' labour. Yet, instead of seeming to be, what we must be actually, poorer by the waste and loss, monetarily speaking we are not only as rich as we were before, but richer! Our working classes are better off by reason of the slightly higher wages they have been receiving; our manufacturers are better off by reason of their higher profits; and, at the same time, our financiers are better off, since they reckon none of their advances to the State as losses, but as investments. What a miracle is here of eating our cake and having it! As a nation we have eaten a two years' cake, and yet still, as a nation, we have it and more to eat.

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Another illusion consequent upon confusing money with goods is the complete misunderstanding our business men labour under of the signs of victory. To see them watching the pulse of the exchange value of the German monetary mark, you would suppose them impatient heirs calculating the approach of the death of their testator by the measure of money. Nothing can, in fact, be more misleading; and any hopes of victory based upon the oscillations of the mark are no better than auguries from the flights of birds. It is a plutocratic superstition that money prophesies. In the last year of the American Civil War the paper dollar was at a discount of over ninety per cent.; yet the war was not stopped on account of money. During the French Revolutionary wars the assignats of the Government were of little more value than waste-paper; yet the wars continued for fifteen years after Pitt predicted their collapse from the collapse of French credit. Nay, we have only to ask whether if the City were ruined (as we should like to see it), our own nation would carry on the present war, to grasp the fact that not money, but goods and services, are alone necessary to war as to peace. Provided that the actual production of Germany remains equal to her actual consumption, civil and military, we see no reason why she should discontinue the war because her monetary values have declined. On the contrary, for German Socialists at any rate, such a decline would be a reason for persisting in the war. . . . !

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All this it is obvious that a number even of our public men are now beginning to see, though still in a glass darkly. An Executive Resolution of the Association of Chambers of Commerce (grandiloquently named by the "Times" a "Trade Parliament,"—with not a Labour representative present!) recorded an appreciation of the distinction between real wealth and "values or the symbols of values," and would have been carried, but for the opposition of the bankers. Sir Algernon Firth, the chairman, did, indeed, venture to maintain the distinction, and he was afterwards supported by Mr. McKenna, who, to do him justice, has occasional glimpses of the truth of things. Money, said Mr. McKenna in effect, was not of the smallest

use in enabling us to carry on the war. We might be financially (that is, on paper) as rich as Cræsus, but unless we could produce more than we consume, we should be compelled to surrender. What, therefore, was necessary? To increase production or to diminish consumption; or, still better, to adopt both courses simultaneously. Very good, Mr. McKenna, but though it is true that money is not itself either goods or services, neither of these necessities, as things are, can be brought into being without the instrumentality of money. Money, in fact, is the catalytic agent in the presence of which goods and services are created and exchanged. But if this agent is in the hands of private financiers who insist upon taking ruinous toll for the national use of it, every service and commodity we produce will cost us, over and above the exertion necessary to its production, a sum, in what is called interest, at least equal to the labour cost. That is what capitalism means; and it is for the elimination of the toll of the money agent that we demand the Conscription of Capital and Credit. It is now admitted that goods and services are the things by which we live; it is now admitted that money without them is useless; but, in return for its passive work of liquidating exchange, is it, we ask, right or reasonable that its private owners should burden us with an onerous toll? Nationalise credit, mobilise money, confiscate capital, conscript wealth, and the nation has in its hands not only goods and services, but the means of their exchange.

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But another discovery was made at the recent sittings of the "Trade Parliament"—the discovery that our profiteers, intent more upon exchange-values than upon use-values, and wholly upon their private advantage to the neglect of national interest, had allowed our national production to become of such a character that at the outbreak of war not only were certain industries, essential to security, in the hands of the enemy, but we had not the means of readily improvising them. Confirming the statement we have often made that our business men were as little prepared for war as the politicians they condemn, Sir Algernon Firth confessed in the name of the Chambers of Commerce that "we had been blind to the essentials of the situation, and had been smugly satisfied with big figures of exchange of goods, without consideration of their significance, or of their value from the point of view of labour or of national defence, the which was a discredit to a great commercial community." And never again, it was resolved, should the like recur. But by what means, we may ask, is it proposed that the disastrous chaos into which, under profiteering, our national industry had fallen, shall not be repeated? Profiteering by its very nature is the substitution of profit for use as the object of commercial pursuit; and it is simply playing with reason to assume that the continuance of profiteering, however regulated, is compatible with the pursuit of national use. Yet, from all we can gather, from the reports of the meeting, from the rumours of Parliamentary action, and from the speeches (now particularly interesting) of company chairmen, it is not only this assumption that everybody commercial is making, but upon it they propose to erect a system of State aid, State encouragement, and State protection, the net effect of which will be to promote profiteering in utilities at the public expense.

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Let us look at this matter a little more closely. It is agreed that there are a number of "master" or "key" industries the possession of which in our own hands is desirable in war-time, and therefore in times of peace. It is agreed, moreover, that whether they are currently profitable or not (that is, whether they yield an annual dividend or not) their establishment and maintenance is necessary to our security. Like an army or a navy, in short, we must have them, even if in annual audit they show a dead trading loss. But, being unprofitable in the private sense, it is obvious

that private capitalists will have nothing to do with them. Yielding no profit, they offer naturally no inducement to profiteers. What is, then, to be done, since, on the one hand, our profiteers will not support them; and, on the other hand, the nation cannot safely do without them? The obvious answer, we should have thought, was to nationalise them and to make of them a national charge and duty. Is it dyeing, for example, that is in question—an industry that yields high explosives as well as dyes? And is it the fact, never to be repeated, that in consequence of the profiteers' neglect of the dyeing industry—because it did not pay them—we were tremendously handicapped against Germany in the early days of the war, and still are? Then the dyeing industry, it seems clear, should be nationalised. Or is it the mercantile marine—with which we shall deal later—that has a use for the nation beyond its profitability to private capitalists? In all such cases, we say, it appears the most obvious course to nationalise the industry and thus to secure its national use for ever. On these grounds, indeed, we have tried to teach the Free Traders a lesson in diplomacy. Here to their hand is a means by which they can either maintain Free Trade or sell it at such a price that the proceeds are worth the sacrifice. What is worth the nation's protection is worth the nation's possession. Every trade that cannot be free ought to be nationalised.

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But that is not the way that our profiteers, as represented by the Trade Parliament and other bodies, look at it. Oh, not at all. Not a word, as we have said, was spoken at any of the recent meetings in favour of this obvious course of nationalising national necessities; but, on the contrary, the impudent claim was made that, in return for the maintenance of these unprofitable but necessary master and key industries, the business men concerned should be guaranteed profits in one or other of two forms—by grants in aid or by fiscal protection—in other words, by artificially induced high prices. It is understood, of course, that the actual labour involved in these industries can be paid for, from skilled management down to skilled workmen, without any form of protection. But what Free Trade (in short, the competition of Germany) could not guarantee is interest on capital and profit on capital in addition to the cost of the labour. And it is precisely this defect that the capitalists are asking the State to make good. They appeal to us, as a condition of carrying on an industry indispensable to our security, to ensure them over and above the actual cost of it, interest and profit for themselves such as they could make in any other industry. They ask us, in short, to make a merely useful industry a profiteering industry as well! We have too often had occasion to be indignant at the impudence of profiteers to waste words upon their present demand. Moreover, we have every ground for fearing that they will get their way this time as always before. Nevertheless, our readers have only to imagine their feelings if the Navy and Army suddenly demanded profit and interest as well as equipment and pay to realise the state of mind that should follow the appeal of the profiteers for profit out of national industrial necessities.

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The case of the mercantile marine is perhaps even clearer than the examples already cited. Speaking last week at the annual meeting of the Cairn Line Company, the chairman remarked that "it is now being realised how vital the maintenance of our mercantile marine is to the welfare and preservation of the nation." "The feeding of the people," he continued, "the supply of war material, and, in fact, the life of our island kingdom depend upon it." They do; we have no mind to deny it. On the contrary, it is our case. For if it is upon the mercantile marine that our island life depends, what incomparable folly it is in us to allow the mercan-

tile marine itself to depend upon the chances of private profit. We might just as well depend for our naval defence upon privateers as for our mercantile defence upon profiteers. And if it be argued that experience has shown that, when called upon, our mercantile marine is ready at the national service we can only advise our objectors to tell it to the mercantile marines. But for the decisive action of the Board of Trade, a considerable part of our shipping would have been sold to neutral countries to make profit at our expense. And in spite of the Board of Trade, the marine has blockaded our island kingdom, raised the prices of imported commodities tens and hundreds per cent., and reduced us all to a state little distinguishable for the average consumer from that of Germany. That, we say, was only to be expected of the policy of allowing a necessary national means of supply to fall and remain in private hands. For if, as such people are fond of saying, it is against human nature for workmen to labour honestly for pay, it is assuredly against human nature for profiteers to manage an industry in the public interests.

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Strangely enough, the same week that has seen the appeals of shipping companies to be allowed to retain their monopoly of a national necessity has seen an appeal to the State from the same quarter for all the advantages of nationalisation. In the "Times" of Monday last a "large shipping-owner" makes the surely facetious suggestion that the State should proceed to construct with State capital a hundred or so standardised merchant ships to be commissioned to private ship-owners during the war, and, when the war is over, to be sold to them by auction. The grounds of this appeal for State aid are, in the words of our anonymous profiteer, as follows: "The first point," he says, "in favour of a State programme is that both for sentimental and financial reasons the men are reluctant to handle any but Government work. And the second reason is that by standardisation the work could be greatly expedited." We have not the least doubt (for, once more, it is our case) that both reasons are valid. For, as to the first, Mr. Hudson announced in an unreported speech in the House of Commons that many workmen in the shipping yards had not only refused to work on private vessels, but had voluntarily offered to do Government work weekdays, Sundays, day or night, at their usual day rates of wages. And, as to the second reason, it is obvious that standardisation, such as is possible to the State, is vastly more economic than the higgledy-piggledy construction of separate companies. But having admitted these advantages from the State building of mercantile vessels, who would have thought it possible that the argument should then proceed to advocate their private use? If the State can manage labour and economise cost in building more efficiently than private employers, the same advantages might surely be expected from State ownership and State control. Moreover, it is no reply in these days to urge that the State may succeed in the one and fail in the other; for it is precisely in the matter of control that the State has recently been compelled in its own interests to supersede private control. "Practically the whole mercantile marine," complained another shipping chairman, "is at this moment under the control of the State." Everything, then, is now proven that needs to be proven. The supply of labour, the provision of economy, and the control of the mercantile marine are all, by admission or by evidence, more secure in the hands of the State than in private hands. Why, then, for the advantage of profits alone, should the mercantile marine remain in private hands?

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While all these plans for preserving and extending the power of private capital are being discussed, it is instructive to turn to the proposals being made for the future of Labour. The output of goods and services which constitute our wealth depends, as we have seen,

upon two factors only: tools and workmen, or, as abstractly named, Capital and Labour; and having now examined the kindnesses to the one, let us look at the treatment promised to the other. From the standpoint of scientific economics, in which subject we profess to deal, it is a matter of equal concern that both Capital and Labour should be well provided for. To spoil the ship for a ha'porth of tar is no less bad economy than to muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. Well, let us see. By way of saving upon consumption and as a means to paying the cost of the war, one of the first proposals of our commercial statesmen is to reduce public expenditure upon popular education. All told, both national and local, the amount thus annually spent is a bagatelle, and the saving under the most severe administration would pay for only an hour or two of the war. But the effects of the attempt in other directions would be incalculable. As well as the reduction of the efficiency of popular education (already, we know, low enough barely to compete with a Balkan State), the consequence would be inevitable that popular education should be held in less esteem than ever. Here is a foundation for a trade war with the most highly educated nation the world has ever seen! Next, on the suggestion of Mr. Geoffrey Drage—one of those pseudo-economists of whom swarms are always being hatched on capitalist dung-hills—the public expenditure upon the Poor-law, old-age pensions, insurance and the like, is to be reduced, if not done away with altogether. We are not and never have been infatuated with any of these aids to wages; but if they are to be taken away without providing in their place wages in compensation, the effect can only be to add to the defects of an abbreviated education the defects of an impoverished standard of living. With the minds and bodies of our working classes thus lowered in efficiency we are then to proceed to recover the ground we have lost in the war and to leave Germany behind us in the race for high production. Lastly, as we have several times warned our readers, wages are to be reduced. Now are we, we ask ourselves, in Bedlam or in England? Either the foregoing analysis is the work of lunatics or the facts we have analysed are themselves the work of lunatics. If we are wrong it would be a mercy to put us out of our fallacy. But if we are right—what, in God's name, will become of England if these things continue?

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Into the discussion of the economic consequences of the war we do not propose to enter at this moment; but one consideration, arising from the proposal to reduce wages, may be mentioned in a closing paragraph. It is confidently assumed by prosperous optimists like Sir Leo Money and Sir George Paish (knighted both for their convenient ignorance of the nature of credit!) that a boom in trade must needs follow from the war, since on the one hand, credit will be plentiful (the war-debt ranking as capital, if you please), and, on the other hand, demand will be abundant for the replenishment of our industrial and other stocks. What, however, these knights and their peers fail to take into account is the exigent character of demand in the economic sense. It is not enough that there should be a demand in the human sense of need or desire; but it must, in order to become economically effective, bring money in its hand. The condition, therefore, of a boom is that as great a number of people as possible shall have money in their hands: in other words, that wealth shall be well distributed. But if wages are to be reduced by taxation or any other means, four-fifths of our population will find themselves with all the sensations of demand but without the power to make it effective. And since the restoration of industry depends upon effective demand, we can guess the effect of reduced wages upon industry in general. As well, therefore, as injuring workmen in mind, body and estate, the present proposals are likely to react upon capital and to cause a slump rather than a boom in trade after the war.

Foreign Affairs.

By S. Verdad.

WHEN the German invasion of France was checked at the battle of the Marne and the enemy driven back to the Aisne, I ventured to say in this column that the war might be regarded as having resulted in a defeat for the Germanic Powers. In spite of criticisms and counter-arguments I never saw good reason for changing that view, though mismanagement, preventable delays, the unbalanced utterances of a section of our Press, and the total inability of the late Government to understand, at first, the needs of a modern war, were factors which all tended to postpone a definite decision of the issue. My optimism at the time of the Marne was not founded, I now feel at liberty to say, on the military success alone. A few words will explain why. Long before the war began I pointed out in this column from time to time the growing strength of the German army, and the perfection of the German military organisation. There were other factors which I also emphasised—the fact that Germany had a close grip on Austria-Hungary and Turkey, that the German Social-Democrats were not Socialists in our meaning of the expression, and, above all, that this country was under definite military and naval obligations to France (and hence indirectly to Russia) in the event of an aggressive military movement by the Central Powers. This last fact, it may be recalled again, was denied in the House of Commons when Mr. Jowett asked questions about it in consequence of articles which appeared in this journal; but the publication of the official correspondence set the matter at rest. These pre-war facts were of great importance at the time of the Marne defeat.

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Why this should be so will soon, I hope, appear. It should be remarked that the Continental publics devote a greater share of their attention to the subject of foreign affairs than the English public does. That is accounted for, not merely because of our grotesque system of education, but by the fact that our geographical situation made us independent of Germany. For the Continent, on the other hand, Germany's rapidly growing power was a matter of the deepest concern, since it was well known abroad that the power of the German Empire had a military basis and was outspokenly of an aggressive nature. Russia and France were the countries, of course, most chiefly concerned; but neutral countries were concerned very nearly as much. The progress of the German army and navy had been followed intently by Denmark and Holland—two potential victims of it; by Norway and Sweden, as countries likely to be involved with Russia; and by Roumania, Bulgaria, and Greece for reasons which may easily be imagined. To sum up bluntly, the situation as it existed at the beginning of the war, it may be said with perfect truth that nearly every neutral country in Europe—certainly, at that stage, all those I have named—expected to see a great German victory. It was taken for granted that, in consequence of the political intrigues which had weakened the French army, and the complete inability of the British Government to realise what was going on, the Germany army would find itself in Paris within six or eight weeks, and that the subsequent campaign against Russia would present no very great difficulties.

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That, in fact, is what would have happened if it had not been for the interposition of the British Expeditionary Force and the very prompt measures adopted by our Admiralty. The immediate consequence of these steps was the German defeat on the Marne; and that defeat was the first event in the whole war that opened the eyes of neutrals. It is now no great secret that if the Germans had been able to continue their successful offensive for another ten or fourteen days, at least

one Scandinavian country would have joined her; and in that event the ranks of our enemies would have been increased almost immediately by the armies of Bulgaria and Roumania. In the face of such a combination it would have been difficult for Italy to disregard her treaty of alliance with the Central Powers, nor would Greece have hesitated to attack Serbia. The attack on the Marne, then, was not merely a military success; it led directly to diplomatic successes—to a complete change of tone in Scandinavia, to enthusiasm for France in Roumania, and to a revulsion of feeling in Bulgaria which made the authorities there hold their hand for more than a year.

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The effect of that victory in the world of diplomacy was realised within a few days. I am not concerned now to say how full advantage of it was not taken. The victory was a fact—a fact which should have been turned to better account. It may be added that neutral countries have all along been guided by facts of this sort, and not by appeals to justice and civilisation. If it had not been for the German victories there would have been no German diplomatic successes subsequently. But the neutral States were anxious—was it not natural?—to do nothing that might offend the winning side; and the Marne was not regarded as a complete victory. From that time there has been only one outstanding military success in the western theatre, and that was the defeat of the Germans on the Yser Canal by the British at the end of 1914. It was never assumed in neutral countries—in Sweden, shall we say?—that the Russians could continue their first offensive into East Prussia, or even their second over the Carpathians. So far as neutrals were concerned the first Russian victory in the war was Erzeroum. I nevertheless insist upon the importance of the Marne, for after it even Scandinavian support for us was possible, and Roumanian support practically certain.

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Verdun represents the second phase. Verdun is to neutrals (and to ourselves) now what the Marne was a year and a half ago. As I said last week, a German defeat in the Verdun area appears to be most probable. It is our duty, however, to think not only of the probable military defeat of the Germans, but of their diplomatic defeat as well. In three neutral countries at this moment our enemies are carrying on a powerful propaganda, not merely through the Press, but in other and more indirect ways as well. I refer to Roumania, Sweden, and Spain. There is no doubt that the Germans are trying to make the most of such small successes as they have just had, though their own papers, significantly enough, relegate the Verdun news to the back pages, for a good enough reason. It is not advisable for a strong and omnipotent military caste to publish the news of its defeats too suddenly. But it is only right that our own Press should be warned of the German propaganda which is now being carried on with such skill, so that the feelings of neutral countries may be treated with due courtesy and care. It has already been hinted in some of our own papers that our stringent blockade has forced Sweden to retaliate by holding up goods and mails from England to Russia, and vice-versa. As for the spiteful attempts by one or two London newspapers to show that Holland and Denmark were growing enormously wealthy through selling goods to Germany, the indignation they caused is now generally known. Even Switzerland has not been left out of account by these people, and the very papers which were most anxious to show that the blockade was "useless" were those which, at an early stage in the campaign, sought to prove to the British public that the Swiss Germans were really Germans, or, at any rate, sympathisers with Germany. Such a statement was too absurd to be criticised; but it may serve as a warning. The diplomatic situation that preceded the Marne resembles the present diplomatic situation in many essential respects. It ought not to be necessary to say more.

Unedited Opinions.

The Case for Germany.

Do you know that I sometimes think that Germany has not had a fair hearing in this country?

Well, we are not altogether to blame for that, are we?

Perhaps not altogether; but since we omitted to understand Germany before the war, we ought, at any rate, to understand her during the war. We shall have to understand her afterwards in any case.

But we do, do we not, only too well?

Oh, you and I are not popular journalists of whom it is required that we talk in the King Cambyses' vein. To answer a case properly you must be able to state it. And a fortiori to wage successful war, and to know when you have won, requires that you should realise why the enemy went to war. For if it was for a necessity and war was the only way to it, be sure that the end of the present war will be only the beginning of the next. If, on the other hand, the object was necessary, but war was not the only way to it, then we may hope that Germany, when defeated, will abandon the method of war and turn to that other way for the satisfaction of her necessity.

You are assuming, then, that Germany had not only an object but a legitimate object, and not only a legitimate, but a necessary object in precipitating the war. And you are only in doubt whether war was the only or the proper means to it?

I would not go so far as to say that Germany's object was legitimate and necessary to her; but I am quite prepared to believe that her object might easily appear to anybody reasonable, and that, even though tragically mistaken, her undertaking of war to accomplish it was not the act of madmen but of reasonable fallible creatures—much as we all are.

It would interest me to hear you state her case; for I have no doubt that you can reply to it as well.

Certainly, certainly. Well, to begin with, let us try to perform the elementary duty of a Christian—let us in imagination put ourselves in the place of Germany before the war. We are a growing people, we are an industrious people, we are a clever people. We feel proud of ourselves and we want to cut a figure proportionate to our talents in the world. We think, in fact, we can do ourselves credit, given a bigger stage.

Excuse my interruption—but of which class are you speaking? You know, I suppose, that the over-population theory of the war has been exploded. At the outbreak of the war nearly two million foreign workmen were employed in Germany.

Yes, I know that. I am not idealistic. The desire of a nation for a place in the sun is composed of several strands: the desire of the many for employment; the desire of the capitalist classes for profit; and the desire of the gentry for golden billets in the Navy, Army, and Foreign Service. But, however composed, its effect is the same: a nation wishes to expand.

Very good.

Being then aware both of our merits and of our desires, our vicarious Germany looks round to see how the world lies. Is it disposed peaceably to make room for the new-comer? Is it prepared to discuss the situation and to make reasonable accommodation? Or, if not, what is its attitude? Still thinking as Germany, what do you suppose the answers were?

Well, I should have thought that the doves brought back the emblems of peace.

Then I'm afraid you are not thinking as Germany thought; that is, as if you were Germany. For, on the contrary, the reports of practically every German look-out were that the world was preparing for war.

But, surely, that is precisely the German obsession, its lie in the soul. Harbours war itself, it naturally attributed—

Wait a moment! Remember we set out with the intention of putting ourselves in the place of Germany

in order that we might understand *why* she went to war. Her reasons may have been wrongly based; all the facts may have been other than she believed. But we have to assume that they appeared to her as facts—for, indeed, they did! And the outstanding fact (as it appeared to Germany) was that the rest of the European Powers were preparing war as *their* answer to the German demand for expansion.

I confess I do not see it. Do you really mean that Germany believed, or, still less, had any good reason for believing, that England, France or Russia entertained aggressive designs upon her territory? It is absurd.

So it is, I agree; and I doubt whether any German ever believed the matter in that form. The form the menace assumed in the mind of Germany was a war on the part of the Triple Entente not against the Germany as she was, but against the Germany as she thought she had every right to become: in short, not against static Germany, but against the *expansion* of Germany.

Quite right, too, I should say.

Do remain a Christian if only for argument's sake. I can say "Quite right," as well as you; but let us first be sure that we have the right to say it. If the rest of the Powers were satisfied to remain as they were; and if they were prepared to offer no unreasonable resistance to the commercial expansion of Germany; then, indeed, our "Quite right" would be quite right on that ground alone. But such, in fact, was not the case. France was expanding in Algeria and Morocco, Russia was expanding in Mongolia and Persia, even Italy was expanding in Tripoli. But with an increasing population, productivity and appetite, Germany alone was expected to be satisfied to remain as she was.

I notice with satisfaction that you have said nothing of England.

Pagan! Let the stage be filled with the minor characters first. Now enter England, the villain of the piece in Germany's eyes. It is true that England had no desire to expand (trifles like Southern Persia apart), but who, do you suppose, stood by the side of France, Russia and Italy keeping guard against Germany while they expanded in all directions? Who, again, joined with them (invisibly to the vulgar) to check every attempt on the part of Germany to expand? Why, England, my England!

You are not, I hope, insinuating that England's motive was selfish? Had she not the Balance of Power to maintain? Was the expansion of Germany safe for the world? Was not less danger, if, indeed, any at all, to be apprehended from the expansion of any other country?

All these things I am willing to discuss in their proper order. I am not saying that England was wrong. For the tenth time I remind you that we are (or I am) trying to look at the matter with Germany's eyes.

Very well, then, what did England's motive appear to Germany to be?

You can guess, surely? Fear of German commercial rivalry. Do you know that in the very year before the war Germany's foreign trade showed a credit balance for the first time? Think what that threatened! If in a few short years Germany had pulled up the leeway of a century and was in 1914 rowing abreast of the hitherto unchallenged commercial leader of the world, what might England not fear from the future? Was it (I speak now out of my rôle), was it to be wondered at that England should employ every device known to diplomacy to impede the further expansion of a dangerous competitor? France, Russia and Italy were relatively harmless; their expansion was still infantile in its commercial menace. But German expansion—

Ah, you have begun to justify England at last.

Then you agree that it was natural that England should endeavour to check and limit the expansion of Germany?

Certainly.

Well, now I have you on the hip. For if, on your

own admission, it was natural to England to attempt to check Germany, it was equally natural to Germany to realise that it was natural to England. By simply putting herself in England's place, Germany found it natural that England should endeavour to check her expansion.

Well, suppose I agree.

But England's resistance to the territorial expansion of Germany was not the only form England's fear took in the mind of Germany. As well as passive resistance a positive trade war seemed to be threatened. Since it was under the system of Free-trade that Germany had peacefully penetrated our Imperial markets, as well as confining Germany within her territorial status quo, our politicians were beginning to plan her extrusion from free competition with us by means of Protective Tariffs. Do you realise what our Tariff movement seemed to Germany?

Doubtless it appeared what you suggest—war upon her trade.

Very good; and the position is now clear. Forbidden, unlike her neighbours, to expand territorially; and, on top of that, threatened with expulsion from the existing markets; Germany saw all her future disappearing before it had been fairly grasped. Think, now, think—what would you have done had you been Germany?

Tell me, have I been forbidden to go to war?

Oh, let war be our last resort. Let us examine the situation afresh. We poor Germans appear to be in a bad hole. To the right is Russia, to the left is France, away south threatening our one partner, Austria, is Italy. Singly, nay, all together, we could beat them. But they are only minor pieces—over yonder, separated from our armies by water, is England. What shall we do?

Carry on, please.

Let us hope that it will not come to war. Meanwhile, let us do what we can peacefully. Make friends, if possible, with France, with Russia, even with England. Cultivate every country in the world. Have a friend in every court. Should all still fail, prepare for war; and, since England is a naval Power, build a Navy as well as train an army.

Yes, that all seems reasonable enough. But do not forget that you have promised to answer the case as well as state it.

I shall not forget. Well, at this point comes something crucial. The Bagdad Railway! Unexpectedly—for who could have foreseen the Turkish revolution?—a door opened for Germany in the Near East upon vistas of wealth rivalling the Arabian Nights. Between her and the treasure-cave lay only the feeble Balkans, a quarrelsome, above all, a divided body of nations. Austria would manage them. But, then—again Germany met her universal enemy—this time in the form of Russia, standing by the side of the most reckless of the Balkan Powerlets—Serbia. Was the last avenue to expansion to be closed for ever? Was Germany to consent finally to contraction within Europe with the further prospect of tariff ejection from England's world-markets? No! Now or never, No! Better war!

Almost thou persuadest me that thou art a German! But I remember that you have undertaken to reply to yourself. I'm sure I hope you will be as plausible. But tell me, why did war appear preferable to Germany then and not before or later?

I claim no better understanding of the matter than anybody—you, for instance—can arrive at by looking at things from Germany's point of view,—most Christian psychology, as I told you. Had I been a member of the Kaiser's Council that debated the question of war during July, 1914—but stop, I should have opposed the war, I should have resigned after voting against it, I should have shot myself. At the same time, tragically, disastrously, stupidly wrong as I should have thought the majority that voted for war, I should have understood them.

That is the very point I was asking you to clear up.

Well, assuming that expansion was desirable for Germany, and assuming that war was ever at all to be contemplated among the elder European Powers; and, again, assuming that war was the only, if admittedly a desperate, means of expansion, the circumstances were the least unfavourable—I will say no more—that Fate had yet presented or seemed likely to present. England appeared less disposed to and for war—upon land—than at any time in her history. Russia—her affairs were largely in German hands. France—one quick blow at her heart, and all would be over. It was a gambling chance; and the fools took it.

Fools, you say, not criminals!

Why, as to that, we must now state England's case.

A Pathological View of the Hyphenated States.

I.—THE TRAVAIL OF NEUTRALITY.

THE conviction is now beginning to formulate itself that their failure to respond adequately to a great event in the world's history will cost the United States dear. Occasional citizens, more intelligent or more frank than their neighbours, admit that the Americans have prepared for themselves a future of hatred or contempt on the part of all European nations. They have succeeded in antagonising both parties of the belligerents, while making a singularly unfavourable impression upon the neutrals. The Allies are dissatisfied with what seems to be a purely commercial bias in their favour, liable to be reversed when not financially satisfactory. The Central Empires are convinced that they have been misrepresented and misjudged, and that nothing they can do will be pleasing to the United States. The neutral States have learned cynicism from the indifference of their only great representative to the rights upon which their common welfare depends. Noting the acquiescence of the United States in the doctrine of might, the small nations of neutral Europe have become doubly anxious to avoid the occasion of making any show of independence. Whatever their wishes or sympathies, they feel impelled to follow the example of their leader: to move only when kicked. We may be sure their gratitude for so noble a lesson in practical politics will duly express itself in commensurate terms.

This unsatisfactory position in international affairs finds, of course, its counterpart in the domestic situation of the Hyphenated States. It is, in fact, the direct reflection of internal chaos. The theory of neutrality, with which President Wilson saluted the outbreak of hostilities in Europe, served the purpose of all American political claptrap; it was a pillar of cloud by day, to conceal the operations of "Business," and a pillar of fire by night, to illuminate the darkness of those who were too proud to think. It might mean anything or nothing, and probably corresponded momentarily to the attitude of the public, which was one of expectancy. People were waiting for something to turn up which would give them a reason for partisanship, the declaration of neutrality absolved them from the disagreeable task of applying principles. Under cover of the President's pious periods there was a chance for each one to seek his own personal satisfaction in the opportunities offered by Europe's difficulties. Had it been possible to maintain this vague relation between theory and fact, that essential condition of American politics, hyphenation would not have been publicly mentioned. The United States might have played the part for which they are fitted. Instead of friction at home and abroad, instead of disunion and instability, the States would have united peaceably in their desire to profiteer and moralise at the expense of the belligerents.

It cannot be too often repeated that the bond of pecuniary opportunity is the primary justification of American existence. The crude need of money has populated the country for more than three-quarters of a century, the hope of making money is the sole tie

between the Republic and its citizens. Remove this factor and the whole social structure becomes shaky, there being nothing equally strong to hold it together. It is impossible to count upon the original element, long since submerged, which came to America in search of independence, and at the impulse, not of hunger, but of principle. The United States would like to believe that they are the crystallisation of the "Mayflower" spirit, but it becomes yearly more evident that such is not the case. They are the by-product of European profiteering. At best, the hell in which the former victims of wavery reign, where they once were slaves: at worst, an industrial Barmecides feast, at which political formulæ do service for the genuine food of democracy. Once the illusion of possible wealth has ceased to exercise its attraction the nostalgia of Europe is felt. The returned American is the familiar proof of this assertion. He has either made what he considers sufficient, or has abandoned the hope of doing so. In both cases he has the same reason for returning, the absence of any other motive for Americanisation. Unfortunately for his possible successors, he can rarely escape, unless he belong to the successful category, in which case amour-propre decides that prestige is preferable to frankness. Thus his motive is concealed from the unsophisticated.

As events very soon demonstrated, there could be no possibility of an equal division of profits so long as the Allies controlled the seas. Citizens who were not humble enough to fight could be proud to make money, provided they were not averse to Allied gold. Obviously this condition supposed an entirely impartial point of view towards the war, the existence of an American nation, in other words. As soon as it was found to involve the exclusion of a large section of the population, complications set in. German-America was involuntarily deprived of all participation, being unable to join either the combatants or the profiteers. Inevitably, the furnishing of money and munitions became the work of partisans, it being difficult to preserve any trace of a politically disinterested, national and independent spirit, in a matter which had created a rift comparable to that between North and South in the Civil War. If the resources of pro-Ally and pro-German sympathisers could have been placed equally at the services of their respective sides, the question would have been one of mere commercial rivalry, unpleasant perhaps, but not more so than most transactions of the kind. It would, at all events, have saved the United States from the serious racial effects of the war upon the social organism. As it is, one section of the community is not only debarred from joining in the scramble for profits, but it is forced, at the same time, into political hostility.

German-America took the proclamation of neutrality more seriously than was intended, when it was found to operate to the advantage of the Allies. The lofty sentiments of the Government were allowed to stand, so long as their vagueness covered a multitude of possible sins on all sides. But it became necessary to insist upon the spirit and letter of the law, when the disadvantage of Germany became obvious. Then started the preposterous controversy which has found its loudest echo in the last Message to Congress of President Wilson: the controversy as to what constitutes a hyphenated American. The question has not officially been formulated so abruptly, but in practice it has resolved itself into a debate on specific points of good and bad citizenship. The President was the first to use the term "hyphenated" in a public utterance, in order to designate those who differed from him in their sympathies towards the belligerents. By right of possession, therefore, the term has become the chief instrument for the discredit of American pro-Germanism. To the unbiased foreigner there seems to be no reason why the application of the word should be restricted. Hyphenation is one of the most typically American phenomena. The United States have created nothing more intensely national than the hyphenated American. It is incorrect to suppose him a pro-German, for he is equally pro-

Ally. It is unjust to reproach him with his hyphenation, for that is an essentially American product. In this one-sided misapplication of an adjective lies the explanation of all the difficulties which the war has created for the United States both in domestic and foreign affairs.

When official neutrality could not conceivably operate to the advantage of all, those who suffered materially or morally by its provisions insisted that something more tangible was necessary. Being, for the most part, Germans, they had perhaps a natural tendency to emphasise the practical significance of ideas, to reconcile, by some means or other, theory and fact. This morbid care for the union of doctrine and practice would, in any case, have been irritating pedantry in a country which has carried the art of ignoring principles to a point at which even the traditionally unmetaphysical Britisher recoils. The dry bones of murdered theories are the plentiful skeletons in the cupboard of hyphenated America. However, a more subtle and disconcerting phenomenon confronted the theorists of neutrality when they wished to make themselves heard. They found that, by some devious process, the doctrine of neutrality had come to be identified with the practice of sympathy to the cause of the Allies. Instead of being despised as pedants they were denounced as traitors! Loyalty to the Hyphenated States had become synonymous with loyalty to the Allies. This interesting dogma has never been officially enunciated, and remains in the same state of dubiety as the cognate question as to the proper qualifications of a "good American." The initial proclamation, with its human but all-too-superhuman platitudes, was left to shield the just and the unjust alike, with that divine impartiality which the President's neutrality presupposed.

In the absence of definitions, and consequent uncertainty of policy, there has developed a situation which is beyond the control of the United States Government. Neither the "preparedness" of Mr. Wilson nor the "Americanisation Day" of Mr. Roosevelt will solve the problem of which these tactics themselves are the creation. Expatriate patriotism is not the sentiment upon which armaments and nationalism can rest effectively. The naïve assumption that the United States could throw their commercial weight on to one side of the European conflict, without reference to the terms of American neutrality, was disastrous. German-Americans could not be expected to acquiesce in the sharp practice by which Business proposed to reap all the advantages of a neutral, while acting the part of a belligerent. They might have swallowed the official camel of neutrality, if equality for all belligerents had been ensured. But it was a little too "practical" to suppose that, because there was money in it, there could be no objection to pursuing an unavoidably one-sided policy, under cover of a theoretical statement of impartiality.

So far, however, from facing squarely the problem arising out of these circumstances the United States Government preferred to avoid the issue. With the assistance of an illiterate Press they proceeded to distort the facts by the simple process of confounding them with theory. They did not admit the conflict of neutral doctrine and pro-Ally practice, but convinced the willing that American interests were identical with those of the Allies. Hence criticism of the latter became treason against the United States, and the imposition of severe restrictions upon all pro-German activities followed, as a matter of course. As these restrictions became more onerous the means of combating them became more radical, until the lives of thousands of innocent people were threatened by bombs and arson. Naturally these outrages have added enormously to the racial antagonism already exasperated by the unwillingness, or inability, of the Government to admit the peculiar situation in which the Hyphenated States are situated. An orgy of yellow journalism has followed the hyphenated minority with mob fury, spying, denouncing, distorting and lying, as only the super-Northcliffes of the Ameri-

can Press know how. Meanwhile the hyphenated majority has been doing with impunity what official neutrality denies to the less fortunate. The effect of this campaign upon a semi-educated public has been to produce a state of mind so inhuman that natives of the countries at war are more tolerant of one another than are the hyphenated citizens of the Republic. A German-American will seek the society of Englishmen to escape the vituperation of his pro-Ally compatriots. Adverse comment upon the affairs of the Allies is possible in London and Paris; it is unknown in New York, unless the welfare of some profiteer demands it.

The irony of the case, as it presents itself to an outsider, lies in the persistent skill with which the hyphenated debate this question without ever reaching the point. The pro-Ally is indignant when he hears that letters have been smuggled to Germany under cover of a neutral passport, he ignores the fact that there is no restraint upon messages to the Allied countries, and consequently no necessity for subterfuge. Whether it is right or wrong to dispatch information of use to the belligerents from American soil never enters the discussion, so fundamentally unconcerned are the parties for the national aspect of the matter. Both fight for their right to aid a foreign Power, knowing, of course, that on the one hand that right will not be challenged, while on the other it will be denied, and exercised as a misdemeanor. When accused of disloyalty the minority protest that they have no evil intentions, so far as America is concerned, while the majority are revolted by what seems a flagrant denial of obvious facts. The former are determined to dissociate the idea of American loyalty from pro-Ally sympathy, whereas the latter are mainly concerned to prevent the dissociation. They resent, therefore, any sentiment which reflects upon the Allies as they would resent an affront to their own country. The wish to differentiate between the two seems either perverted or dishonest. The truth is that both hyphenates are sincere. To the German-American the United States is a country whose affiliations with England are vague, whose claim upon him involves no relation with a third Power. As we shall see, he is mistaken, but the fault is not his, and the responsibility for his error must be noted against those who reproach him with disloyalty. Failure to define the precise significance of American neutrality is a mere link in the chain of hyphenation. It is a typical manifestation of the political, intellectual and social incoherence which geographical circumstances have permitted. If there were any sign that the country were in the act of emerging from this inchoate state, the phenomenon might be disregarded. But it seems as if hyphenism, rather than de-hyphenation, were what the future has in store. The war has brought America a splendid opportunity, which she does not appear capable of grasping to her national, as distinct from her commercial, advantage.

E. A. B.

Little Epistles.

I.—TO SIR OLIVER LODGE.

DEAR SIR OLIVER LODGE,—

I have just read your book "The War and After." I see it is the fifth edition; but books travel slowly to the neglected back-water of the Empire where I live. Please forgive me, then, if I am a little tardy in acknowledging your contribution to our war literature.

At a time like this, it were foolish and hypercritical to discuss the purely literary form of any book written about or upon the war. But why do you overload your own simple and direct style with verbose garnishings from a host of other writers? You surely do not need an amateur to tell you that what other men write should be fused in the crucible of your own brain and the product expressed in your own words. But I observe that your book is written for the particular benefit of the Workers' Educational Association, which was organised by prigs to convert young working men to

priggery. I presume, therefore, that your mass of quotations, all punctiliously acknowledged, is your pedagogic way of "inculcating a love of literature amongst the masses." No doubt these "quotes" (as journalists flippantly call them) will warm the hearts' cockles of the goody-goodies of the W.E.A. and other similar groups. I think, too, that a sense of humility has led you to levy tribute from other writers. Faced by events so stupendous, it is perhaps natural that you should prefer to be in strong company. You are a scientist of no mean reputation, and therefore know how very humble we must be.

There are some aspects of your argument which puzzle me. For example, you adopt the thesis that Germany has fallen from her high estate of the period of Kant, Fichte, and Hegel. To prove it you quote from Kant and Fichte. Are you quite sure of your ground? Have you forgotten an episode in the life of Kant? Let me remind you of it. I am six thousand miles from my books and must therefore rely upon my memory, but I think you can depend upon it. Almost coincident with the spread of Kant's academical fame beyond the confines of Königsberg, came the appointment of Baron von Zedlitz as Prussian Minister of Education. Zedlitz not only admired Kant, but gave him opportunities of advancement. Kant evidently knew that he was on dangerous ground, for he inscribed his "Critique of Practical Reason" to Zedlitz, whom he described as his "protector." That is surely significant. But a time came when Zedlitz resigned. He was succeeded by a clerical, whose name I have forgotten. The official church took command. After some insidious flank attacks, the Ministry issued an order severely limiting the freedom of the Press. Next came an instruction that all teachers in universities should implicitly accept the teachings of the orthodox creed. Finally came an order which point-blank declared that Kant had undermined the Christian creed and forbidding him either to write or lecture. This order was verbally communicated to Kant, *who promptly obeyed*. Nor does that end the episode. Worse follows. After his death, amongst his papers, was found a note, in which he agreed that silence is the duty of a subject *and that one is not bound to express the truth publicly!* It really looks, my dear Sir Oliver, as though the Prussian after all has not changed his spots. (Incidentally, it is worth noting that, although Kant acknowledged his philosophic debt to Hume and had at least two intimate English friends, he had an incurable contempt for the English people.) As to Fichte, I do not remember that he took very much to heart the suppression of Kant. I suspect that he was rather glad. (Our own Milton, a century earlier, had written his "Areopagitica.") Finally, a word about Hegel. If I were a German, I could prove to my own satisfaction, from his "Philosophy of History," that the present war is in harmony with Germany's destiny. Hegel came after Kant, and therefore *knew* the precise conditions of official Germany's attitude towards intellectual freedom. Yet he declared that the German spirit is the spirit of the new world; that its aim is the realisation of the absolute truth as the unlimited self-determination of Freedom. He also believed that the destiny of the German peoples was to be the bearers of the Christian principle. It is true, of course, that he regarded us as part of the Germanic race; but that hardly helps your case.

I think, with these new facts before you, you will understand why I am puzzled. But my puzzlement goes deeper. It is permitted to a physicist not to know Kant (even though he wrote on physical subjects); what I cannot understand is why you should drag in either Kant or Fichte and quote them with approval, when your main argument is that the Allies, particularly ourselves, are fighting for the Christian principle against the Diabolonian schemes of Germany. Kant disentangled pure criticism from the toils of the theological. When Dean of his University, he would, on ceremonial occasions, lead his

academicals to the door of the church, then discreetly side-step and disappear. Fichte was openly charged with being an atheist. I don't think he was; but he wouldn't have written such a book as yours: "The Substance of Faith, Allied with Science." There is, in short, no community between you and the German trinity, whom you quote. In your next edition, then, having a reverent regard for the truth, please cut it all out.

Now, suppose that you are right and I am wrong. Let it be granted, as you affirm, that the German spirit to-day is either more degraded than, or different from, the German spirit of the Kantian period, how can you explain the extraordinary fact that you learned pundits have only discovered it since the war began? Are not these ex-post-facto revelations suspicions? You do not hesitate to teach others their duty. Let me quote from your book: "To have Trade Unions deciding on limitation of output and artificially restricting the working of machinery because of some conditions to which they had grown half-accustomed [why "half"?] in time of peace—an outcome of social strife and misunderstanding between employer and employed—[why not an outcome of physical necessity?] to have such conditions extending into war-time, so that men at the front are being slaughtered for want of the munitions which would do half [you seem rather fond of halves] the work for them—is utterly intolerable. It is treachery of the worst description." Treachery, my dear Sir Oliver, is a very strong word. If the Trade Unionists have been guilty of treachery (their own kith and kin being those whom they treacherously slaughter—an absurdity, if you think of it), what words are strong enough to apply to you and your congeners for not warning us *before* the war of the dangerous change in the German temper? And if you have been palpably and obviously and criminally neglectful of your duty in this vital respect, by what right do you presume to lecture the Trade Unionists, charging them with treachery, when the facts of every hour of every day give you the lie? You must surely agree with me that you are assuming an authority of which you are deprived by your own dereliction of duty. If, however, you only discovered this change of German temper after the war, you are no better than any Tom, Dick or Harry, and your book becomes an impertinence.

I do not, for a moment, think that what you have written is impertinent. I fear, however, that it is muddle-headed. You have strung together a considerable number of contradictory or irrelevant quotations and so spoiled your argument. For truly you have something to say; you are deeply concerned about certain social phenomena (or are they noumena?) and you want us to do some thinking about them. By all means; we shall be delighted. But is it unreasonable to ask you, the author, to lead the way? Because, you know, you don't.

Your main contention is that we are fighting for Christ; your main concern is that we shall spiritually and socially benefit, if not by the war, at least after it.

Of course, we are not fighting for Christ; why such poppycock? The Cabinet never raised the Cross as their oriflamme; never thought of it; never thought of Christ. And I suspect they did not think only of Belgium. We joined in the war, rightly as I believe, because our national sovereignty was threatened and we had an effective combination for the purpose. Nothing very Christ-like about it. Had we all been hard-shell atheists, we should have done precisely what we did do. But I need not quarrel with you on that score, because we are agreed that we must win through to a victorious issue. I only mention your argument because I do not think you realise to what Pecksniffian depths you have descended. For example: "There are indeed some measures taken by the enemy to which we in this country would hardly stoop. It is part of their efficiency not only to develop their own industries, but to try to injure ours by a system of spies and of agents

provocateurs." My dear Sir Oliver, where have you been hiding your leonine head all these years? Spies! Our spy system is better than the German. It is vastly more expert. Agents provocateurs! Have you read the story of the Ascendancy in Ireland? Did you ever hear of Charles, the Walsall anarchist? Come! Clear your mind of cant. We fight to win because it suits our national purpose—and with all our imperfections thick upon us, a great purpose. I wonder how many of your W.E.A. disciples will believe that we are fighting for Christ. Quite a number, I dare say. Doubtless you know them. But you hardly expect us of the great world to swallow it, do you? It is not quite nice of you to put us on the credulous level of the W.E.A.

Never mind, we'll bear it, for Christ's sake! But after the war, what then? You now vigorously attack "the abominable false doctrine that humanity would always multiply to the limits of subsistence." It is "conspicuously untrue." We of THE NEW AGE have been crying this aloud for years upon years. Have you ever come down from your Academic Olympus to help us? I remember a vague sympathy, an indefinite oracularity, from your quarter. Did the Birmingham magnates do to you what the Prussian Ministry did to Kant? Or did you feel some sense of compunction, but kept your feelings rigidly under control? Or did you know as little about industrial conditions as you did about the change in the German spirit and temper?

This third, I think; indeed, I know it. Turn to page 163: "Labour is a floating commodity, easily accessible, and enterprises are started on the certainty that the necessary labour can be got for the asking, and can be discarded and changed at will." (At this point, by the way, you forgot to acknowledge THE NEW AGE.) And what is your comment: "The real grievance of labour is the absence of interest in work—the long hours of monotonous soulless toil." Anything else? Not a thing. Oh, Sir Oliver! Of course, you simply don't know. Consider! If labour be regarded and dealt with as a floating commodity, have you not enough imagination to see that you have put your finger (perhaps inadvertently) on the real disease? The trouble with you is that you don't see it. You mention casually that labour is a commodity and then pass on to discuss poverty, militarism, scientific management, thrift, temperance, industry and art, craftsmanship, internationalism, and not a new word to utter on any of them. Why write a book dealing with these subjects unless you have something valuable or original to say?

I may safely assume that no one hates slavery more than you. Anyhow, I do assume it. Now suppose I were to write a book about social conditions, with these words: "Workmen are slaves, whose labour is easily accessible and enterprises are started on the certainty that the necessary slave labour can be bought and sold at will." Suppose, further, my comment upon this slavery to be: "The real grievance of the slaves is the absence of interest in their work—the long hours of monotonous, soulless toil." Suppose, yet further, I went on to militarism, scientific management, and the rest. What would be your criticism? You would say: "The fool doesn't realise that the root trouble is slavery. He glibly writes of slavery as a permanent and unchangeable factor in our industrial system. Why waste time on these other things? Let us first abolish slavery." You would be perfectly right. And, now, will you kindly tell me what is the essential difference between a man's body being a commodity and his labour being a commodity? You must surely see that it is a difference in form but not in substance. And that is precisely my complaint against you. You recognise that labour is treated as a "floating commodity"; but you do not grasp its significance and pass on to subsidiary considerations. If you do grasp its significance and yet treat it in this cavalier and casual way, then—forgive plain speech—you are a callous brute. But I know you are nothing of the sort. All to the contrary; I know you to be most kindly and sympathetic. But the alter-

native conclusion is that you are hopelessly ignorant. I fear we cannot escape from this most unhappy dilemma.

Having put your hand to the plough and being of the bulldog breed (Christian variety), I now expect you not to let go this problem until you have solved it. You will concentrate your mind upon this devilish theory that labour is a commodity and search diligently for the true way of salvation. You begin Part II of your book with the historic phrase: "The accepted time." So it is: "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." Let it be the day of salvation from wavery. Luckily you have not far to seek. In a book called "National Guilds," the thesis of which remains unchallenged, you will find the commodity theory riddled and the escape from it mapped out clearly. As you are certain to buy the book, now that I have told you of it, I need not recapitulate its general argument here. But I will make one general observation: You are rather fond of asking the workers to exercise their imagination. May I ask you to exercise yours? The transition from slavery to wavery was not only of great historic significance, but called out in rich veins the imaginative faculties of men and women of that period. But think of all that is involved in a transition from wavery, based on labour as a commodity, to economic fellowship, based upon labour as a sacred trust.

I hope, my dear Sir Oliver, that you can rise to the occasion. My fear is that you are a little too smugly righteous; too closely akin to that futile type so prevalent in England, "the man whose heart is in the right place."

NATIONAL GUILDSMAN.

More Letters to My Nephew.

MY DEAR GEORGE.—I enclose Richard Tudor's letter, as promised. I expect it will seem remote and altogether irrelevant to political life as you knew it prior to the war. I regard it as an historic document. Please keep it carefully. It is one of many papers in my possession, which might prove extremely interesting to the next or some future generation. If I were a literary gent I could earn some more or less honest guineas by throwing them together in book form, with those harmless comments and annotations which are deemed to be de rigueur in that class of literature.

Prescience and sympathy are essential to recognise genuinely historic documents. We are told that this Prime Minister or that Foreign Secretary or some President of some republic has added to his fame by writing a classic State paper. There have been several hundred of them in my own recollection. But the years cover them with deathly dust; they become mere stones in an edifice of precedent. No doubt they served their turn, bringing great kudos to their authors. But historic? No. They are not historic because they are political, and, therefore, transient—artificial, and, therefore, transient. A genuinely historic document must first and last be penetrated with truth and sincerity; it must be artless, written without affectation or for effect. Such documents are locked away in old strong boxes in ancient castles and manor houses—a letter from a lord to his lady, old estate accounts, tradesmen's bills, confidential letters that utter thoughts too subversive to publish, or tell of events apparently trivial but often of incalculable significance. We know the legal relations between the various classes of English society from Magna Charta to the Insurance Act. But we do not know the actual personal, the psychological, relations that have subsisted in feudalism and the large industry. That is a much too subtle task for Dryasdust. The really historic documents are precisely those that formal history rejects.

I have been too much behind the scenes to be deluded by formal records and papers. He is a fool who is so

deluded, for they are almost invariably false in essence. It is a safe rule to regard suspiciously every hierarchical document. Depend upon it, the more persuasive it seems, the less reliable it is in fact. Am I then a disillusioned old cynic? Not in the very least. I have merely learnt the simple lesson (too simple for clever folk) that the facts of life, and, therefore, history, are found in the thoughts and hopes and daily tasks of the mass of the population. The voice of the people is not the voice of God, but it is the voice of history. Before it the walls of Jericho totter and fall. To be disillusioned is the first step towards salvation; but I cannot be a cynic, because I have more than once entered into the sanctuary of living truth. I have been present at the birth of the commonplace, that most miraculous and most powerful agency in true historic development. Cynicism is much too cheap for one who has experienced the rich simplicity of ordinary life. Give me Millet, and let who will have Watteau.

Do you think that the commonplace is dull? It is the unusual, the perverse, that is dull. I have been amongst clever people, the so-called Bohemians, the academics, the politicals, the rebels, and all the rest of the epigrammatic quidnuncs. Their lives are dreadful—a strained extravaganza, tiresome and exhausting. Tell me, what do you think of a man or woman who frankly confesses to be always in search of new sensations? Life to them is dull. There can be no other explanation. Perhaps you will say that they have found the ordinary, the commonplace, so dull that they seek something more exciting. Idiots! If life punched them in the ribs, they would look for it in the moon. From time to time, I have told you stories of ordinary, commonplace men and women out here. Have my stories been dull? Then God help you—or me.

I am forgetting Tudor's letter. I think it conforms to my definition. Tudor was the cleverest man I ever met, but he knew that truth and the real struggle that lifts us beyond the level of the brute are to be found only in the universal, in that vast expanse of average experience that surges all around us, that breaks in upon us with tidal force, from which we cannot escape. How foolish for clever men to deny its existence; how fantastic when they refuse to plunge in. Yet London, Paris, New York, and all our "intellectual centres" are covered, as with flies, by these creatures who think that the earth is dirty and average life inconsistent with the fastidious. Not so Tudor. I remember taking him to a mixed club in London. I could not say whether the dress or the conversation was the more exotic. We left early; Tudor's disgust would have broken bounds had we stayed.

"Tony, it doesn't deceive you, does it?" he asked.

I felt a little ashamed, for somehow I had been rather taken in. So I answered, shame-facedly: "It amuses me."

"How can anything so unreal and ugly amuse you? Come, step out; let's get some decent fresh air into our lungs. I do not think a brothel could be more depressing. What a croaking and creaking assembly of flatulent frogs! Did you hear that little ape trying to discuss the de Goncourts? It sickened me. He told me he was a realist. He never came within a mile of reality. But the women! Who was that dressy thing I spoke with? She dithered about sex-freedom. I could have taken her down to Brighton for the week-end for a fiver. I wonder if we are in for a new fashion in whores. The ordinary type I can understand; but this looks like a new variety: intellectual stimulation added to sex lust. I've read about them, but always thought it pure imagination. By Jove; I'm learning."

As we walked, he rolled a cigarette in his long, nervous fingers. I can see his sharply cut features as he lighted a match, his lips curled in scorn and anger.

"You know, we think in contrasts," he continued, "and Agnes Bovaston came vividly to mind."

"A domestic tabby-cat," I remarked.

"If you will," he answered, "but let me tell you she's

none the worst for that. Anyhow, I met her the other day and walked home with her. Her people are all political—Liberals and philanthropic. She runs something—a girls' club, I think. Sense of duty; but I bet you any money she does it well. We got talking about the local political crowd. 'A poor lot,' I said. 'Yes,' said she, 'in your sense, I agree; and in mine, too. They're never themselves; they're all masks and dominoes. I think that what we want is not so much great men as men—just men.' I was delighted. Fancy little Aggie touched by Carlyle! But, Lord! Compare her with those Club vixens. No; damn it! Why should I insult her? She's clean and sweet, and, if she marries a man and not a mask, she'll bear and train up clean, wholesome children."

Some scales fell from my eyes. Life!

And now I wonder if you will agree with me that Tudor's letter has some historic significance. It is not merely the cry of a stricken heart. It tells of what a young, cultured and generous man—a gentleman, in short—felt and hoped and fought for when this century opened.

Your affectionate uncle, ANTHONY FARLEY.

[ENCLOSURE.]

Funchal, October 12, 1904.

DEAR TONY,—I found this place so delightful, so alluring, that I suddenly decided to stop off for a mail or two. As Brown found me dreamy or preoccupied, and found himself entangled with a soi-disant widow, with hair of a Bond Street colour unknown to me, I had no hesitation in giving him a miss. We shall meet later, either at Capetown or Jo'burg—as he calls it. Meantime, the vine rows terraced up the mountain side, the cattle lazily drawing the sleds over the cobbled streets, the quaint little shops selling obviously faked curios (mostly made in Birmingham), above all, the ever-changing face of the South Atlantic, reflecting the smiles or tears of God, have called me out of myself, and I begin to feel a peace that passes understanding.

I think nothing of the future, my present being too deliciously serene; but I have reached one decision which is irrevocable: If and when I return, the movement shall know me no more. At the moment, it seems to leave my life empty. I do not doubt, however, that new interests—or hobbies, fancy me with a hobby!—will gradually fill the vacuum.

This decision is not the result of pique. The criminal revulsion to politics, bringing in its train the degradation of the spirit of the movement, by which I set such store, hurt me more than I can tell. Indeed, I have felt something of the sorrow of Isaiah: "I shall go as in solemn procession all my years because of the bitterness of my soul." But in these soothing surroundings, with brain and nerves smoothed out, and seeing affairs objectively, I now recognise that our efforts have been largely wasted because we have had no all-comprehensive formula, no spiritual talisman, to guide us in our ways. All our vaunted syntheses, upon which we plumed ourselves, prove to be the merest conjecture and speculation. One or two palpable facts prove this. For example, have you observed that our fellows in the game of politics have quite naturally resorted to the usual electioneering monkey tricks? I never liked it, but until now never grasped its significance. It is surely evident that if we were veritably inspired by some great evangel, the majesty of its truth would call out a corresponding dignity in our conduct. As things are, what do we more than others? Then, again, how easy is it for our so-called leaders to swing the movement into any side-track that happens to suit their book? Take the Boer War. Our attitude towards it ought surely to have been distinctive. We had nothing to say, so, like silly parrots, reproduced in our own jargon the arguments of the "Manchester Guardian." The Fabian old gang pronounced for the nationalisation of the goldfields. That rather attracted me at first. It seemed quite in our line. But on examination it is found to be moon-

shine. Apart from the palpable fact that the gang of capitalists who were strong enough to force war upon us were strong enough to hold what they had grabbed, short of confiscation, how would nationalisation have helped the working gold-miners? Their wages would be fixed by market conditions and their bones and sinews continue to be exploited to pay interest on Consols instead of company shares. It is when I reach this point that I am frankly puzzled. If our existing system of industrial remuneration continues under Socialism, it leaves the status of the worker precisely what it was under Industrialism. It is somewhere in this direction that we must look for a fundamental change—not merely a change of employer from Private Stork to State Log. I do not see the way out; I only wish I did.

No sooner are we quit of the South African mess than we find ourselves involved in the woman's suffrage crusade. The I.L.P. leaders are up to their necks in it. What in thunder has it got to do with us? I heard a woman say: "I have no vote; my gardener has." It struck me all of a heap—but not the way she expected. Who was she that she should speak of "my" gardener? It looks as though slavery were not yet abolished. Why is not the gardener his own man? Mind you, it is not a mere form of speech, as who would say "my grocer" or "my butcher." She spoke of the gardener quite naturally and sincerely in the possessive sense. She meant: "This man belongs to me, body and bones. I keep him and maintain him. He is at my mercy. How preposterous, then, that he should have a vote while I haven't?" My answer disconcerted her. "Why, then, we must take steps to prevent you possessing a gardener." The more I think of it, the more clearly do I see that my answer inadvertently gets down to the roots of things. We are very fond of the epigram: "One man, one vote, good; one man, one job, better." Do we then mean "One woman, one job"? If we do, then count me out. That prospect, in a competitive wage-market, means Hell. That Socialist leaders are beguiled into a movement such as this strengthens my conviction that our formulæ, or, if you will, our principles, sadly lack any vital relation to the fact of life.

Perhaps you will remark that I have been re-valuing my intellectual outfit. Why not? If one receives a great shock, it were surely foolish not to turn it to good account. What I wanted, I still want; but I perceive that I desired something infinitely greater than the Socialist movement has in it to give. Socialism is now reduced to an affair of party politics, coloured by a vague expectation that we can compel our bureaucracy to deal more humanely with labour than the present proprietors. It has altogether rejected any prospect of that economic revolution which so attracted you and me and scores like us. Materially, we are comfortable enough; but behind that thwarted revolution was a new spiritual vision, now blurred to all eternity. We shall go down to our graves with our hunger unsatisfied, with a dull ache at the heart, because what we loved has not stood the test. We invested it with qualities and beauties of which it was incapable. The awakening has been bitter; but it is better now than later, when perhaps we could not easily have adapted ourselves to something worth while.

The political virus must, I suppose, work its way out. Until it does, believe me, we shall recede from, rather than travel towards, that new form of society for which we struggled. It is necessarily so; it is the nature of the political man. I have been thinking of the various concrete things we put into our programme. We have completely deceived ourselves in believing that difficult technical problems could be solved by any kind of political effort. In spirit and conception we are all hopelessly wrong about it. Take agriculture as an example. How glibly do we talk of land nationalisation. The term is meaningless. All our talk has been of the form nationalisation should assume. You and I have together worked out a new heptarchy, under which we were to marry town and country. I do not modify my views on that; the scheme is logical, and, as far as it

goes, good. We have even forced the Fabians to swallow it, notwithstanding Webb's sly opposition. But none of us has had the true feeling for the land. It happens that I have had some thoughts of working one of my farms instead of renting it. So I packed one or two books on practical agriculture. Now read this. It is in the preface to a book on Soils.

"This marvellously thin layer of a few inches or a very few feet that the farmer knows as 'the soil' supports all plants and all men, and makes it possible for the globe to sustain a highly developed life. Beyond all calculation and all comprehension are the powers and the mysteries of this soft outer covering of the earth. We do not know that any vital forces pulsate from the great interior bulk of the earth. For all we know, the stupendous mass of materials of which the planet is composed is wholly dead; and only on the veriest surface does any nerve of life quicken it into a living sphere. And yet, from this attenuated layer have come numberless generations of giants of forests and of beasts, perhaps greater in their combined bulk than all the soil from which they have come; and back into this soil they go, until the great life principle catches up their disorganised units and builds them again into beings as complex as themselves."

No doubt, all self-evident; but have you or I or any of the politicals that *feeling* for the land, that sense of awe, of reverence, evinced by this writer? To him it is almost a divine thing. To rob it is like robbing God. Again, I quote: "The man who owns and tills the soil owes an obligation to his fellow-men for the use that he makes of his land; and his fellow-men owe an equal obligation to him to see that his lot in society is such that he will not be obliged to rob the earth in order to maintain his life. . . . We shall reach the time when we shall not allow a man to till the earth unless he is able to leave it at least as fertile as he found it." His last words please me immensely: "I wait for good politics and good institutions to grow out of the soil. I wait for the time, also, when we shall have good poetry and good literature developing from subjects associated with the soil; for we want good literature to appeal to all men." How puerile, how futile, do all our politico-mechanical schemes of land nationalisation sound when confronted with this practical man who not only has the skill to work the soil but the imagination to see its meaning to the sons of men? Perhaps, after all, we have gone the wrong way to work. Why not organise a great agricultural fraternity or guild? It occurs to me that possibly other men have a similar feeling for their own "craft and mystery." If so, why not other self-governing fraternities? I admit, however, that I am gravelled by the problem of adequate remuneration. I can only pray that light shall come in God's good time.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that "our cause, pure, passionate," has taken a wrong turn. Politics bores me stiff. You and I know what it is locally; I suspect that it is very much the same thing at the centre, the only difference being that our local men play with penny chips and the head centre men with sovereign counters. Even if it were desirable to play the political game, our poor little ineffective leaders, who shiver at ha'penny nap, would stand no chance against the other party leaders. From the outset we should be doomed. I have met practically all the Socialist leaders—most of them have been my guests—and sorrowfully affirm that when they are not eaten up with conceit they are only good-natured boys, pleased with a rattle, tickled with a straw. So I step down and out. Adieu!

For all your good comradeship I can only offer you my eternal gratitude. You haven't taken things so seriously as I have. You have always had outside interests, and I have rather feared your diabolical sense of humour. But you have always backed me, and never more strongly than when you knew I was making a fool of myself. We have had some gorgeous times together.

Yours as ever,

RICHARD TUDOR.

Drama.

By John Francis Hope.

IN its own way, the London stage is very interesting at this moment. It has always been tolerant; for, although tolerance is a treachery to principles and to taste, it is the basis of urbanity and a primary condition of good manners. It is true that there is a stream of tendency manifest in its productions, a something, not ourselves, that makes for comedy; but not even Nature could embrace more variety than London takes to its heart. A little patriotism goes a very long way; and if immortality be length of life, instead of depth as Emerson suggested (did not Blake also talk of "Eternity in an hour"?), what is called the "obstinate success" of "The Man Who Stayed At Home" will ensure to History the testimony of our patriotism. At the one extreme of culture, we have "Caroline," a perfect light comedy, the last word of civilisation; at the other, we have revues, musical comedies, and melodramas which are inimitable. The production of "The Love-Thief" at the Queen's Theatre adds unconscious humour to the list of attractions of the London theatre; it is "tolerable, and not to be endured" except by those who, like Omar Khayyam, have forgiven God for all the sins of man. To understand is to pardon; and at least we owe a debt to the Canadians for their gallantry in this war, a debt that we may partially discharge by accepting, not too hilariously, this sample of Canadian melodrama. Everything has its price, and we shall have to pay in some way for Imperial Federation; if this be the price, let us congratulate ourselves that it is not so exorbitant as was the price we paid for cochineal. Indeed, if simplicity is charming, Mr. J. G. Cambridge deserves equally with Virgil the title, "Lord of the incommunicable charm."

For it is incommunicable. The wickedness of great cities is known to no one so clearly as to the village maiden; and the relation of the Colonial dramatist to the drama is equally simple. Seduction, desertion, adultery, persecution, revenge, embezzlement, attempted murder, all these themes have been treated by dramatists; and what could be more natural than that a Colonial dramatist should use them all in one play, make most of them the activities of one character? The naïveté with which the themes are presented suggests that the author is a Kantian; he is content to give us the thing in itself, to show us the noumenon of evil behind the phenomenon of prosperity, the salamander living in Hell-fire, and, like the chameleon, adapting itself to every change in its surroundings. The metaphors are mixed, but so is the play. We have it on Scriptural authority that there is nothing hidden that shall not be revealed; and "The Love-Thief" makes it easy to believe that statement. Everyone in the play has a secret which is revealed. Tom Shanley is a foundling, Mary Martin is an unmarried mother, J. Burton Downs is not only her seducer but the seducer of innumerable other girls, Mrs. Burton is in love with Gerald Bostwick. All these secrets are revealed in the first act. Tom Shanley tells his secret to his benefactor, J. Burton Downs, who already knew it. The love-affair of Mrs. Downs and Gerald Bostwick is discovered by J. Burton Downs walking in just as they are kissing; and in the encounter which follows, it is also revealed that J. Burton Downs is an embezzler. Mary Martin walks in to claim marriage from J. Burton Downs, while Mrs. Burton Downs is about to claim divorce from him. That Tom Shanley should be in love with Mary Martin (whose secret he does not learn until the third act), and should believe that his own secret makes it impossible for him to hope for marriage with her, is only an addition to the general confusion. The action moves so fast that it suggests the cinematograph.

It is clear that J. Burton Downs is a scoundrel. His

wife wants to divorce him, her lover wants to imprison him, his mistress wants to curse him. The character of Gerald Bostwick has a humour of its own; it is only when he is threatened with physical violence if he does not cease his attentions to Mrs. Downs that he retorts with the accusation that J. Burton Downs is an embezzler, it is only when he has been worsted in a physical encounter with J. Burton Downs that he calls a constable, produces a warrant, and has J. Burton Downs arrested for embezzlement. This is, apparently, a new doctrine of reprisals. But most interesting of all is the assiduity with which J. Burton Downs tries to prevent, and then to wreck, the marriage between Tom Shanley and Mary Martin. Tom Shanley is the son of the only woman whom J. Burton Downs had ever loved, and she was seduced by the brother of J. Burton Downs. From infancy, J. Burton Downs had fostered Tom Shanley; he had educated him, trained him in business, he has hopes for him, dreams of his future yet to be realised. For this reason, he tries to prevent the marriage, but is prevented by his arrest; for this reason, he utters the period during which he is out on bail to try to wreck the marriage. When in the third act, he faces the muzzle of Tom's revolver, and solemnly explains the whole business, before going back to ten years' imprisonment, justice was done, the ceiling fell, and we realised the good intentions of the author.

It was by a curious coincidence that Mr. Robert Courtneidge produced "My Lady Frayle" at the Shaftesbury on the same night as "The Love-Thief" was produced at the Queen's; for "My Lady Frayle" is also a love-thief. As melodrama has become comic, it is only fair that musical comedy should become serious enough to have a little story in it. My Lady Frayle had cherished her ward, Dick Bassett, had come to hope for something more than gratitude from him; yet his choice fell upon a empty-headed chit named Virginia Desborough. She cried aloud in her agony for a spell of her vanished youth, that she might woo her ward from his infatuation; and, of course, Mephistopheles appeared, exquisitely tailored. The bargain was struck; her beauty was restored to her, so that she might enslave the soul of the boy, which would then be the property of Lucifer D. Nation, as he is called in the play. But she thrilled only his senses, his soul was already captured by Virginia; and at last, real love came to her, she made the great sacrifice of renunciation. As Lucifer vanished, she returned to her old age, and the boy turned back to his first love. Let us hope that he will go to Heaven. The part of Lady Frayle, a difficult part, was undertaken at short notice by Miss Margot Joyce; and although the indulgence of the audience was asked, Miss Joyce never trespassed on it. Her performance needed no apology, and came near to being a triumph.

Luckily, the play is not all Lucifer and love; there is light and laughter and music. There is a very funny butler played by Mr. Arnold Richardson; the Mrs. Grundy hardly justifies her existence, but her six daughters have the gem of the piece, "We don't get that from mother." There is a convivial Canon played by Mr. Courtice Pounds, and an equally convivial and even more comical entertainer played with real cleverness by Miss Cicely Debenham. The play is exquisitely dressed and set; the music clever and very cheerful, and the jokes are not always without wit. Exactly what all these people have to do with the play, I do not know; I only know that they were there, and that one did not wish them to be elsewhere. If it be objected that this is not drama, I agree; to see "My Lady Frayle" is to be amused, even more cleverly than one is amused by "The Love-Thief," and, really, the "intellectuals" have played such havoc with dramatic forms for argumentative purposes that I incline to the opinion that their chief objection to musical comedy is that its deliquescence is delightful. But that is because the tolerance of London has affected me.

Boudoir Economy.

A Duologue.

By D. Leigh Bennett.

SCENE.—A beautiful Dressing-room Boudoir with Poiret hangings and discreetly shaded lights. An electric contrivance in the grate emits a steady radiant heat. Some bronze chrysanthemums look splendid against the dull black walls. From some fat gold-topped jars and bottles are wafted various scents. Bliss is skilfully manicuring her mistress's pretty pink hands.

LADY GERTRUDE (throwing down a copy of the "Daily Wail"): I do hope, Bliss, that you're economising. It's most essential. You see what the papers say—"One penny must be made to do the work of two."

BLISS: Yes, Madam.

LADY G.: It seems your class is not behaving well at all. Men and women—they've never earned such wages in their lives, and they've never spent so recklessly.

BLISS: No, Madam.

LADY G.: We shall never win the war, Bliss, unless the people save.

BLISS: No, Madam.

LADY G.: Now you, yourself; you get well paid—thirty-five pounds a year; and you are well housed and fed, besides being given my old clothes. You ought to put by half you make and buy some War Loan Stock.

BLISS: Yes, Madam.

LADY G.: Well, are you doing it?

BLISS: No, Madam, not as yet.

LADY G.: I thought so. That's what the papers say. People like yourself are sharing none of the responsibilities of this *frightful* war. (She places another fat silk cushion behind her exquisitely coiffured head.) What's your father earning? I presume he's over age.

BLISS: He's dead.

LADY G.: I see. I'm sorry. Your mother, then? I s'pose she works?

BLISS (brightening): Yes, mother's earning £2 a week with overtime, as a glass packer in a store. It's skilled work, Madam.

LADY G. (incredulously): Two pounds a week! That's a lot of money. (She places her other hand on the cushion spread on Bliss's knee, and carefully surveys the jewelled finger-nails just manicured. They don't come up to her expectations.) This cheap polish is no good, Bliss. Get some more of the old stuff to-day. (As an afterthought.) It's really much more economical, when you consider the result. Well, your mother bought a piano, I suppose?

BLISS: No, Madam; furniture.

LADY G.: Furniture! Good Heavens! Why I don't buy furniture now.

BLISS (with a glance at the sumptuous Louis Seize couch on which m'lady is reclining): If I may say so, Madam, your rooms could not be finer furnished than they are. (With diffidence.) It's difficult for you to understand, I know, but our front room at home has had no furniture at all since coals went up a twelvemonth since. Mother was then out of work. Another two weeks, and it will be looking quite itself again. I've helped.

(She takes a small glass basin, fills it with rose-scented liquid, and arranging Madam's cushions so that Madam may lie down, puts some well-soaked pads of cotton wool on the lids that are shut down upon two lovely violet eyes. Bliss seems to take courage from m'lady's temporary sightlessness.)

If I may so, Madam, some of those gentlemen write and talk about what they don't understand.

LADY G.: Nonsense. However, I'm glad about your

mother's room. But when that's finished, in two weeks you say?—she *must* begin to save.

BLISS: Well, there's another thing mother's set her heart on doin', Madam. My eldest sister, Violet—her husband's in the Surrey Rifles, but her allowance, with six children, only comes to 35s. 6d. a week. . . . So mother thought she'd like to take the children's clothes off Violet. Fit them out new, like. It would take a little time.

LADY G. (ignoring the clothing question): 35s. 6d. is more than her husband's ever earned, I expect.

BLISS: Yes, Madam, it is. Excuse me, do you wish me to massage your arms with the new amber-coloured oil?

LADY G.: Yes, certainly. Well, you own it's much more money than your brother-in-law has ever known?

BLISS: I do, Madam. But, you see, it's no good getting better money if it must all be paid away at once in food and firing. The price of things has risen so; they're hardly *better off*; if anything, the money does not go so far.

LADY G.: Oh, nonsense, Bliss.

BLISS: Well'm, my sister Violet says if they was as they was before the Kaiser started doin' his tricks she could do as well on 20s. as she does on 35s. 6d. (Her voice rapidly becoming humanised.) My brother George puts it this way: my wages, he says—and he earns good money—has gone up 15 per cent., but if the cost of things has risen 30, how am I to save?

LADY G.: I know nothing about that.

BLISS: No, Madam, I don't quite follow it myself, but George is a well-educated man. He explains himself beautifully.

LADY G. (stung by the thought of the superior George, and hunting in her mind for a full-flavoured phrase): But we must think of the future generations, Bliss, of the Empire, of the race.

BLISS: Yes, Madam—the future—that's what I've heard my sister Gwendoline say. She's the mother of five, all delicate; but now her husband's in munitions earning £4 a week, and the way they've brought those children round is simply wonderful. Shows what good food will do. There's savin' for you, says Gwen to me, when she showed me the baby last Sunday.

LADY G. (getting bored and feeling rather sorry she ever started this improving conversation): That's not quite what I mean, Bliss, however . . . change these bandages.

BLISS: Yes, Madam. (With touching diffidence.) If I may say so, Madam, it seems to me it's rather waste of time to trouble about people like us and what we ought to save. George says, of all the money in the country one-third of it comes to our sort, and we number thirty-six million; the rest—two-thirds—goes to your sort, Madam, and there are only nine million of you. (Warming perceptibly.) Now . . .

LADY G. (hurriedly, fed up with George): My dear girl, you've missed your vocation. You ought to have taught mathematics in a secondary school. Figures! (Laughing.) You might as well talk to me in Russian—meaningless, meaningless. This room is much too hot. Open the window.

BLISS: Yes, Madam.

(A silence and a peacefulness, warm and infinitely fragrant falls upon the Boudoir. Bliss is apparently absorbed with the rhythm of her massage upon that beautifully moulded arm.)

LADY G. (drowsily): A nice woman your mother sounds. Take her the small oak table in the garden room—I don't want it—as a little gift from me. . . . But (hardly audible) think over what I've said on saving. . . . We've . . . all . . . got . . . to . . . save. (She falls asleep.)

Readers and Writers.

I WAS saying last week that the cure for confused thought is not no thought at all, but clear thought. But this may be allowed to raise the whole question of the purpose of literature in general. Why are we readers and writers? Assuming as an axiom the definition of man (there are few men yet!) as the truth-seeking creature, the further assumption must be made that since literature everywhere and always, by the acknowledged best minds of the race, is reckoned as honourable, literature in some way or other is a valuable instrument of truth. But in what way precisely? I have the disadvantage of being uncertain as to the facts of the following illustration, but it may nevertheless serve. They tell me that for the extraction of gold from quartz a new method, called the cyanide process, has been invented, by means of which the labour of the former method of crushing and washing has been considerably reduced. Be that as it may, in theory, at any rate, literature is a cyanide process applied to experience for the extraction therefrom of truth. Not all experience, as I have many times maintained, is of value to man as the truth-seeking creature: but only such experience as contains truth. And of this, again, there is, on the one hand, so little; and, on the other hand, the means of extracting truth from it are so difficult; that, without special good fortune or specially effective methods of extraction, a man may well live a dozen lives and yet learn little to his immortal advantage. It is the function of literature, therefore (or I conceive it to be), to communalise the particularly auriferous experiences of the fortunate (no man deserves to be called a literary man who is not, by nature, superlatively experiencing); and, at the same time, to demonstrate by example the most effective means of extracting truth from experience. Take any great book you please. Its two characteristics are, first, that it contains the record of the experiences of a rare and powerful mind; and, second, that it indicates in its method the means by which the writer turned his experiences to the account of truth. And we, the readers, by sympathetic following of him, are thus doubly instructed: in the first instance, by sharing in his experiences; and, in the second, by learning a means of turning our own to account. But is this not enough to establish the utility—yes, the utility—of literature,—utility being here defined as something that is useful to man as the truth-seeker? It is, I think—and yet there is much more to be said. But, perhaps, I have written enough.

* * *

In his Introduction to his translation of M. Alfred Loisy's essay on "The War and Religion" (Blackwell, Oxford, 1s. 6d. net), Mr. Arthur Galton has, among some commonplace stuff about the war, an interesting note contrasting French and English styles. The French style he compares to the rapier (not for the first time!), and the English style to the battle-axe; each of which weapons, of course, has its own peculiar excellence. The comparison, as I say, is familiar; but Mr. Galton adds to it an appeal which I can never ignore—an appeal for the recovery into English prose of the excellences of the seventeenth and, still more, of the eighteenth century. Simplicity, strength, and common sense,—these, he says, were the qualities of eighteenth century prose; and if, without losing them, the grace of the seventeenth century prose could be added to them, what an instrument of great thought we should have in modern English! The belief, I know, is common that English is a perfected language because it is a fixed language. But the fixity of language is compatible with continued development; otherwise a fixed language would be a dead language. I declare, in fact, that the best English prose is still to be written; and, if I could, I would direct writers to aim at combining in their style simplicity, strength and grace.

In M. Alfred Loisy's essay above referred to, my readers will find a reply to the propagandist Roman Catholics who would have us believe that France, after the war, will react towards Catholicism. It is as improbable as it is undesirable, thinks M. Loisy—and upon several grounds. It cannot be said that the Pope has made himself either popular or respected in France by his neutrality in the war. Mistaking neutrality for impartiality, he has really abnegated the peculiar claim of the Papacy to judge, and has thereby proven his impotence, if not something still worse. Are Frenchmen, after the war, likely to turn with increased respect to an authority that has deserted them in their trial? And, again, says M. Loisy, it cannot be true that the Pope himself expects a favourable reaction; for otherwise he would take pains to encourage it. His neutrality, in fact, is evidence that he expects nothing of France. That, on the other hand, there is a religious revival in France M. Loisy does not deny. But he maintains that the new religious feeling is not Catholicism, but patriotism, in whose name it is that Frenchmen of all creeds and none have united. Let this be my *amende* for the error into which a courteous "French Reader" recently thought I had fallen.

* * *

M. Loisy, however, like many less distinguished critics of Christianity, appears to me to interpret the Christian doctrines in a singularly unsubtle fashion. It is easy enough to contrast the exoteric texts of the Gospel with the practice of professedly Christian nations and to reproach the latter with hypocrisy, to the credit of their common sense! If, as M. Loisy reminds us, in Jesus' doctrine brotherhood was accepted as an accomplished fact from which all ethics must flow, and Jews and Greeks, barbarians and Scythians (translate English and Germans, French and Turks) were to cease to be distinguished, the present conflict in which these brothers and nations are killing each other is, indeed, an obvious contradiction of it. But only, I think, on the supposition, hard to make and impossible to maintain, that the *fact* of brotherhood, which Jesus taught, is incompatible with the attempt of brothers to establish justice among themselves. I remember, without being able to put my hand on the text, that in a classical dialogue (was it Lucian or Aristophanes?) Hercules was asked what his service to the gods, his brethren, consisted in, and his reply was that he thrashed them when they deserved it. Similarly, I am disposed to believe that it is not necessarily either an unbrotherly or an un-Christian act on the part of one nation to defend itself or even to make war against another. The justice of the cause is the sufficient excuse—I should say duty. If something of this were not true, should we find, on the one hand, that the combatant soldiers themselves usually fight without malice; or, on the other, that defeated nations would ever accept their defeat? Defeat that leaves no abiding sense of injury must, it appears to me, be realised as deserts. And all nations at one time or another deserve to be defeated.

* * *

I have just discovered in a corner of my bookshelves a translation into English of the famous Upanishads, in two volumes at sixpence each (the Theosophical Publishing Society). The "Upanishads," as, of course, my readers know, are digests of the doctrines of the Indian Vedas or sacred scriptures; and as such, for their curiosity alone, they are worth attention. Oh, but it was not with this sort of curiosity that Schopenhauer drew from a Latin translation of them his whole philosophy; nor is it with this curiosity that I should advise anybody to read them. For they are unintelligible to such a mood and exasperating into the bargain. An acquaintance once complained that he learned no ornithology from Shelley's "Ode to the Skylark." Nothing of the kind either can be learned from the Upanishads. But as the value of Shelley's Ode lies in its indefinable poetry, the value of the Upanishads lies in their indefinable religion.

R. H. C.

Man and Manners.

An Occasional Diary.

WEDNESDAY.—Freda, you're angry. Don't deny it. There's a look in your eye! Angry? I should think I am angry! Never you get married, my dear. Marriage may be the shortest cut to knowing men, but it's not the pleasantest. I can tell you! What's Arnold been doing now? I asked. Doing? His behaviour at Aunt's nearly killed me. Never fit to be seen till mid-day. Came down, late of course, to breakfast, not even shaved, and afterwards put out all the servants' work by dawdling in the bath and pottering half the morning in his bedroom. If that's the Oxford manner at a friend's house, all I can say is—How oxenish! I suggested. But you don't mean you let him behave so at home? Let him! How can I prevent him? I suppose he thinks now he's got me he can behave as he likes—I can't any longer give him notice. And it's not only his appearance—it's his manner. Paper come? is his morning's greeting, and there he sits worrying it and growling over it like a dog with a bone—never a word to me except Tea every now and again, poking out his cup without even looking up! Occasionally, as at Aunt's, he decides to read the news aloud. You mustn't breathe during this operation—or, at least, you do so on pain of having a whole paragraph repeated for punishment. That's his manly manner to me and mine, out of whom he's got all he can! But, mind you, if Violet or Norah (not relatives, you understand), come to stay—ye gods, you'd think he was a little godling himself! Pretty speeches, passing smiles with the salt, and so on. The paper becomes a "rag," and even tea a matter of polite indifference. I'm sure Tom wouldn't—but, there, I'm not so sure. All men are the same when they've married you! Not all, surely, said I. Even Arnold's behaviour arises more from vanity than indifference to your relatives, my dear. Behold me, says he, a man of leisure. Work, indeed? D'ye think I'm a bank clerk? Such almightiness is mine (Ah, before MY time! I went UP in—let me see—'95—6—ah, '97!) exempted am I from the common lot. (And if the dressing-gown isn't a silk one, it soon shall be!) Haw-haw! But why, then, doesn't he behave in the same way before Violet? asked Freda. Oh, well, I said, the manners of spreading a net are not the manners of keeping a cage. You've married him!

Thursday.—Cook's given notice, said Elsie. Mine are always doing it. No wonder, said Joan frankly. Rather than be your cook I'd be married. My dear, you've no more notion of giving orders to servants than they usually have of taking them. One day you're spoiling them with familiarity, and the next you're spoiling them with contempt. So far Joan.

A hemisphere of the trouble with servants, domestic and public, arises from the manner in which their employers treat them. (The other half arises from original sin, complicated by pseudo-democracy.) It is seldom supposed that the proper giving of orders is indispensable to the proper receiving of them. But it is. In fact, as in the case of money, the giving of orders is more difficult, if anything, than receiving them. Again, as with money—that other test of good manners—orders can be most unpleasant to both parties. The receiver is often humiliated by the manner of giving, and the giver humiliated by the manner of receiving them. Why is it that orders prove often so two-edged? The fault lies, I think, with the giver rather than with the receiver. At least, it is only manners to assume it. And it arises usually from the confusion in the giver's mind between himself as a person and the accidental superiority of his position relatively to the receiver. *Because* he is in a position to give orders, *therefore*, he thinks, he is the better man *qua* man. But a good order is not a personal whim commanded upon a slave, it is simply a reminder and direction of duty coming from one status to another. The discipline of the Army is an

example that need not be elaborated. There, however, orders are, as a rule, proudly carried out, because they are properly given. Another illustration is this: A boy is head of his school. It is quite proper, then, for him, on the strength of his status, to give orders to junior boys, but would not a suggestion of his personal superiority be resented by the other boys as "side"—(or am I out-of-date? is it "swank" now? or yet another equivalent?) To return to Elsie's case, her superior domestic status undoubtedly gives her the right (which is also a duty) to give orders; and it undoubtedly gives the cook the duty (which also includes the means) of obeying them. But what it does not give is the right to humiliate by treating her servant as if she were the human as well as social inferior. Bullying a servant before visitors, for example, is an unpardonable breach of the rules of giving orders. So is the omission of "thank you" for any personal service, by which I mean a service addressed to oneself in particular, such as the bringing of an early cup of tea as distinct from the dusting of the staircase, say. Of course, it sometimes (!) happens that the status and the person do not fit. There are people who are not up to their position, and others who think themselves too big for their boots. Such people are bound to give orders wrongly, and to have them (I hope) carried out worse. The fact is that unless your superiority of manner chimes with your superiority of status, your insistence upon your status alone will never command respect. Your inability in the first will belie you in the second. The commanding faculty, says Rochefoucauld, is no other than a graceful authority proceeding from a greatness and elevation of the soul. Well, what is a good order? I grieve to repeat myself; but a good order is unnoticeable. Like all good manners, it likes to work without being observed. Great art is necessary to create it. The voice must not express entreaty or the imperative. It must simply carry command. That, of course, is clear!

Post-Script. By Joan. A defect of the English servant is that the better you treat her the worse she will probably treat you, whereas the reverse is the rule with the foreign servant. But the English servant is a snob. Hers is such an inordinate admiration for power that she despises the person, who, when in a position to exert it, doesn't do so. That's why our upper servants are such tyrants to those a job beneath them. But, because a servant mistakes "bossing" for the giving of good orders, that's no reason why her mistress should do so!

Saturday.—When I saw Freda smoking in the café last night I regretted the leniency of men that ever made women's smoking possible. In itself smoking by women needs justification, and it is their manner of smoking that does or does not provide it. Now Freda's certainly doesn't. It is much too hen-a-hoop. And Freda is by no means the only woman whose smoking manners are all wrong. Women with bad smoking tricks are legion. There is, for example, the woman who at the end of dinner produces, if you please, her own cigarette case. But it is one thing for a woman to be ready to smoke if invited and another to be prepared and equipped with her own fire-arms. She thereby shows that she has entirely forgotten that smoking for women is by permission of men; and to omit their permission is to turn what is a concession into a claim. There is, again, the woman who fishes from her pocket a cigarette-holder in the plain expectation that some useful man will keep it fed for her. This attitude is neither one thing nor another—it is neither the behaviour of a woman nor of a man. Then there is the woman who smokes on station platforms—not so much for enjoyment (that I swear) as to throw down the gauntlet to men. (When, oh when, will women learn that sex-equality is not sex-identity, and that to insist on sex-identity is only to create sex-rivalry?) I was about to say that there are only a few times and places when and where women may smoke with pro-

priety, and a station platform is not one of them. Once more, there is the woman who thinks stiff collars, starched voice, and Harris tweeds the necessary masculine setting for a trivial cigarette; and will not smoke out of 'em. There is the woman who makes a bee-line for smoking carriages—by doing which she is trespassing as shamelessly as the man who insists on entering a carriage labelled "Ladies Only." There is the woman—But 'nuff said! Why do women do all these things? Why are their smoking manners so graceless? Is women's single aim in smoking to smoke like a man? But women's manners in men's customs will never be identical with men's. At best they can only be an ill-looking imitation. Besides, why should women try to imitate men's smoking manners when they might invent some prettier ones of their own? There is something very unresourceful in the woman who can't, doesn't, or won't make a cigarette play into her hands. It really looks as though women were losing their feminine talents of social creation in proportion as they pick up men's habits. (What a mistaking is there of the shadow for the substance!) For if it were not so, would they be blind to this new weapon of fascination and charm? Look at the amount of woman's art that went to the manipulation of the fan. It was an emblem of highest civilisation. The handling of the cigarette permits and requires no less cultivation. The cigarette is the fan of the twentieth century. And what was done with the fan in the eighteenth century may be done now with the cigarette. Until, in fact, it is employed as a grace in a woman's hand, and ceases to look like a Suffrage symbol, women should smoke in practice and in private.

Victoria.

At dawn, the rivulet, which ran even all summer from the far glaciers, was a blue, flat line amidst the pale flowers on its banks. As the sun arose, the flowers grew coloured, pink, purple and blue, and the rivulet became a chain of diamonds; at a rocky point it divided, and one of its streams flowed into the swamps while the other dripped down a precipice into a crocodile pool.

Just at sunrise, when outline is very clear, M'binqui's mother appeared at the top of the precipice, and suddenly she flung over into the pool M'binqui—for what reason, unless that she was simply tired of the burden on her back, no woman may guess. The young crocodile on whom M'binqui landed rushed away more frightened than hurt and told the tale to his grandmother, who swam across the pool to convince herself that there was nothing there, and came head foremost against Destiny in the shape of a vast Bird that crushed the said head. Let us sigh; for heaven knows what we are not all comparatively worth! She had been an admirable wife, mother, and grandmother according to her lights. However, there she stuck, dead as a lizard, against a rock; and above the rock stood the Bird holding in one claw M'binqui imbecilely smiling out of her toothless gums.

"Come, my cherub," said the Bird, "you and I may be useful to each other before another day comes round."

So saying, she flew up over the precipice with M'binqui and carried her deep into the forest until they came where a little mossy cave offered a cradle. Here the Bird tucked M'binqui in, rolled a stone against the mouth of the cave, and went off to find a substitute for the maternal breast. "There!" she cawed, coming back with some bananas—"there's what will cool its little tongue and won't throw it to the nasty crocodiles!" M'binqui clutched a banana and dribbled. "That's all right," said the Bird, and set about making doubly secure from beast and reptile. "If she stuffs all day, she'll sleep all night until I want her. What audacious creatures these mortals be! No wonder that

the Lord of Heaven was afraid of their learning too much! With no knowledge of what life is, they are so insolent as to put their kind to death. And they were made of really the best material! The mistake was in their surroundings. Fancy giving them tame lions and serpents as playmates! Enough to make them insolent as microbes! Lucifer was not so far wrong . . . but, good gracious, the baby's awake! Da, da! diddle da! go, to sleep my, little piccanniny! da, da! diddle do da—there, she's off! Now I'll go see what is happening. I shall startle a supper out of someone to-night. Another night like last, supperless and up a tree, no safe bed at all in this country of leopards, were more than I should have bargained for in setting out to enjoy mortal felicity for twelve hours out of their dismal twenty-four!"

Over in the village, the Seven Epfumos were at work, smelling out the criminal who had done away with M'binqui. Not that there was any need to smell out, for the First Epfumo had seen M'binqui's mother toss the infant over the precipice; but the accused is not the only protagonist who finds a criminal trial interesting. Not, either, that the Seven Epfumos minded in the least M'binqui's disappearance. What they did mind was that M'binqui's mother should have executed such a matter without their permission. Herein lay her crime. And so should say all of us! For we ourselves will so little abide that persons should kill without our permission that we give permission to some barber or publican to kill the persons; nay, we go the length of paying the killer, although he would certainly do the job for nothing, provided merely we promised not to extend our permission to a second killer to kill him. But, in fact, it rather looks as though we are all killers together, so let us drop the subject, merely storing up a defence against the Recording Angel that nothing we may have permitted will have been outside the permission of Providence.

So the Seven Epfumos, passing slowly through the village, smelled out the hut of M'binqui's mother. The First Epfumo danced around the woman, who lay crouched upon the floor. Five others shook their great painted masks and wigs made of bones and feathers, growling, while the Seventh, indignation overpowering him, leapt forward and clawed the criminal to his heart's content. At four of the afternoon, the Court decided to adjourn to the place of crime, which likewise was destined to become the place of punishment. The whole population followed, except the retinue of the old Chief, who stayed smoking amidst his warriors and devising plans for the discomfort of the men of the robe, seven of whom, in one small tribe, did seem impertinent.

Down by the crocodile pool M'binqui's mother lay, bound, beaten, and gasping out her wicked life, hoping for nothing but a drink of water before she died.

The people, debauched these days by criminal trials, and whom only a bloody war might have really interested, stood about waiting for nothing but the conclusion to the interminable dances, growls, and clawings of the judges—waiting for the slaughter of the accused. "It's past sundown," they murmured; "we have got the meal to grind still!" When, suddenly, out of the pool, out of the purple shades, started an Apparition. The folk yelled and fell back. The Epfumos slunk to the earth like dogs that have been caught stealing fat. The Apparition advanced up the rocky way and stood clear upon the cliff, a ghost with yellow hair. An old, old blackie alone held his ground or, at least, he held it with his knees whereon he sank, ecstatically stretching his right arm above his head. And thus everyone remained until the runners of the Chief came, warned by several frantic arrivals that something uncommon was taking place. The first runner merely saw and ran back. The second asked news of the Epfumos, who scrambled up, and seeing the motionless Apparition, began to accuse each other of witchcraft. The Apparition moved towards them and they fled. The Apparition then moved back to the cliff-edge. The third runner asked news of the old man.

"It is the Spirit of the Great White Queen!" he whispered; and let us hope that even Victoria of impeccable memory might not have been entirely displeased at the idea of parading Paradise in a ghost which a Greek might have mistaken for Aphrodite of Cnidos.

"What's all this hullabaloo?" said the Chief, coming up. He adjusted his feathers a bit upon catching sight of the Apparition. "The Great White Queen!" sang the old man. She saluted royally, and advanced, saying—"Long life, O Chief!" and he responded—"O Queen, thy subjects number as the mealies!" The Epfumos crept alongside—"O Chief, if she is really a Spirit and not some wandering maniac, let her re-enter the pool and return before our eyes."

"If she is really a mad white woman," retorted the Chief—"I should have to answer for her death in the pool. A real white madwoman or a real Spirit were equally inexplicable. In fact, I can easier believe in the Spirit."

The Spirit understood that her bread was buttered for a royal supper. "Where is M'binqui?" she thundered, turning upon the Epfumos—"Say, you smellers-out!" They could not say, because they did not know. They would have given their ears to know; and M'binqui's fate would have been sealed! The Chief and his warriors frowned; the people giggled. The Epfumos puffed and snarled. The Spirit of the Great White Queen waved to the assembly—"Bring torches and follow me. Let the mother come, too." It was a great procession, and, returning, very noisy. All night the country blazed in honour of the Great White Queen who flew back to heaven at sunrise.

But the Government could not make anything of the yarn. No white woman was missing! It used the opportunity, however, of warning the Chief that either he or the Epfumos would be suppressed, since smelling-out is forbidden by English law which demands something more than someone's conviction to procure someone else's.

ALICE MORNING.

Views and Reviews.

A New Work on Collective Psychology.

WHEN psychology widened its terms of reference, and became the science of behaviour, it made one of the most fruitful, because most scientific, advances that could be made. It linked man with the rest of organic life under the comprehensive formula of evolution, and enabled the psychologist to check his observations by the results of biology. The merely literary and introspective psychology was reduced to its proper status of a parlour-game; indeed, it was never really any more than a naïve sublimation of what Macdougall calls "the instinct of self-display." When Nietzsche remarked that every philosophy is primarily an autobiography, he made the same discovery; and if I may address a remark to other writers in this journal, I may say that all their reasons do not disguise the purely instinctive origin of their so-called "objective" ethics from the psychologist. The attempt to formulate an objective standard, to use so far as is possible mechanical, or, at least, not personal methods, is only an extension of scientific procedure to ethical or philosophical questions. Psychology as a descriptive science places even the most objective ethics among the sublimations of the gregarious instinct; and sees in the assertion of the absolute nature of ethical truth only a proof of its instinctive origin.

Mr. Trotter* as a biological psychologist has a broader and a firmer basis for his descriptions and criticisms of national psychology than is possible to the human, all too-human, psychology. It is possible, without offending anybody, to distinguish in Nature three types of the gregarious instinct, the aggressive,

* "Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War." By W. Trotter. (Fisher Unwin. 3s. 6d. net.)

the defensive, and what he calls the "socialised," of which the examples are the wolf-pack, the flock of sheep, and the hive of bees. But to trace in the activities of particular men, especially if they are alive, any resemblance to such types is, of course, to lay oneself open to the accusation of degrading man; although, curiously enough, man has always likened himself to animals in his literature. The sheep and the goats of the New Testament, is one example; our own Richard was the Lion-heart; and the Normans of the Conquest assumed for their types the swine, goat, jackal, leopard, wolf, and snake, which they severally resembled. But the description of man is not a degradation of him; besides, in this case, psychology deals only incidentally with man as an individual, it devotes its efforts to the description of his type of gregarious action. If, for example, the characteristics of aggressive gregariousness in Nature are known, and are exemplified in the pack of wolves, and we find a body of men exhibiting in their gregarious activity the characteristics of the lupine type, that classification of their type is not abusive but descriptive. That the particular community exhibiting these characteristics happens at the moment to be Germany will not deprive this particular induction of Mr. Trotter of popular approval.

But Mr. Trotter's psychological analysis is much keener than this patriotic conclusion would indicate. He shows quite clearly that what is inherited is not the type of gregariousness, but the pure gregarious instinct. For man differs from the animals by the extraordinary complexity of his brain (most of which is unused), and intelligence neither destroys instinct nor weakens instinctive impulses; it multiplies the number of reactions to stimuli, makes possible new expressions of the original instinct, even to the extent of defeating the individual purpose of the instinct. The gregarious instinct is inherited, the gregarious type is imposed; and it is at this point that Mr. Trotter makes some of his most searching criticisms of civilisation, and, at the same time, demonstrates the possibility of progress. His criticism of Freud's standard is very sound, indeed it is fundamental; Freud does assume that the normal is what Mr. Trotter calls the "stable" type, a type that, for biological reasons, Mr. Trotter distrusts. For it is the type of Shelley's father, distinguished by "a happy inaccessibility to ideas," in Prof. Dowden's phrase, a type that Mr. Trotter shows to be mentally resistive to personal experience because it is dominated by herd suggestion.

But if he doubts the validity of Freud's standard, his approval of Freud's as the first, and so far, the only attempt at an objective method of investigation, and his adoption of the main propositions of Freud's system and his application of them to collective psychology, testify alike to his fairness and his skill. The conception of mental conflict is the central feature of Freud's system; but Freud, as is well known, has concentrated his attention chiefly on the instinctive impulses, while Mr. Trotter directs his attention mainly to the nature of the repressive forces. The true mental conflict which moulds and deforms the mind must be endopsychic, within the mind itself; and Mr. Trotter finds the origin of it in a conflict between the egoistic and the gregarious instincts. All that process of repression that we call training or education is directed to the gregarious instinct, to imposing upon it, with all the tremendous strength of herd suggestion, the type of gregariousness prevalent in the society. When the process is successful, we get the "stable" type, the type whose accessibility to personal experience is completely controlled by the herd suggestion. When it is unsuccessful, we get the "unstable" type; and the fact that this type is rapidly on the increase inspires the most pessimistic passage of Mr. Trotter's book. "By providing its members with a herd tradition which is constantly at war with feeling and experience, society drives them inevitably into resistiveness [to experience] on the one hand, or into mental instability on the other, conditions

which have this in common, that they tend to exaggerate that isolation of the individual which is shown us by the intellect to be unnatural and by the heart to be cruel." Unless the mental environment is adjusted so that sensitiveness to feeling and experience may find expression, attain development, and be utilised, he foresees nothing but disaster to civilisation. "Living as he does in a world where, outside his race, no allowances are made for infirmity; and where figments however beautiful never become facts, it needs but little imagination to see how great are the probabilities that, after all, man will prove but one more of Nature's failures, ignominiously to be swept from her work-table to make way for another venture of her tireless curiosity and patience."

Apart from this prophecy, which is much less rhetorical than it seems at first sight, Mr. Trotter criticises some of the suggestions made for dealing with the menace of instability. The effect of his criticisms coincides with the teaching of most psychologists who are acquainted with the increase of instability, particularly among people below twenty-one years of age. It is admitted on all hands that the thresholds of consciousness are too high, that the inhibitions (which Mr. Trotter calls the herd suggestions) are too powerful, and that man is really dying (or, what is worse, going mad) for lack of expression. According to Dr. Boris Sidis, wars and revolutions may be regarded as important factors for the release of the reserve energies of man; but Mr. Trotter shows us why this war has failed to act beneficially on the human mind and race. The war has been made the occasion of still more repression, from the censorship to conscription; and, at the same time, no positive direction has been given to the instinctive national unity with which we began the war. On the contrary, there has gradually developed and intensified a feeling towards youth, expressed in the lies about "single slackers," which suggests that England is hardening into middle-age; and the biological consequences of this phase of national psychology are best studied in Mr. Trotter's work.

A. E. R.

REVIEWS

Youth: a Play. By Miles Malleston. (Henderson. 1s. net.)

The repertory theatre developed conventions many years ago, but we do not remember that they have ever before been so shamelessly exploited as they are in this play. It is possible to find a reference for almost every trick of Mr. Miles Malleston. For example, the play opens with an anti-climax; an apparently real love-scene is suddenly discovered to be a rehearsal. The same device was used recently in "Driftwood," played by Miss Horniman's company at the Duke of York's Theatre. The first scene of the first act of Houghton's "Hindle Wakes" "is triangular, representing a corner of the living-room-kitchen," the purpose of this arrangement being the setting of the second scene while the first was being played. As though there were some virtue in this triangular setting, Mr. Malleston adopts it for his scene in the dressing-room, which occupies the whole of his second act. He makes a ridiculous use of the ridiculous convention of a fourth wall, the actors facing the audience and "making-up" in front of an imaginary glass. The humour of such a scene is elementary, and the music-halls have squeezed the last laugh from "make-up" on the stage. Not only Mr. Bransby Williams comes to mind, but a sketch now going the rounds which purports to show life behind the scenes. As for plays behind the scenes, they are innumerable; and the fact that this one shows a repertory theatre gives it only an invidious distinction. Yet we have nothing but praise for the technical skill with which Mr. Malleston handles his first act; indeed, if the play had stopped there (and it might very well do so) it would be a little masterpiece of stage technique and adroit

satire of repertory authors, producers, and public. But Mr. Malleon evidently imagines that he has something to say about sex, and drags out his play to an inconclusive end in three acts to say it. Without going too far back, Browning's "Fra Lippo Lippi" raised this question in his own manner; more recently, and more in line with the repertory theatre, Strindberg dealt with the problem in "Asra." Shaw provided Mr. Malleon with the prototype of his character when he gave us the "Philanderer" and the poet in "Candide"; and in "Getting Married," he provided much more material for discussion than Mr. Malleon can use. Byron, in recounting the first affair of his "Don Juan," has exhausted the psychology and physiology of the State, and has treated it with superb imagination and humour. All that Mr. Malleon's Douglas Hatherby does is to argue with a virgin to prove that "love and . . . emotion . . . and . . . all the rest of it," although really "so difficult—and often ugly . . . ought to be simple and terrific—and beautiful." Well, arguing about it is not the way to make it so; and this young man's difficulties are not so spiritual as he likes to think. Marriage is ruled out. "Just to begin with, I've never met anyone I'm absolutely certain I should want, to the exclusion of everyone else, for the rest of my life, and if I did, I couldn't afford to marry her." What of prostitution? Well, there are risks; and this young man takes no risks. What he is leading up to is, of course, cohabitation without marriage; and he wants to be assured that it is right for a man, and generous to a woman, to enter into such a relation. So he argues with an actor, who tells him how he managed; the girl was "strong enough," and so forth. Later he meets the "strong enough" girl, and argues with her about it. By this time, he is already engaged to be married; but the effect of his argument with the "strong enough" girl was that "she seemed to switch me off one woman on to womankind." Radically false psychology, Mr. Malleon. Anyhow, it is now impossible for him to marry: "I can't promise." The girl doesn't want any promises, but she sends him away until he has "found himself." All this argument without a new idea, a flash of humour, or a burst of poetry; for the girl's speech wherein she describes her feeling of "one-ness" with Nature is theatrical fustian. This is not youth; it is dementia præcox; the imperative impulses are not imperative, but argumentative. Take him away, Mr. Malleon, and put him in a repertory theatre, where he belongs.

The Russian Campaign. By Stanley Washburn.
(Andrew Melrose, Ltd. 7s. 6d. net.)

Halfpenny journalism de luxe—text by the Special Correspondent of the "Times," illustrations by the camera-man of the "Daily Mirror"—beautifully dedicated to "Lord Northcliffe and the Editors of the 'Times,' London, in Appreciation of a Year of Loyal Support and Co-operation." (Sic!)

After this magnificence, it were bathos—nay, an impertinent intrusion—for an awe-struck reviewer to say more. Still, it would be sheer ingratitude not to mention how Mr. Washburn, his faith in Russia still unbroken, even after Warsaw, bestowed upon a carping world these records of desperate optimism. "Many of my friends," he confides, "have urged me not to publish this." But the world must be served, even at the risk of severing friendship; and when the hour of decision came, Mr. Washburn did not flinch.

For the rest, the usual competent babble about smiling generals, sturdy, cheering troops, seasoned with dark hints of secrecy, and a few shells dropping here and there (not too close to Mr. Washburn, of course, but just near enough to make the "Times" a really good pennorth). Only on the subject of Przemyśl and poison gas does Mr. Washburn become at all lurid, and then he gives the reader an inkling of what he can do if he tries. The illustrations are good, and almost justify the trouble it must have taken to bind the book.

Pastiche.

WAR DIARIES.

IV. COUNT BERNSTORFF.

Monday: Met Curley Tim of Broadway. Charming and cultured acquaintance. He drew \$4,000 and left for Chicago.

Tuesday: Two of Curley Tim's friends arrived by appointment. There is something so particularly agreeable about these Americans.

Wednesday: Two railway bridges blown up in New York. Curious.

Thursday: Sudden death of prominent pro-British journalists at Chicago.

Friday: Issued statement to Press that evidently British plotters had made mistake and killed wrong men at Chicago. These Americans are fools.

Saturday: Curley Tim arrested on charge of poisoning journalists. Allah, the Merciful, the Compassionate!

Sunday: Curley Tim has confessed. Have scornfully denied his allegations against the German Embassy. Assured Press that this is only new evidence of characteristic British duplicity. Will it blow over? I wonder. Told Press that America has the greatest English-speaking soul extant. Later: Quite all right.

V. MR. H. G. WELLS.

Monday: Shall war continue? The scientific progress of mankind, the mechanical future of humanity, the social machine, all are endangered by this up-to-date barbarism.

Tuesday: Force is the only good. Weak men too long have stood before the bar of humanity and claimed its indulgence. Was the steam-engine invented in the drawing-room? Are strong men conceived in satin?

Wednesday: Right above might. Men speak of the mechanical law of the universe, and then think of stopping it with a vacuum-brake. There is something mightier than crude force, even than babies.

Thursday: Peace and its results. The war is a failure; Japan and China have not produced the airships I prophesied from them. Where is the Red Death? This was to be my war, and it has all gone wrong. Let us, by all means, have peace.

Friday: If there is one thing in this war sickening to a plain, blunt Englishman, it is the thoroughly irritating delight in half-measures. The Central Powers are to have their economic alliance; let us, then, have ours. Why should not the Allies agree ever afterwards to refuse German ships the passage of the seas? We must not sheath the sword till Germany is crippled for ever.

Saturday (and Sunday): If England wins this war, it will be in defiance of her publicists, not because of them. *I do not wish to cast aside all modesty, but tell me, where can I look about me and see any other of my contemporaries maintaining a single unwavering point of view for a week together? Sickening! Disgusting! Goo-lorable!*

VI. MR. GEORGE R. SIMS.

Monday: Had dinner. Told a lie.

Tuesday: Had dinner. Told a lie.

Wednesday: Had dinner. Told a lie.

Thursday: Had indigestion. Told a memoir.

Friday: Recalled eventful passage of my youth. When I was three years old, my parents lived in Kidderwick Avenue, Camden Town. The number of the house was 16, and every window had two blinds. The late King of Siam was living in the next house, and he must have been surprised one morning to find me arrive in his study by way of a particularly sooty chimney. However, he introduced me to Gladstone and Disraeli, both of whom, as I well remember, were dining with him that evening, and will corroborate my statements, so help me Tatcho!

Saturday: Went to seaside.

Sunday: Told the truth. No one believed me.

C. E. B.

THE REALM.

The Realm hath many an honest hand,
Or bare, or silken gloved;
But what is there within the land
That she should be so well beloved?

And she hath many an haughty town,
That liveth in her law,
But fairer is the linnet brown
That singeth in a leafy shaw.

The Realm hath many a nobleman—
Ay, many, and to spare!

But better is the ploughman Dan,
Though that he drives the earthy share;

For towns and noblemen are made
By silly Fortune's dole:
But birds, and they who wield the spade,
They are green England's singing soul.

RUTH PITTER.

A PROPOSAL FOR THE FORMATION OF A SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THRIFT, SOBRIETY, AND CHASTITY AMONGST THE UPPER CLASSES.

BY W. MEARS.

Although numerous societies exist for the purpose of propagating almost every virtue (except, of course, independence) amongst the poor, there is not a single body that concerns itself with the encouragement of virtue amongst the rich. That no such society has yet been formed is due, probably, to the fact that it has not been considered necessary; since everyone is aware that the upper classes are as superior in morals as they are in intelligence to the rest of the nation. Now, although the promoters of this society have not the slightest intention of impugning the virtue of the upper classes, yet they feel that the time has now come when such a body as this will fulfil a very useful function.

There is a widespread suspicion amongst the masses that they are being called upon to make sacrifices that their superiors have no intention of inflicting upon themselves. The principal object of the proposed society will be to remove this suspicion. When the poor are made aware that a society has been formed to encourage the virtues of thrift, sobriety, and chastity amongst the rich they will no longer feel that they alone have to practise these virtues.

The promoters of the society are very anxious to impress upon intending members that no inquisitorial methods on the lines of the C.O.S. will be attempted. The justification of the society will be its reflex action on the lower orders. It is obviously inadvisable to say more on this point in a public prospectus, but the promoters feel sure that if they call the attention of intending members to the war profits clauses of the last Budget and assure them that this society has a precisely similar object, there will be no cause for alarm.

ALEXANDER ALEXANDROVITCH BLOCK.

I.

Tender-grey the day was, grey as sorrow; and
Pallid grew the evening, like a woman's hand.

In the house at evening they had hid their hearts,
Faint with tender sorrow—grief that ne'er departs.

Hands were clasped together, eyes forebore to meet,
Unto glistening shoulders laughing lips retreat.

Garb that bares the shoulders, serpent-like array,
White as scaly raiment in the waning day.

O'er the table-cover brow to brow inclined;
O'er the glowing faces locks of hair were twined,

Beat of hearts grew swifter, glances sore oppressed,
In their thoughts the garden—sultry, deep, at rest.

Mutely they together, as in covenant, stirred;
Woman's white apparel on the steps was heard.

Mutely in the garden, tracelessly they fled,
Softly in the heavens, shame its flush outspread.

Then, perchance, a star fell, with a trail of red.

II.

THE WILLOW-BOUGHS.

Here's many a lad and maiden
With boughs and tapers laden,
As they homeward fare.

They who pass there, render
A cross to the flame-lit splendour,—
Spring-tide scents the air.

Thou, breeze from the distant spaces,
Rain, rain with thy dainty graces,
Quench not the taper-glow.

Palm Sunday is on the morrow,—
That blessed day to hallow
First of them all I go.

(Translated by P. SELVER.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

THE CAUSES OF WAR.

Sir,—In your "Notes of the Week" of February 24 you say: "... for, in a deeper sense than shallow economists or diplomatists will ever understand, the very causes of war are to be found in the inequalities of wealth brought about by these same financiers. The tendency of wealth is to find its own level; and where by artificial means (capitalism in our case) a huge dam is erected between one class and another, preserving in one class a high level and in the other class a low level of wealth, sooner or later, by war or revolution, the pressure becomes excessive and the dam is broken." That this is true in a way that our economists and diplomatists will never understand I can quite believe; yet William Morris recognised this inequality of wealth as the cause of war over thirty years ago. The following extracts are from his lecture, "How we live and how we might live," published in his "Signs of Change":—

"The manufacturer, in the eagerness of his war, has had to collect into one neighbourhood one vast army of workers, he has drilled them till they are as fit as may be for his special branch of production—that is, for making a profit out of it—and with the result of their being fit for nothing else; well, when the glut comes in the market he is supplying, what happens to this army, every private in which has been depending on the steady demand in that market, and acting, as he could not choose but act, as if it were to go on for ever? You know well what happens to these men: the factory door is shut on them, on a very large part of them often, and at best on the reserve army of labour so busily employed in the time of inflation. What becomes of them? Nay, we know that well enough just now. But what we don't know, or don't choose to know, is that this reserve army of labour is an absolute necessity for commercial war; if our manufacturers had not got these poor devils whom they could draft on to their machines when the demand swelled, other manufacturers in France or Germany or America would step in and take the market from them. [My italics.] Well, I say all this is war, and the results of war, the war this time not of competing nations, but of competing firms or capitalist units: and it is this war of the firms which hinders the peace between nations which you surely have agreed with me in thinking is so necessary.

"As nations under the present system are driven to compete with one another for the markets of the world, and as firms or the captains of industry have to scramble for their share of the profits of the markets, so also have the workers to compete with each other—for livelihood; and it is this constant competition or war amongst them which enables the profit-grinders to make their profits, and by means of the wealth so acquired to take all the executive power of the country into their hands."

Like National Guildsmen, Morris recognised the existence of the wage-system in all its hideousness and intricacies; but, unlike them, he did not see the way out.

C. S. D.

* * *

THE FRENCH PROPHETS AND THE WAR.

Sir,—In your issue of February 3 a correspondent, who signs himself "Subaltern," comes forward with some belated advice as to the desirability of THE NEW AGE undertaking to introduce to English readers the writers of the Action Française group. As far back as December, 1912, you published a lengthy analysis of the Action Française movement, which was followed by a prolonged discussion of the subject in general, and of that article in particular, in your correspondence columns. It is a pity that "Subaltern" did not make some inquiry as to the need for his advice before proffering it. Evidently he is too recent a reader of THE NEW AGE to be aware of your interesting habit of forestalling all other English journals in the discussion of modern literary and political movements! He is also too recent a reader to realise how strange his praise of the journalism of Daudet and Maurras must sound to those of us who recall the samples quoted in the article mentioned and in the ensuing correspondence. So filthy were many of the specimens of political epithet that I remember hearing of readers who were shocked at your allowing them to be reprinted in a decent journal! Times have changed, however, and it may now perhaps be our patriotic duty to applaud the venereal witticisms and anti-Semitic slaver of the journalistic guttersnipes who are sheltered by the literary reputations of Barrès and Maurras. I would suggest that "Subaltern" refer to THE NEW AGE of December 26, 1912, and then he will perhaps be less astonished at the omis-

sions in Mr. Gosse's article. The reputation of M. Barrès will not be helped in this country by too close a scrutiny of the unspeakable company which his politics oblige him to keep. Even in France much goodwill is required of his admirers when they are forced to reconcile the delicate disciple of Renan, who wrote the series of "Le culte du moi," with the idol of the Hun-hunting, Jew-baiting clericals whom "Subaltern" would have us take seriously. But they resolve the difficulty by remembering that Barrès is essentially a politician (much as he would ape the statesman)—a politician with a sense of style.

ERNEST KEMPSTON.

THE GERMANS IN BELGIUM.

Sir,—On October 1, 1914, you published—alone amongst eight prominent papers and reviews to which it was sent—a letter of mine wherein I appealed for justice and fair play towards my German countrymen, asking you at the same time not to intern innocent alien enemies and warning you not to believe the stories of atrocities circulated by the Press.

I still hold the same opinion as to the advisability of internment, but have, unfortunately, had to come to other conclusions about the atrocities. Trustworthy eye-witnesses from Belgian towns whom I have met here during my stay in Switzerland have convinced me beyond all doubt that acts have been committed by my countrymen which far surpass the necessary measures of a military occupation, however precarious it may have been at the beginning of the war. I am sorry I gave my honest name to the defence of an indefensible system, but having been convicted of my error in this matter I beg you to publish this letter.

OSCAR LEVY,

Editor of the authorised English translation of
Nietzsche's works.

St. Moritz, Switzerland, February 24, 1916

ENGLAND AND TURKEY.

Sir,—Poor Mr. Pickthall's bluff has been called with a vengeance. He "happens to know for certain" that England was offered a protectorate of the whole Turkish Empire in 1913! For certain, too. Are we not getting into the atmosphere of "Armenian massacres"?

I will not afflict your readers with quotations from Mr. Pickthall's correspondence. After all, even hysterics become dull at last, especially on repetition. But, if anyone cares to turn to Mr. Pickthall's letter in your issue of June 24, 1915, he will find the explicit suggestion that Lord Hardinge is unpopular in India as a Russophile.

As I said, I have been an Anglo-Indian; but I was not, as Mr. Pickthall insinuates, a political official. Evidently Mr. Pickthall is not so clever at guessing as he is at other forms of fiction.

A. H. MURRAY.

Sir,—Allow me your kind hospitality once more to put in a word in the controversy between Mr. Pickthall and Mr. Murray.

The fact is that Mr. Murray and Mr. Pickthall both are right to a certain extent in their contentions as to the policy of Lord Hardinge. Mr. Murray is quite right that, on the whole, Lord Hardinge has been a very popular Viceroy and that people in India do not like much his impending departure. It is a little unfortunate that when this terrible war broke out he could not overcome the panic of his colleagues and sanctioned the internment of a number of educated leading Muslim publicists. Otherwise he has done his best to pay due regard to the susceptibilities of Muslims, and it was well that he happened to be at the head of the Government of India when the war broke out.

But there is no doubt that any pro-Russian policy on the part of the Government of India or the British Government is extremely resented not only by the Muslim population of India, but by the Hindu and other peoples, as it was the British Government itself that impressed upon the minds of Indians that Russia was the one and only enemy of India.

As far as Muslims are concerned, they heartily detest Russia because of her aggressive policy against Muslim dominions—not only Turkey, but also Persia and even Afghanistan, have been taught by Russia herself to view her with aversion. Lord Hardinge only knows what great anxiety Russian aggression in Persia but a few years ago caused him, and in the last Turco-Balkan war he had actually to encourage Red Crescent funds and missions to allay the lurking suspicion in the minds of the Muslim population that Great Britain was being dictated by Russia to adopt an unfriendly policy against Turkey.

The Muslims of India have sense enough to see that this

is not the time to raise a voice. They see that at the present moment it is only guns that have a "voice" to be listened to, and that military measures, even if they be like those as that of the bombardment of Gallipoli to get in through to Constantinople, should have their own course. But this does not mean that they will remain dumb even when peace terms come to be settled, and when permanent arrangements are to be made: it will be well for the British statesmen to pay due attention at that time to the demands and susceptibilities of the Muslim citizens of the British Empire. If it is considered necessary to have a permanent alliance with Russia, then it shall be incumbent upon British statesmen not only to reform Russia, to improve her system of government, to get rid of her racial and religious bigotry and persecutions, but also to stop her from her policy of constant aggression against Muslim dominions and to make her give up her ambition of possessing Constantinople, Teheran, and Kabul. If there is going to be a permanent alliance between England and Russia, then Russia must be Anglicised rather than England Russianised. If Russia is really reformed and purged of her avarice, then it will secure the permanent peace of this world to make the present alliances between Japan, France, Russia, and England permanent, provided that Turkey is also included in it. Otherwise Muslim "fanaticism" will never be satisfied.

SHEIKH M. H. KEDWAI OF GADIA.

MEN AT WAR.

Sir,—André B., with his long experience of war, must not be too severe with me. I do not like to think I am working a stunt—whatever that may be—and, if he likes, I admit that I am susceptible and sentimental in relation with the wounded soldier. That does not mean, though, that I cannot detect the humbug. All men certainly do not wish to return to the regiment, and less to the trenches—I do not think I gave that impression—but there are some that do, and enough for the purpose of my note. Moreover, all trenches are not up to the knees in mud, nor enfiladed, nor always under heavy shell-fire; and, lastly, all distant discomforts are soon forgotten. B.

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS.

Sir,—I quite agree with "T. C.'s" letter on the subject of conscientious objectors in last week's NEW AGE, which means that I am sorry he should have misunderstood mine.

The object of my letter was to show that the grounds of an objection to military service are various and quite immaterial provided that the objection is genuine. People insist on calling the same thing by different names, according to the creed they possess or the school of thought to which they belong. The really conscientious man has frequently too much conscience to claim conscientious objection, but few of us are honest enough for that; and an impulse of distaste or pique at being compelled to do what we do not like has not much difficulty in getting itself labelled with the high-sounding title of "conscience." The obscure philosophical question, therefore, which "T. C." raises as to the precise distinction between belief and knowledge is as irrelevant for me as it should be for him.

The important fact is that the tribunals, difficult as they find it to recognise the existence of a conscientious objection, are entirely unable to admit the possibility of there being any other kind, and even the House of Commons cannot conceive the possibility of a desire which is not conscience. The position, in effect, is this: An objector on any ground says to the tribunal, "I do not want to undertake military service." The tribunal replies: "Are your objections conscientious, because, if not, we have no power to deal with them, and in fact our official spectacles will not allow us to see them?"

What reply can an applicant make, except to say that they are, unless, as I suggested above, he really is overburdened with conscience? It is not too much, then, to say that only the man with no conscience can honestly claim it.

But it is not our fault if we are forced to be hypocrites by Act of Parliament.

C. E. M. J.

DEMORILISATION AND THE SCHOOL AGE.

Sir,—There are not wanting indications that the question of raising the school age is getting ever nearer to the region of practical politics; and when demobilisation takes place after the war, the resulting unemployment should be eased by the immediate withdrawal of the children from the labour market.

May I, through your columns, appeal to the many rank

and file propagandists in the Trade Union movement, who read THE NEW AGE, to keep the question to the front, and also and especially to take every opportunity of showing that the economic difficulty should be met by the demand of many successive Trade Union Congresses, for a maintenance grant or scholarship to make up for the wages earned by the child workers?

Propagandists should emphasise the fact that such maintenance grants are in no sense "charity," and that they should be accepted by the children as the rest of free education is accepted, not on the grounds of the poverty of the children, but on the grounds of their citizenship. This warning is by no means unnecessary. The working class agitation, extending over many years prior to 1906, for the feeding of school children at the public expense, was a generous agitation, based on the idea of communal responsibility to the children of the wealth-producers. However, when the powers that be grudgingly accepted the minimum of the inevitable, and yielding to pressure from below, graciously allowed the niggardly "Permissive" Bill of 1906 to pass, it soon became apparent that they had not been lacking in foresight. For "charity organisation" was ready to administer the Act on such lines as entirely to crush the communal idea, and to install the rightly much-hated "charity" methods—thus incidentally providing the historian of the future with a very disgraceful chapter in the history of our national education.

Bebel House.

M. BRIDGES ADAMS.

* * *

THE CASE OF A SERBIAN FIELD HOSPITAL.

Sir,—My attention has been drawn to a letter published in your columns over the signature "R. O." which seems to demand an answer, otherwise I should not feel disposed to waste time or words upon your correspondent. Perhaps, then, you will kindly allow me space to point out that the erroneous statement to which your correspondent refers—that my wife and I were "in control" of the First British Field Hospital for Serbia—was not made in the body of our "Daily Express" article; we were not responsible for it, and, at our request, it was rectified in the next issue of the "Daily Express," the name of Dr. J. Hartnell-Beavis being duly mentioned as commandant of the hospital.

As to the omission of the name of Dr. J. Hartnell-Beavis from other reports we can give no opinion, being only responsible for what we write ourselves. While we were with the First British Field Hospital for Serbia we published no articles that were not first submitted to the committee of the hospital; after the retreat began conditions were different, as we had detached ourselves from the Mission in order to remain with the Serbian Army.

May I add, in conclusion, that we deplore the tendency of THE NEW AGE towards gratuitous impertinence?

CLAUDE ASKEW.

[Our correspondent, "R. O.," replies: I condole with you—while I congratulate myself—upon a correspondent being mistaken for THE NEW AGE in toto. I suppose, on the strength of seeing one copy and reading one letter, Mrs. and Mr. Askew will now for ever refer to THE NEW AGE as a scurrilous rag! But, please, Mrs. and Mr. Askew, do not be so harsh. Just think whether Mr. Blumenfeld would like the whole "tendency" of the "Daily Express" judged from one of your contributions to it. Alas! I am not even one of a pair of famous Siamese novelists, or doubtless I should be able, like Mrs. and Mr. Askew (though, unlike them, I have nothing to gain by it), to prune my language to the public's prisms. Then perhaps they would not have been so cross with me, THE NEW AGE. And may I explain how we—me—I—THE NEW AGE—came to overlook the correction of the fateful statement, "in control"? My excuse is one which Mrs. and Mr. Askew, who condemn a whole paper for the sins of a correspondent, will readily understand. "Scurrilous rag!" exclaimed I, as I read in the "Express" the joint handiwork of two correspondents: "Serbia has had her hour in Gethsemane . . . hers has been a very agony and bloody sweat. . . ." "How I deplore," cried I, "the tendency of the 'Daily Express' towards gratuitous profanity! Never set a paragraph inside my house again! Not another halfpenny shall you have from me! Voilà!" However, I beg most prettily to thank Mr. Askew for the explanation for which I asked. But I would like to know what are "flaming men." Even the fire-stations will not tell me the secret! R. O.

P.S.—Could you, I wonder, arrange for me to have a few lessons in manners from your diarist?]

"LIFE IN A RAILWAY FACTORY."

Sir,—Thanks for your notice of my book, "Life in a Railway Factory." I suppose the writing is clever; reviews generally are—I am no judge. I don't understand the style of wit; but then I am devilishly dense. By the way, with respect to those notes which the reviewer says I was taking for twenty-three years, and which were finally "flung together without any judgment"—what fool, at middle age, would require to write notes upon the manner of taking his breakfast? Is your reviewer disappointed in the working-man who has at length "become cultured," as he puts it? He would be the more bitterly disappointed if the whole of the labouring classes should succeed in that direction. They have a sense of humour of their own and would make short work of him and his sarcasm. Your writer records that I said scarcely a word about Trade Unionism. The title of the book is "Life in a Railway Factory," not "Trade Unionism in a Railway Factory." The reviewer probably knows more about Trade Unionism than I do, but when he is studying that he might remember that it does not embrace the whole of the life of the working classes. At the same time, I am a Trade Unionist.

The smiths are really extraordinarily magnificent men who "can work forty-eight hours a day without turning a hair"! Your reviewer confounds what I say of them with what relates to the forgers. I suppose he must be forgiven, though he ought to have known the difference. The case of the furnace-tarring, as an instance of my self-reference, is most cunningly and judiciously selected—it is the only one in the book! He might have told the whole story, however, instead of merely mentioning the tail of it. The only part of the review I really do not like is that in which the writer says, I am "always despising the other workers for their lack of and indifference to culture." That is an utterly false and slanderous statement, and there is nothing in the book to support it. We working men do not waste our time in mutual adoration and the paying of sickly compliment. I admit that. But we respect each other, and never fail to appreciate worth and merit. And we can intelligently interpret criticism that is sound and honest, though we do not admire that trickiness and sarcastic superficiality employed by your writer of last week.

ALFRED WILLIAMS.

* * *

SHAKESPEARE AS GROTESQUE.

Sir,—When I quoted Ruskin's definition of grotesque, I had not the full text before me. Here is the full text: "A fine grotesque is the expression, in a moment, by a series of symbols thrown together in a bold and fearless connection, of truths which it would have taken a long time to express in any verbal way, and of which the connection is left for the beholder to work out for himself; the gaps, left or overleaped by the haste of the imagination, forming the grotesque character." The addition of the concluding sentence affects my interpretation of Ruskin's definition. Evidently, Ruskin does not mean that grotesque effect arises from a simultaneous expression, but is formed by a consciousness of certain omissions. I am of the opinion that grotesque effect is the direct outcome of simultaneism. The difference of opinion is interesting, seeing that it rests on an argument. Though I differ from Ruskin as to the cause of grotesque effect, I agree with him as to the effect itself being a departure from the normal of which the connection with the normal cannot be detected at once.

HUNTLY CARTER.

* * *

STARTLING REVELATIONS!

Sir,—I was absolutely astounded to learn from your contributor "North Staffs" that the president of the No Conscription Fellowship had only obtained a second-class degree at Oxford, and hereby renounce all connection with such Fellowship.

Shanghai.

A. HANSON.

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Press Cuttings.

"State buying of wheat. . . . Following on conferences in November and December with the Corn Trade Associations of the United Kingdom on the Government proposals for ensuring the maintenance of adequate stocks of wheat during the months when the reserve here is lowest, there was a general agreement that the stocks held by the Trade would be very small and that public discussion of any scheme to be adopted was inadvisable. When on December 24 the British and French Governments bought 200,000 tons of wheat from Australia, the British Government's share was 50,000 tons. It may be added, says an official statement, that the suggestion made in an organ of the Corn Trade that the British Government should follow the example of the French Government and requisition the home crop of wheat at a fixed price, would naturally involve the elimination of the corn trade from business and the taking over by the State of the whole supply of wheat for the nation."—"Times."

"Fat Profits. Shipowners' gains and Government muddles. . . . As to the rise in freights, there is no doubt whatever. It has put vast profits into the pockets of those shipowners who have been so fortunate as to escape much requisitioning of their ships by the Government. The net gains of the shipowners are estimated by the 'Statist' to have swelled from 20 millions in 1913 to 250 millions in the present year."—"Daily Mail."

"What a pity it is that the Press do not study economics. To judge from the reports of working-class prosperity one would imagine that the workers as a whole are rolling in wealth. As a matter of plain fact, a few are doing very well indeed, the mass are pretty much as usual, whilst many are distinctly worse off. The advance in prices having risen from 40 to 50 per cent., real wages have, again excepting a few favoured industries, remained stationary or declined. When will the public and the Press learn to make this distinction between real and nominal wages?"—"New Days."

"In England we live under the tyranny of the *fait accompli*. A law is passed, and because it is passed it can never be altered. The truth is that this exaggerated deference to the accomplished law is a very useful trick for the lawyer politician. Take the case of the National Insurance Act. That highly Prussian piece of legislation was passed in a great hurry, and a large number of its clauses never even received a moment's discussion. But it was passed, and another link in the chain of 'Progressive' legislation was forged to bind the people's liberty. The great employers were pleased, the politicians were delighted to have done their masters' pleasure, and the lawyers obtained a vast new field for their predatory and profitable labours. Lloyd George pushed the clock on towards the hour of slavery a little too fast in that case. But though we have the mind to put the clock back, and even to smash his cheap German alarm to bits, have we the power? No. Under the present system it cannot be done."—JAMES PONTING.

"To understand military conscription you must consider it as part of a general policy, and not as if it were complete in itself. The driving force of this policy is, in my opinion, a desire for cheap labour. Before war broke out wages were fixed by the law of supply and demand, slightly modified by Trade Unionism. While there were more workers than jobs this method suited the capitalists, and they spoke of it as a law that contained a big spark of divinity. But the war turned the tables. The demands of the army for men and munitions exceeded the supply, and the capitalists realised that if the old system continued and men were free to sell their labour to the highest bidder, and only work when and where it suited them, there must be a great boom in wages. The men would supersede the masters as dictators of terms, and engineers who were indispensable and scarce might demand one shilling, or even two shillings an hour for their labour, just as capitalists have doubled the prices for ships and eggs, so a Munitions Act was passed to prevent a worker leaving his employer without permission, or an employer offering higher wages to tempt a worker. For industrial purposes the worker came near to being

the property of his employer; he dare not leave, but might be discharged. It was all done in the name of patriotism. . . ."—Councillor JOHN WHEATLEY in "The Worker."

"We have full-fledged industrial conscription for the younger single men, and the distinction between the young and the old, single and married, is in this respect so untenable that we may confidently expect its abolition in the near future. . . . For ourselves we remark that we have here a Bill to deprive some millions of men of their freedom on the ground of the delinquency of a number conjectured by some at two or three hundred thousand, but held by others to be much less, a Bill for reducing the million to industrial serfdom on the ground that the conjectural thousands ought to do military service, a Bill which will not, as we think, contribute to the victory of British arms over Germany, but establish beyond doubt the victory of German idea over England."—"Manchester Guardian."

"Cheap things only last a short while, but the greatest objection to cheap things is that while they last they are ugly. What the country needs is better quality, better workmanship, and better prices for it. A country's prosperity is judged by its mint of money. In a country where you can buy a lot of cheap things for half a farthing you will find it is very difficult to earn even half a farthing."—Madame DESTY.

"Hitherto it has been customary to reduce taxation when peace comes. This war is peculiar in that peace will bring, to all the belligerent countries, actually heavier taxes than have been imposed during war. Our own country will apparently form no exception. Even if the war ends within a year the National Debt will stand at a little less than 3,500 million sterling, involving an annual charge for interest of not far short of 175 millions a year, as compared with 20 millions before the war. Add to this the charge for war pensions, the cost of refitting and strengthening our defensive armaments, the need for beginning to pay off some of the debt, and the provision that will be necessary in connection with getting back seven million men and women into productive industry—and we get a total that will compel the Chancellor of the Exchequer for 1917-18, assuming that peace has been signed, to raise an even larger revenue than he is about to propose for 1916-17. After 1815 the first thing our ancestors did was to abolish the income tax. After 1917 it may well be that the first thing we shall have to do will be to double or conceivably even to treble its war rate."—The "New Statesman."

"I dined the other night with a friend whom I should describe as one of the ablest and staunchest of the individualist Liberals, who had played a considerable part in the last Free Trade campaign. I found his point of view quite changed. He remained anti-Protectionist. But he did not think that a negative statement of the Free Trade case would suffice, or that the joint-stock system was adequate to carry the country through a crisis such as its commerce would have to face after the war. He was willing to make concessions to Socialism, and to say, with clear emphasis, that there must be a closer grouping and more vital organisation of the most important of the great industries, with State support, direction, and suggestion at their back, and a corresponding educational development. Clearly this is the direction in which we shall travel. There can be no vulgar game of private profit played with the country's needs."—WAYFARER in the "Nation."

(To the Editor of the "Spectator.")

"Has not the time come when a tax might be placed with great advantage upon advertisements? I refer particularly to those which are displayed in public places on hoardings which disfigure the towns and villages and even the fields throughout the length and breadth of the country. We have suffered this form of 'frightfulness' too long. It would be at least some consolation to know that these posters were 'doing their bit' in helping to supply the sinews of war. They do these things better in France, where it has long been the practice to attach a Government stamp to every affiche displayed in public places."—F. G. MCCLINTOCK.