THE
NEW AGE
A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS. LITERATURE. AND ART.

No. 1234] New Series. Vol. XIX. No. 1. Thursday, May 4, 1916. [Registered at G.P.O. as a Newspaper.] SIXPENCE.

CONTENTS.

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

No unusual judgment is needed to realise that this week may be a critical one for the Government; and the organs which represent, approximately enough, the more superficial aspects of public opinion and feeling have been insisting on different points during the week-end. The failure of the latest Conscription Bill, the outbreak in Dublin, and the surrender of General Townshend at Kut, are all paraded as so many props knocked away from under a Ministry already tottering; but these incidents, in our judgment, are not nearly the worst of the grave symptoms which the Government will have to consider. *A worse symptom, by far, of the steady* decline of responsible opinion is the desperate, trembling zeal with which political and journalistic vultures fasten upon such reverses as these with the one aim of destroying the Government, breaking up the political truce, and shattering the unity of the country. Let us again insist that a general election is to be feared or welcomed strictly in accordance with the circumstances bringing it about. A dignified appeal by the Prime Minister, on behalf of himself and of his Liberal and Conservative colleagues, made with the object of explaining the difficult position of the Coalition Government in the face of malignant, hot-headed, and irresponsible criticism, would undoubtedly be followed in the country by an enthusiastic outburst of public sentiment in favour of the Coalition; and a general election held under these conditions would show with what impatient contempt the people of England regard the so-called War Committees, Liberal and Unionist, and similar malcontents. On the other hand, a general election forced by intrigue, especially by the intrigues of the newspaper Jacobins, might result disastrously, and would, in any event, seriously damage our prestige abroad.

* * *

The true object of criticism in these days, surely, is to assist in the winning of the war. The Coalition Government are accused, both in the Press and by public speakers, of not wishing to win the war so much as to remain in their offices. Conversely, it might be retorted to these critics that they themselves are more wishful of turning the Government out than of winning the war. A careful scrutiny of anti-Governmental criticisms has convinced us that not one of the organs which have been browbeating the authorities since the war began has yet expressed a single helpful idea or put forward a good suggestion not already under consideration. Their very truisms on abstract points of international ethics have been plagiarised; and when they have tried to become original they have been merely stupid. The fanatical leaders of the different anti-Governmental movements have harped upon one string: men—"more men for the Army." Here politicians and newspapers at variance in all other respects have one story to tell—the war cannot be brought to a successful conclusion until England has put her final quota into the field in the form of the unattested married men. Then, it is urged, the enemy will indeed be as good as beaten; but without general conscription in England we may as well become prepared to submit to German dictation. We decline to believe, nevertheless, that the tone of our military and political ideas is to be set by such beings as Captain Amery and Sir Leo Chiozza Money, aided as they are by the riff-raff of Cockney journalists, and by a more or less reformed company promoter. The main problem is not, as they assert, one of men for the Army, but of the proper use of the men both in the Army and out of it. The formula for success we should propose is: the fitting use of the naval, military, industrial, and financial forces at the disposal of the Grand Alliance.

* * *

Let us see how far this formula will take us. Long before the war broke out it was recognised that the combination of Powers known as the Triple Entente—since become the Quadruple Entente with the addition of Italy—would have an approximate scheme of defence to consider. France, it was surmised, would have to bear the first brunt of the German onslaught; England would keep the seas, sending a small force of men abroad, and providing supplies and money; and Russia would ultimately turn the scale with her vast reserves of men, not easily mobilisable at first. With one grievous exception, this plan has, on the whole, been adhered to. France has warded off the German attacks in the West, with British aid, and Russia is even now

preparing for what, it is hoped, may be the final advance from the East. But the scheme so carefully laid by military and other experts has miscarried in one important particular. The suddenness of the German attack, and the overwhelming superiority of men and guns brought to bear from beyond the Rhine, meant that the English contribution of a hundred thousand or so men had to be supplemented by innumerable further drafts. From published statements in Parliament both before and after the Derby scheme, as well as from the figures provided in the estimates and in the casualty lists, it is easy to judge, with approximate accuracy, how many men we have raised in this country. There are, roughly, a million British soldiers in France, a million doing essential garrison and other duties abroad (Salonika, Egypt, India, Malta, Mesopotamia, etc.), a million in England—including a regular Army for home defence and men in training—and another million, made up of the dead, the wounded, the prisoners of war, and the sick. In addition, there are a few hundred thousands of attested married men and single men not yet called up.

* * *

In the face of these figures it cannot be said by anybody that England has not done her duty by the Army. It can be said, however, that the Government has not kept a sufficiently tight rein on the military authorities; that the forces at the disposal of the Government here have not been fittingly utilised for the purpose of winning the war. It was pointed out in THE NEW AGE at least a year ago that the industrial situation was becoming serious; for in the first six or eight months of war thousands of skilled men were enlisted whose services would have been of much greater use in the skilled trades. Consider the position, which most of the Government's critics have considered so far only superficially. Within three weeks of the outbreak of war about a dozen French Departments were in the hands of the enemy, and within two months it became evident that he could not be driven out of them without a long and arduous struggle. These Departments were of especial importance because they happened to be practically the only industrial Departments in France. They contained coal and iron-ore deposits, with consequent facilities for production. Munition works, certainly, had been established in other Departments, *out of reach of the invader, but* they could no longer be supplied with coal and raw material from France herself. There were immediate and heavy demands on this country for raw materials, coal, and foodstuffs; for the entry of Turkey into the war early in November, 1914, effectively stopped all wheat supplies from Russia. To mention a single item, it is reckoned that since the war began we have been sending France two million tons of coal a month more than in time of peace.

* * *

This question of supplies had given rise to further difficulties so far back as the spring of last year. Russia had a rich soil, but there were no facilities for manufacture, or very few, even in places where the soil had been exploited. It became necessary, in view of the enormous and unexpected expenditure of ammunition, to refit the Russian Army with guns, rifles, and shells. This work fell upon us, and orders were hurriedly placed with American firms, and, indeed, with firms in almost every neutral country. Even Argentina provided French soldiers with uniforms. But these foreign purchases had to be paid for; and the export trade of France, Russia, and (later on) Italy had all but stopped. England, thanks to her position and to her command of the sea, was the only country in a position to carry on her trade and thus pay for her foreign purchases. After a few months all pretence of independent financial settlements on the part of our Allies was discarded, and it became frankly recognised that the Grand Alliance rested on English credit. The exchanges rose higher and higher against our partners—fifty-nine per cent. against Russia; twenty-five per cent. against Italy and France. Industrialists and financiers urged upon the Government the seriousness of the situation; it was recognised by the Allied Governments no less than by our own. Yet recruiting went steadily on; our skilled workers were enlisted by the hundred thousand; and in July last the value of the English sovereign went down with a run on the New York Stock Exchange until, in a few weeks, it looked as if our credit was to go the way of that of our Allies.

* * *

At this time, solely in order to steady the exchange, a joint Anglo-French Commission was able to arrange for a loan in New York of a hundred millions sterling, followed later on by a bankers' credit of fifty millions. This, at nearly seven per cent., was America's sole contribution to the cause of humanity and justice. But our recruiting continued. The expeditionary policy, condemned by every competent military critic, raised the average cost of a soldier's maintenance, until Mr. Asquith was able to announce, last autumn, that every man in the army was then costing from two hundred and fifty to three hundred pounds a year. In these circumstances, apart altogether from the question of our Allies' credit, it behoved us to recruit warily lest our own credit, the basis of the whole Alliance, should be shaken. But no. The Derby campaign and the Military Service (No. 2) Act accounted for all but a fraction of the population. It is estimated that if the boys of eighteen are taken, under the new measure now proposed, the result will be an addition of a quarter of a million very junior recruits, and if the unattested married men are conscripted some two hundred thousand more may be available. These married men, it is admitted, are for the most part men with business or domestic responsibilities who have simply not been able to afford to go to the war—the so-called shirkers among them form a negligible quantity. So well is this fact recognised by the Government that special measures are being taken to relieve even the later groups of married men enlisted under the Derby scheme of certain contractual and other obligations, the maximum amount payable being two pounds a week. In other words, the later married recruits (or conscripts) for the Army are to cost the country an average of four hundred a year each—a perfectly appalling figure in view of our present financial position.

* * *

Can it be said that we are thus using our population, our resources, most fittingly for the attainment of the desired object? Most emphatically no. We cannot supply both men and money; or (what amounts to the same thing) both men and supplies or men and credit. The shipping organs tell us that German submarines have sunk some three million tons of British and neutral shipping, and our Government have had to take dozens of liners and cargo boats for war purposes. In this way, it is estimated, about one-third of the normal shipping is no longer available. The consequence is a severe scarcity of tonnage, inflated profits for the fortunate owners whose vessels have not been seized, and loud complaints from some of our Allies in regard to the excessive freights. One remedy for this state of things, naturally, would be the construction of more steamers. This is impossible; for so many skilled shipwrights have been enlisted that it is difficult to effect the necessary repairs for the Navy. Even when Mr. Balfour told this to a bewildered House of Commons the cry of the Northcliffian rump, including Mr. Austin Harrison, for more men was not stayed. Our conscriptionists, so they "get the Government out," care nothing for the outcome of the war; a fact which makes their noisome protestations of pure-minded patriotism all the more loathsome. Oh, but, it is urged, the Army in France is short of essential men—is short of infantry to the extent of sixty or seventy thousand; and these places must be filled. This is Mr. Asquith's justifica-

tion for demanding the conscription of expensive married men on the ground of "expediency," useful word! Even here there is room for protest. In the first place, the British military authorities are notoriously uneconomical in their use of men. "Seven soldiers making coffee for every soldier fighting," was the jocular summing-up of a retired officer who had visited the British Front. The deficit in infantrymen could be made up by a more careful employment of the soldiers on the spot; apart from the fact that young and fit men are used in departments, such as the Army Pay Department, where older men could easily take their places. In the second place, why should there be a deficit at all? Only because, in what we must presume to be an overflush of miscalculating enthusiasm, the Government promised to send too many men abroad. It is easy to reduce the number of divisions we undertook to place in the field.

* * *

But, we shall be told again, the French losses have been very heavy. Mr. Wedgwood estimated them in Parliament months ago as eight hundred thousand dead alone; and M. Longuet, in a public speech several weeks later, also spoke of France's eight hundred thousand dead. With Verdun and the other fighting since, no doubt, the French losses in dead alone are over a million; and the Germans, perhaps with truth, claim over a million French prisoners. Then there are the wounded and sick—say two millions at a low estimate, and you can see that France can have hardly any reserves at all, as the calling up of the 1917 class proves. That may be so—that, in fact, is the case, to judge from such figures as have been published. But is it for us to meet this deficiency in men? Is it not rather for Russia now to fulfil her traditional part of the agreement? Russia, if statements in the foreign Press may be trusted, is more than ready to furnish supplies of men—three contingents have already been landed at Marseilles, and more are to follow—but Russia cannot send men without equipment; and there are Russian troops available who cannot be used at all because they have no equipment, no uniforms, no rifles, no guns. And, ironically enough, these men cannot be provided with equipment because the English workmen who can make the articles of which these potential Russian soldiers stand in need are in the Army. Varying estimates have been made of the number of Russian troops, or, rather, possible troops, thus held back for want of equipment; but no estimate that we have seen places it at less than four million men. That is the lowest estimate; but make every possible allowance for exaggeration and take it at half that. In the name of sanity, would it not be better for half a million skilled English workmen to be taken out of the Army in order to provide equipment for even two million Russians who are present twiddling their thumbs in barracks or training with dummy rifles? Let it be remembered, too, that there are hundreds of English firms unable to fulfil their contracts with our Allies' Governments for necessary supplies solely because their skilled men have been taken for the Army.

* * *

We need expect no sympathy from the avowed conscriptionists, who, as we have often stated, want conscription for its own sake, even if we should lose the war in imposing it. It is clear that if we cannot win the war with five million voluntary soldiers and sailors (we include the regulars and the Navy) we cannot win it with the few hundred thousand extra men we may get as the result of even the most extended measure of compulsion. But, if we must put the conscriptionists aside, what of Labour? Labour, above all, must inevitably lose as the result of compulsion, especially if an attempt be made (as it will be) to secure the maintenance of compulsion after the war. Our Labour problem, too, is complicated by factors which do not arise in France, Russia, or Germany to anything like the same extent. The wide distribution of land in France and Russia, and the paternalism of the German Government, are factors which tend to make the position of the worker in those countries more secure than that of the workman here. Such security as our workmen possess—and how pitifully little it has always been!—has had to be built up after years of agitation by men formed in trade unions; and their security rested on trade union privileges. One by one these privileges have been filched from them by what has been termed the exigencies of war. The men must now work unlimited overtime until they drop; unskilled and female labour is to act as a "dilution"; and strikes and "lack of discipline" are drastically dealt with. Such is Mr. Lloyd George's reward for the toilers who trusted him, cheered him, and almost literally licked his boots in time of peace.

* * *

Yet it is admitted that Labour can say yes or no to the question of the extension of compulsion. But the Labour Party appears to have been more than usually submerged of late; and the Labour leaders in Parliament, eagerly expectant of commissionerships of some sort, are ready to smother such sympathy for their own class as they still possess. A Labour leader nowadays puts his supporters far in the background; we have reached the period when none is for the party but Walsh is for the State. Mr. Stephen Walsh, let us recall, was a "citizen" before he was a miner during the miners' strike of 1912; and he is a patriot before he is a Labour leader in 1916. He is, in short, always something else before being what he ought to be. Mr. Walsh, Mr. Thorne, and the rest of them, with one or two odd exceptions, such as Mr. Snowden, who is too much of a fanatic to consider any subject, and Mr. MacDonald, who is too sentimental to appreciate intellectual distinctions, are all demanding immediate general conscription. So much for Mr. Walsh, the patriot, Mr. Walsh the citizen. But, if Mr. Walsh could appreciate this half exotic expression at its true value, and imagine himself to be citoyen Walsh—the expression was in place only in the last decade of the eighteenth century—would not he see that the people who proudly called themselves "citoyens" took care to have something to their name more than the mere empty title of citizen? Mr. Walsh, a miners' representative, has sat in Parliament while the rights of Labour were being snatched away one by one. The time came when he could retrieve some of them; when he could bargain—"conscription if you like; but only in return for so-and-so." He could, for instance, have demanded conscription of wealth in return for further conscription of men. Instead, he chose to say that some three thousand single men, who ought to be in the Army, were shirking or skulking in mines. This is a gross misstatement of fact. Nobody can shirk in a mine. And are not the employers to blame for taking on three thousand men who ought to be in the Army? Ought these men to be in the Army at all when it is realised that we are exporting, or trying to export, more coal to our Allies and to neutrals than ever before, and that some three hundred thousand miners who ought to be in the mines are in the Army?

* * *

We say emphatically that there is no need for further conscription; and that there was no need for the earlier measure of conscription, either. The results of voluntary service were more than four million men; the results of conscription will amount, in all (even assuming the passing of a further measure) to less than three-quarters of a million. And these three-quarters of a million would be much better occupied in doing productive work, or paying their taxes, at home. The least Labour could have done was to demand a quid pro quo—a piece of enlightened selfishness which would certainly have meant an earlier ending to the war. The exuberance of Mr. Walsh prevented this. His was the only speech of the evening. A fool uttereth all his mind; but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.

Foreign Affairs.

By S. Verdad.

IT seems to be evident at the time of writing that the Greek Government has finally decided not to give formal permission for the Allies to arrange for the transport of the Serbian troops from Corfu to Salonika by rail. The Greek Premier, M. Skouloudis, is even said to have threatened that if the Allies try to use the railway for this purpose the Government will give orders for it to be blown up forthwith, or otherwise rendered useless. This decision, it is stated, has been reached as the direct result of an Austro-German threat; and the basis of that threat can easily be guessed. When the Franco-British forces, after having advanced inland for some distance after the Salonika landing, finally decided to fall back and to make their base impregnable before undertaking a definite offensive, they were pursued to the Greek frontier by, apparently, a mixed force of Austrians, Germans, and Bulgarians, the latter predominating. While Salonika was being strengthened many of the Austrian, and nearly all the German, regiments were withdrawn, leaving the Bulgarians to deal with the enemy almost unaided. At this stage the Bulgarians appear to have had two schemes under consideration with regard to the continuance of their part of the campaign. It was open to them either to await German reinforcements before attacking the French and British troops, or to turn their attention in an entirely new direction, and make themselves masters of doubtful territory in Greek possession which might, at a pinch, have been called part of Bulgarian Macedonia. The possibility of capturing the long-wished-for port of Kavalla was also not excluded.

* * *

This latter plan may have been Bulgarian originally, or it may have been suggested to King Ferdinand's advisers by the Wilhelmstrasse. At any rate, the mere mention of such a possibility was enough to bring Greece almost to her knees, especially with the recent lesson of Serbia staring her in the face. The King and his friends, of course, had always been German sympathisers; but the new danger rallied to the Court many politicians whose previous attitude had been distinctly doubtful. It thus became possible to hold over the head of whichever Athens Government happened to be in power for a month or two the threat of letting the Bulgarians loose on Greek soil unless the Greek authorities maintained an attitude of stiff, unbending hostility to the Allies. It was clearly impossible for Greece to oppose the landing at Salonika; but it is to be feared, unfortunately, that everything else that could be done was done to make things difficult for the Entente forces.

* * *

So far as the Allies are concerned, two facts cannot be overlooked. One is that the Franco-British troops are at Salonika at the direct invitation of M. Venizelos, given when he was Prime Minister of Greece, and responsible for the conduct of the Administration. Subsequent developments did not run counter to this arrangement, for the next Ministry contented itself with making what was definitely understood to be a purely formal protest against the landing. The Entente troops were not ordered to leave. Secondly, there is no reason to doubt the fact that the Greek Government has not upheld the Serbo-Greek Treaty. Assistance which should have been rendered was not rendered when the time came, the reason being the too close presence of Austrian, German, and Bulgarian armies. A move by Greece in the direction of the Entente would have led to a joint invasion of Greece by the combined forces of the Central Empires, and the Kaiser's telegraphic threats to make an example of his enemies were not forgotten. On the other hand, the Entente Powers hesitated to use force on what was, after all, a semi-neutral country. A blockade of Greece would have had as dire effects on the population—"frightfulness" excepted—as an invasion; and a Greece friendly to the Entente Powers would naturally have been rewarded. The Greek Government, anxious to safeguard the population as much as possible, paid more attention to the imminent force of the Central Empires than to the promises of the Allies.

* * *

If the Entente Governments, as we may suppose, have decided that Salonika is "worth while," it becomes clear that some moderate form of pressure is inevitable if the members of the present Greek Cabinet are to be made thoroughly familiar with their written obligations. Greece is all but bankrupt, and she cannot obtain money anywhere but in Paris and London. Further, the slightest interference with Greek import and export trade has an immediate effect; for the mainland cannot feed its people. These are levers which might be used by the Allies without causing any of the devastation associated with pressure from Germany; and as a demonstration of power it would be even more effective. For it is quite possible for a German and Bulgarian invasion to be checked, if not altogether stopped, by the Greek Army combined with the Franco-British forces at Salonika, whereas the Central Empires can do nothing whatever to oppose a partial blockade of the Greek coasts. It is, again, quite legitimate to argue that the German and Austrian submarines in Greek waters form a source of danger to the British warships, and indirectly to the British and French troops at Salonika; and a rounding-up of these pests might necessitate certain interference with at least part of the imports reaching Greece from overseas. Such action on our part could be undertaken without too great a departure from the strict letter of international law.

* * *

Another point which may have to be considered in the very near future is the position of the Vatican in the war. Ever since the outbreak, as I pointed out in THE NEW AGE many months ago, the Vatican authorities have assumed a distinctly pro-German attitude, and the sympathies of the present Pope are almost openly on the side of the Central Empires. I have already given reasons why this should be so—the disestablishment of the Church in France; the competition of the Orthodox Church in the event of a Russian victory; the comparatively unimportant position of the Church in England and Italy; and the prestige and status of the Church in Austria and in Germany as well. The despotic, arbitrary administration of Germany and Austria, too, is more likely to find favour in the eyes of the Vatican authorities than the democratic, or professedly democratic, administration of the Entente countries. It is significant enough that the Church has remained strongest in the two most despotically governed countries in the world; and the lesson has no doubt not been lost upon Benedict XV. In a recent issue of the "Sunday Times" (April 23), M. Coudurier de Chassaigne draws attention to the fact that the Pope wishes "to play the part of a temporal sovereign at the Peace Congress" after the war, although he has "carefully abstained from giving any moral help and a fortiori any material help to the Allies." M. de Chassaigne is undoubtedly right in suggesting that if the Pope claimed the right to attend the Peace Conference other religious denominations, such as the Moslems, might also claim the right to be represented. I have heard it suggested that the opprobrious use of "cosmopolitan" should be transferred, for once, from the Jews and hurled at the Roman Catholics; for the Vatican undoubtedly manages to guard the interests of its children all the world over. I vote against allowing the Pope to take part in any peace negotiations.

Unedited Opinions.

The Compulsion of Men.

THE NEW AGE appears to me to have been variable in its view of the Compulsion of Men. At one time you seemed to condemn Compulsion in principle and absolutely; at another time you appeared willing to accept it if the Compulsion of Money accompanied it. Where exactly do you stand?

I am sorry that this impression has been given, and doubtless, if you say so, it has been. But my mind was clear, and I think still is. Moreover, I am sure I could refer you to passages in THE NEW AGE which, fairly examined, would dispose of your charge; though, of course, it is my fault if they were not more explicit. May I resume the argument?

By all means.

Well, in the first instance, you will agree, I suppose, that every man should do his duty. Definition of duty apart for the moment, the proposition that a man should do his duty is indisputable. Very well, my next proposition is that it is better that a man should do his duty voluntarily than that he should have to be compelled to do it—do you agree with that?

It goes without saying.

Oh, no, it can be disputed, and it has been disputed, on quite ethical grounds. Some people contend, for example, that there is a virtue in Compulsion that does not exist in Volition; and, hence, that Compulsion is good for its own sake. To be compelled, they say, is a finer spiritual training than to act on one's own accord —necessity being a better school than fancy. But you do not hold with them, it appears?

I do not; nor, I suppose, do you.

Very well, now let us put the case from the standpoint of those responsible for seeing that men do their duty—our rulers, in fact. First, they naturally require that men should do their duty. Next, they would prefer that men should do their duty voluntarily. But, finally, they must be ready to *compel* men to do their duty if they should fail to do it voluntarily. Is that clear?

Yes, it appears clear to me.

You will see, then, my reasons for having, as you say, varied my attitude towards Compulsion. The variation was more apparent than real. Actually, I have been contending that Voluntaryism is the principle of which Compulsion becomes only the support in case of need. Compulsion is the policeman of Voluntaryism; not a principle in itself, nor a thing to be admired or adopted for its own sake, but the only alternative left when men refuse to do their duty voluntarily.

But supposing Compulsion to be legitimate as an alternative to Voluntaryism; and assuming that it is the duty of men to defend their country, why, thereafter, did you attach to the discharge of this duty the condition that Wealth as well as Men should be compelled? The duties are surely independent; and the discharge of one ought not to be conditional upon the discharge of the other.

I agree; and I think you will find, in fact, that on no occasion have I maintained that the duty of military service is dispensed by the failure to apply compulsion to the service of money. What I have maintained is, in the first place, that each of these services is a duty owing to the State, since the State exists to secure life and property; in the second place, that the fulfilment of one of these duties without the concurrent fulfilment of the other is unjust; and, in the third place, that the fulfilment of one should be made, as a matter of practical politics, a lever for the fulfilment of the other.

Your insistence upon the Conscription of Wealth, as a concomitant of the Conscription of Personal Service, was only a sort of bargain, then?

Yes, a bargain as between the two classes composing the modern State. For, of course, I need not remind you that one class of the State has only its life to be conscribed, and has, therefore, only one duty to perform; while the other class has life and wealth, entailing thus two duties, each of which ought to be subject to Compulsion in default of voluntary performance. The question, indeed, would never arise in a State composed of persons on an equality. In such a State the equal duty of all, in respect of both personal service and money, would be accepted without discussion. The problem arises only when, as in our State, one class has all the wealth, though all classes share alike in life.

But cannot the wealthy class fairly complain that their wealth should be exempt from Compulsion, seeing that they accept the Compulsion of Personal Service in common with the poor? Why a double compulsion for them, merely because they chance to be wealthy; and a single Compulsion for the poor who have only their lives?

Duty is defined by ability. If your argument were valid, a fit man might fairly complain that he should not be compelled to fight while unfit men were exempt. Because he chances to be fit, and the others chance to be unfit, he might urge that he should not be penalised for a chance ability. But, as a matter of fact, we never hear this complaint made or this argument employed. Why, then, should the wealthy use it against the poor? And particularly under the circumstances!

What circumstances?

Oh, you know—the circumstance that the wealthy *make* the poor. It would be peculiarly cruel, would it not, if the fit fighting men refused service because the unfit men *whom they had made and kept unfit,* were not equally compelled? Let us draw a veil over that. . .

But still, I think, the wealthy can plausibly maintain that their sacrifices are equal with those of the poor, since both are "compelled" in the same respect.

Plausibly, yes; and convincingly, it appears, to the majority of our fellow-countrymen; but, in truth, equality of sacrifice is not a proper criterion. From him that has more, more is due. It is equity of sacrifice that we ought to insist upon.

But would you, then, refuse the Personal Service of the poor until the rich had consented to offer their wealth as well as their lives?

I have said that in my opinion the two duties are independent. Hence, I cannot, as a matter of principle, refuse the one even if the other should be refused. But as a matter of expediency, as a means of enforcing equity of sacrifice, as a lever to the fulfilment of the duty of Wealth, I most certainly should. It is the business of all of us to see that all of us do our duty; and if the poor see the rich failing in their duty, they are justified in bringing compulsion to bear upon them.

But by what means? By refusing to do their own duty?

That is the only means within their power. Remember that the rich control the State, and hence can, if they choose, exempt themselves from their own duty at the same time that they can enforce their duty upon the poor. When they have done this (as they have), how otherwise than by refusing to do their duty can the poor insist that the wealthy shall do *theirs*?

You would have the poor, then, refuse military service until the rich fulfil their duty of money-service as well?

I would—even for the reasons I have already given. And there are many others.

What others?

I will, if you like, enumerate them later.

Sir Mark Sykes and the Armenians.

IN the "Times" of April 20 appeared the following letter:

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "TIMES."

Sir,—It is with great reluctance that I trespass on your valuable space, but I feel that circumstances oblige me to do so. It appears that certain persons have thought it worth the expense to circularise the members of the House of Commons with a sixpenny pamphlet entitled "The Armenians," by C. F. Dixon-Johnson. In the pamphlet are several quotations from books of mine, and in the preface is the following sentence: "The writer desires to thank those authors and travellers whose works he has so freely quoted, and upon whose information he has relied for the historical and geographical notes, as well as Professor Henry Léon, Mr. Robert Fraser, and other friends who have afforded him their most valuable assistance." I find that this sentence has been construed by some of my friends as meaning that I am in some way connected with the work, or at least in sympathy with the underlying ideas which inspire its author, or authors. I therefore take this opportunity of stating that I have the deepest sympathy with unfortunate Armenian peoples, whose millennium of martyrdom is, I hope and believe, reaching its final stage, and that the horrible sufferings which they are now enduring are but a part of that profound darkness of the dying Eastern night which heralds the sudden and glorious dawn.

I have the honour to be your obedient servant,

MARK SYKES.

Sir Mark Sykes has, of course, a perfect right to free himself from the imputation of being in any way connected with the authorship or publication of the pamphlet in question, while his pessimistic view of the intelligence or intellectual independence of members of the House of Commons is that of most Englishmen at the present time. But has he really the right at the same time to free himself from all connection with his own opinions? Would not anyone reading the above letter suppose that Captain Dixon-Johnson's work was in the nature of an attack on the Armenians, and that the quotations made by the author from the published works of Sir Mark Sykes were wrested from their true meaning, or unwarrantably introduced in such a work? Instead of that being the case, the pamphlet is a *temperate, judicial and, in my opinion, well-written* protest against an hysterical or hasty judgment in the matter of Armenian massacres, a judgment which might lead to rash political conclusions. The author supports his case by quotations from official papers and from writers whom he judged to be of some authority. Not least among these he reckoned Sir Mark Sykes on account of that gentleman's acquaintance with Armenia. I had no more to do with the authorship and publication of "The Armenians" than he had; but Captain Dixon-Johnson is a friend of mine, and I know that he has always been an admirer—one might almost say a disciple—of Sir Mark Sykes. Anything more disconcerting to him and to others who have followed with interest the literary and political career of that gentleman than the tone of this disclaimer it is impossible to conceive. Turning to the pamphlet in question, I find the following quotation from "The Caliphs' Last Heritage" (published in the autumn of last year).

In common with many others of the Christians of Turkey, the town Armenians have an extraordinarily high opinion of their own capacities; but in their case this is combined with a strangely unbalanced judgment, which permits them to proceed to lengths which invariably bring trouble on their heads. They will undertake the most desperate political crimes without the least forethought or preparation; they will bring ruin and disaster on themselves and others without any hesitation; they will sacrifice their own brothers and most valuable citizens to a wayward caprice; they will enter largely into conspiracies with men in whom they repose not the slightest confidence; they will overthrow their own national cause to vent some petty spite on a private individual; they will at the very moment of danger grossly insult and provoke one who might be their protector, but may at any moment become their destroyer; by some stinging aggravation or injury they will alienate the sympathy of a stranger whose assistance they expect; they will suddenly abandon all hope when their plans are nearing fruition; they will betray the very person who might serve their cause; and, finally, they will bully and prey on one another at the very moment that the enemy is at their gates.

To add to this curious fatuousness of conduct, the town Armenians are at once yielding and aggressive. They will willingly harbour revolutionaries, arrange for their entertainment and the furthering of their ends; yet at the same time they can be massacred without raising a finger in their own defence. . . . He is as fanatical as any Moslem. . . . *That the Armenians are doomed to be for ever unhappy as a nation seems to me unavoidable.* . . . In a time of famine at Van the merchants tried to corner all the grain! . . . The Armenian revolutionaries prefer to plunder their co-religionists to giving battle to their enemies; the anarchists of Constantinople threw bombs with the intention of provoking a massacre of their fellow-countrymen. The Armenian villages are divided against themselves; the revolutionary societies are leagued against one another; the priests connive at the murder of a bishop; the Church is divided at its very foundations.

If the object of English philanthropists and the roving brigands (who are the active agents of revolution) is to subject the bulk of the Eastern provinces to the tender mercies of an Armenian oligarchy, then I cannot entirely condemn the fanatical outbreaks of the Moslems or the repressive measures of the Turkish Government. On the other hand, if the object of Armenians is to secure equality before the law, and the establishment of security and peace in the countries partly inhabited by Armenians,* then I can only say that their methods are not those to achieve success.

The Armenians of the Mush Plain are at present an extremely difficult people to manage. They are very avaricious and would object to pay the most moderate taxes; they are also exceedingly treacherous to one another, and often join the revolutionaries to wipe off scores on their fellow-villagers. As for the tactics of the revolutionaries, *anything more fiendish one could not imagine*—the assassination of Moslems in order to bring about the punishment of innocent men, the midnight extortion of money from villages which have just paid taxes by day, the murder of persons who refuse to contribute to their collection-boxes, are only some of the crimes of which Moslems, Catholics and Gregorians accuse them with no uncertain voice.

I have italicised three passages in order that the reader may compare them with the final sentence in Sir Mark Sykes' letter to the "Times." Surely there can be no doubt as to the meaning of such words. Sir Mark Sykes writes decidedly and with the vehemence of firm conviction; and he should not be surprised—much less annoyed—if one of his admiring readers thought him quite sincere; prepared to stand or fall by his decided utterance. The utterance is indeed so decided that the author's firm conviction of its truth alone could justify its publication. I believe it, from my own slight knowledge of Armenians, to be true; and I, in common with many other Englishmen who have hitherto regarded Sir Mark Sykes as a friend and possible champion of the much misjudged Mohammedan majority in Turkey, am anxious to know what has caused this sudden change in his opinions. It must be that some evidence, withheld from us, has reached him; for the so-called "evidence" which has been circulated with regard to late unfortunate events in Turkey is too obviously the work of those Armenian revolutionary societies whose activities he has so often and so strongly denounced, to carry weight with him; and the propaganda of the persons who have brought forward that evidence includes the statement that the recent harsh treatment endured by the Armenians was altogether without provocation—a statement which Sir Mark Sykes knows to be untrue. As for the "millennium of martyrdom," I am at a loss to guess his meaning, for Sir Charles Wilson, in his article "Armenia"

* According to an Armenian estimate, the Armenians formed 33 per cent. of the total population of the six provinces commonly called Armenia in 1913.—M. P.

in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," writing of a period much less than a thousand years ago, says:

This *imperium in imperio* secured the Armenians a recognised position before the law, the free enjoyment of their religion, the possession of their churches and monasteries, and the right to educate their children and manage their municipal affairs. It also encouraged the growth of a community life, which eventually gave birth to an intense longing for national life. On the other hand it degraded the priesthood. The priests became political leaders rather than spiritual guides. Education was neglected and discouraged, servility and treachery were developed, and in less than a century the people had become depraved and degraded to an almost incredible extent.

In other words, at the beginning of Turkish rule the Armenian was, as Sir Mark Sykes has shown him to be to-day, his own worst enemy. And "Odysseus" in his "Turkey in Europe" declares that until after the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-8:

Turks and Armenians got on excellently together. The Armenians looked upon Russia as their enemy, and a large Armenian population from that country migrated into Kurdistan. The Russians restricted the Armenian Church, schools, and language; the Turks, on the contrary, were perfectly tolerant and liberal as to all such matters. . . . The balance of wealth certainly remained with the Christians. The Turks treated them with good-humoured confidence, and the phrase "millet-i-sadika" (the loyal community) was regularly applied to them.

As for the "underlying ideas which inspire the author" of the pamphlet, they may be fairly deduced from that author's own words: "The stories which have been so assiduously circulated about wholesale 'massacres' of Armenians have a distinct object in view, viz., to influence the future policy of the British Government and to prepare the public mind for the desired settlement—the incorporation of Armenia in the Russian Empire."

The author of the pamphlet thinks, and I think, and Sir Mark—unless I have mistaken the significance of some of his public speeches and his occasional writings in the "Yorkshire Post"—used till lately to think, that this, with its almost necessary consequence—the partition of Turkey—would be a great disaster for the British Empire; and the author of the pamphlet gives his reasons for so thinking.

Does Sir Mark Sykes, perhaps, imagine that the imputation of a distinct political purpose to Lord Bryce and his supporters is a gratuitous insult to those gentlemen, and that it was for the sake of making that insulting suggestion that the pamphlet was written? I can assure him that it is not so. If he will consult a book entitled "Travel and Politics in Armenia," by Noel Buxton and Harold Buxton, with an Introduction by Viscount Bryce (Smith, Elder, 1913), he will find this political object stated at considerable length, with amazing candour and simplicity, in the chapter entitled "The Function of the Powers" (pp. 123-159), and it is permissible to suppose that it has not altered since the war. Moreover, the pamphlet was not written with the purpose of attacking those gentlemen, but with that of opposing their political propaganda to the extent of warning the British public that there is another side to the whole question, and that it would be unfair to deliver judgment till we know the case for the defence.

That, I contend, is a perfectly legitimate aim in a publication, and if the pro-Armenian friends of Sir Mark Sykes object to temperate and reasoned opposition, they must be in a truly pitiable state of mind. I ask every reader of "The Armenians," by C. F. Dixon-Johnson, to compare it with the pamphlet "Armenian Massacres: The Murder of a Nation," by Mr. Arnold J. Toynbee, and then, and not till then, to think about it.

In conclusion, I must apologise to Sir Mark Sykes for addressing him in these columns, and not in those of the newspaper in which his letter appeared; but the "Times" would hardly publish a letter of mine at this juncture, certainly not one of any length.

MARMADUKE PICKTHALL.

The Larger Lunacy.

MR. EDITOR,—When I quitted my native country, and crossed the Atlantic, I was prepared to find a considerable amount of lunacy on the other side. I do not mean to be invidious. Most nations have their insane as well as their sane citizens: in the universal madhouse we call the World there are many cells. We also have our lunatics in America: not a city but boasts an ample share of them. I have mingled among them in my time, and found them exceedingly interesting. But I was anxious to see the lunatics of England; for, like my illustrious predecessor Washington Irving, I had read in the works of various philosophers that all animals degenerate in America. An English lunatic, thought I, must therefore be as superior in size to an American lunatic as a giant to a pigmy; and in this notion I was confirmed by observing the conduct of some English travellers among us, who, I was assured, were esteemed quite sane people in their own country. I will visit this land of the Larger Lunacy, I decided, and see the gigantic maniacs from whom we are degenerated.

To say that the result has surpassed my most sanguine anticipations would be using a very inadequate form of speech.

I will bring to your notice a few of the numerous cases which I have studied since I first began my researches in this country—a period amounting now to nearly twenty years.

The first thing I see, as I open my window in the morning, is a row of maids on their hands and knees, zealously scrubbing the doorsteps and stone pavements in front of the houses opposite. The creepers which adorn the walls of those houses vary with the seasons—the bright greenness of summer yields to the brown nudity of winter; then the spring comes back to clothe them with verdure again. But that row of kneeling maids knows no variation. Neither damp nor frost interrupts their matutinal genuflexions; their sense of duty seems to triumph over every discomfort—their proud spirit to scorn all the vicissitudes of the weather. So much for the poetry of it. Now a word of prose.

I am told that this way of scrubbing is the cause of a painful disease called "housemaid's knee" and of chilblains; and I have seen in a newspaper a letter from a lady who has travelled abroad, asking, "why not do it all in the foreign way: wooden clogs on the feet and large mops and pails of soapy water, even hard brushes with long handles for extra dirt?" But, so far as I can judge from the daily evidence of my eyes, nobody has paid any attention to this advice. It would seem that disease itself is not powerful enough to make an English housemaid abandon a habit hallowed by tradition.

That row of female figures in their posture of perennial adoration, Mr. Editor, is to me a symbol—or a symptom—of that wonderful English spirit of which your Parliament forms the most eminent incarnation.

"We have great traditions!" exclaimed Mr. Asquith in the House of Commons some months ago; and more recently Mr. Balfour speaking in the same place declared, "We never change!" In these two utterances you have the soul of England mirrored forth. No wonder England's representatives burst into ecstatic applause. They heard their favourite spokesmen giving voice to the very essence of English Parliamentarism. What other legislative assembly in the world is so deeply imbued with reverence for its traditions, so hostile to any change from the habits and ordinances of its prehistoric antecessors, so fanatically attached to its Links with the Past? On stepping into the House of Commons, the visitor, in spite of his efforts to keep himself at a matter-of-fact frame of mind, feels transported to another age—an age when life was fundamentally different from ours, when miracles were of daily occurrence, and the talismanic virtues of holy

water and exorcisms formed the orthodox antidote to the virtues of unlawful charms and incantations; an age when an eclipse of the sun or the apparition of a comet filled the hearts of men with maddening terror, and when it was a far surer sign of impudence to doubt the existence of witches than it would be now to deny the motion of the earth or the circulation of the blood. Obsolete fashions of costume, obsolete forms of speech, obsolete modes of thought are treasured up in that House as bits of the true Cross and rusty nails from Noah's Ark were treasured up in the monasteries of the Middle Age. And like mediæval monks its honourable members are ready to perish as one man in defence of their precious heritage. A hint at innovation is to them what a red rag is to the eyes of an exceptionally irritable bull or blasphemy to the ears of an exceptionally pious curate.

Whether the scrubbing of doorsteps or the making of laws is the more valuable contribution to the well-being of a community I will not presume to decide off-hand. But be the relative importance of the two functions what it may, it is obvious that both labour under hardships and hindrances which could easily be avoided. Foreign pavements are kept clean with half the discomfort, and foreign Parliaments pass their Bills with twice the speed. But English people have grown so accustomed to see their servants suffering from rheumatism, and their deputies frittering away their time, that it is difficult for them to imagine a housemaid in any other posture, or a House of Commons with any other procedure. Hence, morning after morning is witnessed, unchanged, the same domestic rite, and evening after evening the same political farce. This is what I call a sample of the Larger Lunacy.

Now, madness of this magnitude does not come from nature alone; it must be developed by practice, by example, by education which does not end with boyhood. If your politicians cleave so tenaciously to their effete traditions—those mounds of immemorial rubbish that are kept up at an enormous cost to prevent the inundation of efficiency—they owe their capacity, in no small measure, to their training.

Almost every Englishman who gets to Westminster gets there by way of Oxford or Cambridge; and in what other educational centres will you find the needs of the present more ruthlessly sacrificed to the ghosts of the past? Where else is the idolatrous worship of ancestral images carried to greater lengths of absurdity? I will not dwell on the meaningless mummeries and senseless ceremonies, on the antiquated formalities and moth-eaten frumperies that absorb so much of the mental energy of the custodians of English Culture. These are only the cerements of the academic body. Let us glance at the mummy they enfold.

In every modern civilised country the transition from school to college marks an advance towards manhood; in England a relapse into childhood. A student who is old enough to have a vote is not considered old enough to have a latch-key. Night and day his every movement is subjected to a system of official supervision, secret and overt, unknown anywhere outside the Russian Ministry of the Interior, or the Spanish Inquisition. These restrictions were formulated in centuries when undergraduates were boys of twelve; they remain in full force now that they are youths of twenty-two. In those centuries the only available education was classical education; to the typical English pedagogue the classics still are the only fountains of knowledge, and nothing that has happened since the Peloponnesian War is worth considering. For modern languages and sciences he has the contempt of arrogant ignorance. No thought however beautiful, no idea however magnificent, moves him to admiration as long as it is not clothed in a dead tongue. But present him with the most trivial commonplace in Greek or Latin, and he breaks into frigid raptures; mistaking his own pedantic love of the obsolete for some peculiar beauty in the passage; pretty much as a collector of antique furniture will lavish his praise and his money on any piece that bears upon it the authentic, or counterfeit, impress of age. He, therefore, regards himself bound in duty to make it as hard as possible for any fresh and living studies to trespass upon the preserves of the dead. To the average don Classical learning is a sacred legacy, as the Mosaic Law was to the Pharisees. To the letter of the ancient writers he gives all his homage, so that he has none left for their spirit. The essence of Greek literature is the negation of traditionalism; and the European Humanists who acclaimed it five hundred years ago did so because of that. It was for them a New Learning, destined to emancipate the mind of man from the tyranny of tradition. To their successors its chief merit lies in the fact that it is no longer new—that it represents an established tradition. Thus the cult of the Classics having arisen in active conviction persists as a passive creed. The ancient writers, so treated, do nothing for the mind of their votaries, save to mount guard over it to keep it empty.

This, I submit, is yet another sample of the Larger Lunacy.

It may be said that English politicians and pedagogues play, with such diligence and sincerity as is in them, the only game which they know. They refuse to be put out of their accustomed strut, merely because it is silly; for what would their reason for existing be if once the former left off pretending to govern and the latter to educate? I am not clever enough to answer this argument. There is force in it. And if the malady I am investigating manifested its virulence only in antiquated laws and antiquated learning, I should have nothing more to add. But, notoriously, it is by no means limited to these spheres of ineptitude. I have visited an English agricultural exhibition, and beheld therein a display of ploughs and other machines which, in America and Australia, were discarded as out-of-date thirty years ago. What was novelty to your countrymen would have been hoary antiquity to mine. I have been to your great cotton-spinning factories, and seen, besides many specimens of plant which in America would have fetched record prices as antediluvian curios, all sorts of operations that elsewhere are performed by automatic machinery here still done by hand. I have dealt with English merchants, and was astounded at their methods of trade. To one and all of these representatives of English Industrialism I expressed my feelings with the freedom and frankness of a candid cousin. And what was the answer?

"Ah, it is easy enough for you Colonials to draw any picture you like on your life's canvas, because you find it a blank. We have so many old pictures to take into account—Links with the Past, and all that sort of thing, don't you know."

To this I reply, "Why don't you wash the canvas clean? Why don't you break the rusty old links? It would be cheaper in the end."

But, of course, the mere hint at such a thing is almost enough to drive an Englishman sane.

Wherever I turn I find myself confronted with those miserable Links—the chain stretches as far as the limits of the population. The whole country is inhabited by worshippers of the Past. On all sides I seem to hear the same hymn sung in a multiplicity of pious accents: "As it was yesterday, is to-day, and, please God! to-morrow shall be!"

The houses in which you live are proverbial for their dampness, as might be expected to be the fact in the most rainy part of Europe. And yet, while in Continental countries, where rain is comparatively rare, the houses are coated with cement, here the thin brick walls are mostly bare. As regards heating also: whereas all other Western nations have long since invented a system which fills the whole building with a uniform warmth you still hug those primitive fireplaces which scorch one half of your body while the other half shivers, and send up the chimney all the heat

which should have spread through the room. In this matter, as in every other, you prefer traditional discomfort to a remedy that would savour of novelty; and an English friend of mine has told me how sorely he missed, whilst passing a winter in America, the chills and draughts of his ancestral home.

Talking of fireplaces reminds me of a kindred topic. The smoke produced by the coal burnt in them, in certain states of the atmosphere, rests like a thick cloud over your capital, shutting out the sun, and often descending, in foggy weather, as a dense, dirty, and partly poisonous mass of darkness most depressing to the spirits and very prejudicial to the health. It is on record that during the fogs of one winter asthma increased 220 per cent. and bronchitis 331 per cent., and in one week of another winter the death-rate rose from 27 to 35, while diseases of the respiratory organs rose from 430 to 994. So far back as 1306, when the population of London did not exceed 50,000, the citizens petitioned the king to prohibit the use of sea-coal, and he passed a law making the burning of it a capital offence. What has become of that law, I know not—perhaps it has been mislaid somewhere in your dusty archives. The smoke-producing area has since then increased forty-fold, and the average daily consumption of coals in domestic fireplaces in winter amounts now to 50,000 tons or more. But the citizens of London have long since given up complaining, and I do not envy the Reformer who would now try to deprive them of their annual asthma.

What shall I say about your attitude towards another vital matter—the matter of food? Even the most rudimentary delicacies and flavours of Continental cooking are still unknown to your palates. A few persons belonging to the higher classes have learned from the French to appreciate variety in their diet, and those habitually dine at restaurants kept by foreigners, but the bulk of the nation are both ignorant and scornful of all culinary refinement. They eat roast beef with boiled potatoes six days in the week, and on the seventh they eat roast beef with roast potatoes. The potato is to the people of Britain what rice is to the peasantry of Bengal. No meal is complete without potatoes, and how Englishmen managed to exist before Columbus discovered America I cannot imagine. For there are but few other vegetables in England, and all efforts to increase their number have failed, which is not to be wondered at, when one considers that even the use of this tedious esculent made its way into this country very slowly, and in the teeth of much popular opposition. It took centuries of agitation by the Royal Society to overcome the Englishman's instinctive distrust of an alien plant.

Other Western nations are quick in learning from their neighbours, in adopting and assimilating that which their neighbours have found good and useful. You are quite free from the vice of imitation. So far from borrowing from other countries, you carry to every country whither you may go your own native trains of thought and feeling—you "run the great circle and are still at home," like the squirrel in his rolling cage; and think every institution which does not coincide with those you have been brought up in either quaint or objectionable. I remember an English family living in Greece. Although more than fifty years had elapsed since they had settled among the Greeks, they still cooked their meals in the English way—meat and vegetables separate, with little salt and no butter—and could not conceal their disgust upon hearing that their neighbours put oil in their salad. Thus it comes about that even in these days, when the facilities of travel and the multiplication of books conspire to bring every nation under the influence of foreign opinion and fashion, English cooking remains, to all intents and purposes, such as it was in the days of the Conquest.

There is romance about this defiance of Time. It is undeniably a great thing to feel yourself superior to the power of circumstance; and I am far from being blind to the picturesqueness of your Links with the Past. I cannot sufficiently admire this spirit through which the peculiar type of the race is preserved, and the originality of its life perpetuated. But what impresses me more than the romance and the picturesqueness is the pathos of it. If love of novelty for its own sake is a sign of childish frivolity, uncompromising attachment to tradition is a symptom of senility. They live on memories who have no more hopes. In other countries the cult of the Past is confined to a few enthusiastic individuals or to societies of aged antiquarians, who cling to the past chiefly because they are too old to expect anything from the future. But here every man is born an antiquarian. There is something in the word "innovation" which seems so closely associated in the minds of Englishmen with trouble that it stands in their vocabulary for a synonym with disaster. Even persons—mostly politicians and journalists—who, to serve their own ends, in public clamour for reform, in private conversation make no secret of their distaste for change. As for the average Englishman, he has no inducement for acting so uncongenial a part. He can afford to be himself, and he is.

The butcher cuts out his meat by a traditional weight—the buyer pays for it in traditional coin—the cook dresses it with the traditional lack of sauce—the butler serves it with the traditional potatoes—and the consumer, having consumed it with the traditional mustard (none who have not tasted English mustard can have any conception of its hell-fire potency), retires to bed at the traditional hour to nurse his traditional indigestion. One foggy morning, in a fit of traditional spleen, he cuts his throat with the traditional razor. His body is then immediately seized by the traditional coroner. Twelve of his countrymen hold upon it an inquest according to the traditional forms, and commit it to everlasting rest with the traditional verdict of "temporary insanity."

Insanity, yes; but why "temporary"?

I remain, Mr. Editor, according to the traditional formula, your obedient servant, JONATHAN.

A Reflection upon Sin.

By Ramiro de Maeztu.

SOME three months ago a New York paper related an event the authenticity of which I cannot guarantee. Only, there is something even more interesting than its authenticity, and that is its very possibility. An American, Mr. Douglas Dold, happened to be at Nish when the Bulgarian and German troops entered the Serbian city. Mr. Dold and a Serbian bishop went out to the gates of the city to implore the commander of the Bulgarian troops to extend his protection to the non-combatants. The Bulgarian general courteously granted what was asked of him. "I must say," adds Mr. Dold, "that his men behaved correctly, and even placed guards to protect the hospital stores. There were no disorders until the Germans arrived. Then there were robberies, fires, murders, and violations. . ."

Now, the well-balanced reader must have wondered when he read these lines: "But how is it possible that German troops should have behaved worse than Bulgarians? Isn't Germany a cultured nation and Bulgaria a semi-barbaric country?"

And this is the point which interests us. It is not possible to guarantee the authenticity of the event related in the absence of better and more circumstantial evidence. But it is more interesting to raise the question of its possibility than of its reality. The reality might only mean that it casually occurred to the commander of the Bulgarian troops to restrain his men, while the careless commander of the Germans gave them free rein. What is important is the question of the possibility; for when the accounts of similar happenings in Belgium were cried throughout the world there were many well-balanced people who asked themselves the same question: "How has it come about

that such a kind and cultivated people as the Germans should have been able to reproduce scenes which the Church remembers in the prayer: 'May God deliver us from the fury of the barbarians'? How is it possible for cultivated men to fall into the same sin as those who are not?" The question that moves well-balanced minds is therefore more that of possibility than that of reality. But this question of possibility is solved if only we remember that human sins are of two kinds: sins of lust and sins of pride. Sins of lust emanate from the lowest part of our human nature; but the sins of pride proceed precisely from the highest part of man.

This idea shocks and displeases many modern minds, especially those brought up in the idealist school, who willingly admit that the lowest part of human nature sins, but who refuse roundly to believe that our highest part may sin also. But these modern minds are in reality very old. Although the words change, the ideas are always the same. The men who believe that the only source of sin is lust are, in truth, Manicheans, who give the spirit to God, but declare matter to be eternally and incurably evil. The result of Manicheanism is inevitably the grossest immorality; for, on the one hand, the Manichean is careless of his body, since it cannot do other than sin; and, on the other hand, he is careless of his mind, because the mind cannot sin. But, if you believe that your mind cannot sin, you have already committed the sin of pride—a sin in itself, and the source of the gravest sins.

We sin through lust because we are, in part, barbarians; because we have always been, in part, barbarians; and because we shall always remain, in part, barbarians. It will be impossible to eliminate the element of barbarism from human nature so long as we are not pure spirits. But we sin through pride precisely because we are also rational beings, capable, therefore, of carrying out good actions, and of being conscious that these actions of ours are good. Satisfied with these our good works, we easily forget our condition as sinners; we believe ourselves to be good and righteous; and as soon as the illusion of our righteousness takes possession of our mind we lose the rein which held us in check so long as the consciousness of our condition of sinners did not absent itself from our minds.

The man who asks himself: How is it possible for me to sin? makes himself capable by this question of committing the greatest excesses, for they will no longer seem to him to be excesses, but acts of righteousness. And the greater the merits of this man, the greater will be the possibility of his merits filling him with pride, and of pride blinding in him the consciousness of the fear of sin. The condition sine qua non for the purification of our double nature, spiritual and corporal, is a permanent shame of one's self, founded on the conviction that our constant inclination is towards lust and pride. Men are of two classes, and only two: the bad ones, that is to say, those who do not know that they are bad; and the good ones, who are also bad, but who, because they know themselves to be bad, make themselves good.

History and experience show us every day that the greatest outrages are usually committed by persons of eminent righteousness. Perhaps the greatest persecutor of the Christian in the times of Trajan was the younger Pliny, honourable quæstor and prætor and consul, who ordered the death of every Christian who did not address his prayers to the Cæsar of pagan Rome. The reason why Jesus reserved His greatest anathemas for the Pharisees was not that the Pharisees were not righteous. The Pharisees were righteous, but they knew themselves to be righteous; and because they knew themselves to be righteous they crucified the Son of God.

One of the glories of English literature is J. A. Froude's Essay on the Book of Job, in which precisely this problem is studied. You may find in this Essay words still burning with actuality:

Knowledge is power, and wealth is power; and harnessed, as in Plato's fable, to the chariot of the soul, and guided by wisdom, they may bear it through the circle of the stars. But left to their own guidance, or reined by a fool's hand, they may bring the poor fool to Phæton's end, and set a world on fire.

But Froude does not understand the sin that Job had committed. Job was a man who had practised a righteous life, and was conscious of it, and who believed himself, for that reason, to have a right to a happy life. And thus when God submits him to the proof of adversity, and his friends urge him to repent: "Job will not acknowledge his sin, he cannot repent, for he knows not of what to repent." That amounts to saying that Job was proud. Well, then, a proud man may have practised righteousness throughout his life. This is enough for the eyes of men, who cannot penetrate into the sanctuary of intentions, and can judge of others only by their acts. But it is not sufficient in the eyes of God. God is not contented with acts, but He requires humility as well. Men cannot punish pride, because they do not know where to find it. But if they were gods they would punish it too, for it is inevitable that pride should lead men, sooner or later, to the greatest crimes.

What is said of individuals may be extended to nations. For what is a nation but its individuals in so far as they are solidary in a territory or in a state of culture? There does not exist a soul of France or of Germany distinct from the souls of Frenchmen or Germans. Nationality is nothing but a mood of individuality. It cannot be anything else.

Suppose the case of a country in which the men are individually humble but collectively proud, through being convinced that their state of culture is the best, the highest, and the only one deserving to impose itself upon the others. Here you have the case of a nationality which thinks itself righteous, and because it thinks itself righteous it will be capable, with perfect tranquillity of conscience, of trampling upon everything else. All nations have passed through similar moments of collective pride, or, to be more exact, of individual pride in relation to collective things. We Spaniards know that well. The French still speak of "la morgue espagnole"; the Germans say "stolz wie ein Spanier"; the English often refer to "the proud Spaniard." But it is in these moments of pride that the nations commit the acts of impiety which, sooner or later, lead to their ruin; for they create the enemies who destroy them.

I repeat that I cannot guarantee the authenticity of the event at Nish. But I am not surprised at its possibility. I am not surprised that the Bulgarian troops should have restrained themselves, because what restrained them was the consciousness of believing themselves to be barbarians; nor am I surprised that the Germans did not take the trouble to hold themselves in check, precisely because they believed themselves to be a superior people.

And if you tell me that the Germans not only believe themselves to be, but *are*, a superior people, I will agree, because, as a matter of fact, the Germans have done superior things. Although it may pain me as a Spaniard, I have to acknowledge that in the present world there are only four superior nations: France, England, Germany, Italy. But true superiority has two moments: first, that of doing superior things; and, secondly, that of believing them to be bad. And if you say that that is impossible, I shall reply that all depends on the ideal that accompanies our action. If you have an ideal of mere superiority it is possible to do superior things and to believe them to be superior. But, if you have an ideal of perfection, although you may do superior things you will believe them to be bad. But this ideal of perfection has almost disappeared in modern men. That is why the consciousness of original sin has also become so weak. And it is through this weakness that we so easily become the prey of lust and pride.

Troy Again!

Reported by Charles Brookfarmer.

SCENE: Haymarket Theatre; last Saturday; "The Mayor of Troy," by "Q"; scenery by Joseph and Phil Harker; costumes by L. and H. Nathan; wigs by Clarkson. Enter STUDENT, as curtain rises.

After some conversation:

MAJOR SOLOMON TOOGOOD, MAYOR OF TROY: If it rested with me, sir, every woman in England should produce a dozen children. (Laughter.)

ALL: On such an occasion, etc., etc.

After some conversation:

LOMAX (excise officer, leaning out of window): My ahem, ahems won't meet behind; I think I've been stung by a bee. (Loud laughter. DOCTOR runs to help him, then reappears.)

DOCTOR (explaining to ladies): It's only his uniform; he finds a certain difficulty, I believe, in making a certain portion of it meet! . . . Lomax, do you feel easier?

LOMAX: Yes, as long as the swelling goes down. (In his absence, the MAYOR and a FRENCHMAN, after some conversation, arrange a smuggling deal. Enter guests.)

1ST LADY: One would say that Nature had donned her gayest gown. (Enter VICAR.)

After some conversation:

VICAR: The millennium is not the end of the world; it simply means that Satan will be bound for a thousand years; only that. Satan, madame, Beelzebub—

CAI (a servant): O, 'im! (Laughter.)

VICAR: We are assembled here on this distinguished occasion to unveil a statue to our Mayor. Those of you who heard my sermon last Sunday will remember that, although the collection was small——

A LADY: Small, cousin?

VICAR: Fourpence ha'penny, cousin, and a button! But where are we? We are here—

AN OFFICER: Hear, hear! (Loud laughter.)

VICAR: Here, in the year 1804—

OFFICER: What for? (Laughter. The bust is unveiled, and the MAYOR returns thanks. A French lugger is seen; exeunt all to smuggle. Two comic soldiers are left on sentry.)

1ST SOL.: William Oke, William Oke, yer'll never make a sojer. (Suddenly): William Oke, William Oke, have ye ever broke the tin commandments?

2ND SOL.: I've niver married me grandmither, if that be what ye mean. (Laughter.)

1ST SOL.: William Oke, William Oke, hiv ye iver coveted yer neighbour's wife?

2ND SOL.: Ah, no, I niver could abide of 'er. (Exeunt soldiers. DOCTOR and MISS MARTY enter.)

DOCTOR: The bee has taken Lomax in the rear! (Laughter.) And so, while everyone thinks we're being attacked, the Mayor will run in the brandy.

MISS MARTY: The Vicar was right after all; this must be the millennium. (They kiss. Guns. Confusion. Re-enter all.)

SCIPIO (negro footman): Oh, missie, missie, it was a real Frenchman. An' massa's—oh! oh! missing, missing. (Exeunt all. FRENCHMAN steals MAYOR's hidden treasure, sits down comfortably and counts it.)

CAI (entering quietly): So yer'd rob me master of the money! Dirty swine, get out! if iver I see yer dirty face here agin, I'll shoot ye like a dog. (Exit FRENCHMAN.)

CAI (to statue): So that's you, master, is it? And this is what's left—you and me and this! (Curtain. Three people applaud.)

ACT II.—TEN YEARS LATER.

MISS MARTY (now Mrs. DOCTOR): Ten years to-day!

DOCTOR: And it seems like a week.

After about twenty minutes' conversation:

MAYOR (enters with comic sailor, BEN CHOPE): Constancy, thy name is woman!

B. C.: O, stow it! (Laughter. They sing a song.)

MAYOR: Well, old fellow prisoner, what do you say to it?

B. C.: I says, wait an' see! (Tremendous laughter. Sees bust.) 'Ello, ere's a guy! (LOMAX enters and reads memoir of Mayor and hands it to B. C.) 'E was dirty——

MAYOR: Doughty!

B. C.: Dirty?

MAYOR: No, doughty! (To LOMAX.) Suppose I brought you word that Mr. Toogood was alive?

LOMAX: Then what about my book? (Enter MAYOR'S WICKED BROTHER.)

MAYOR: D'you know me, brother?

BROTHER: Take it away!

CAI (enters): The Mayor wants to know when the fireworks 'll start and stop the vicar's damned talking.

MAYOR: I'm not wanted back.

B. C.: No man is after ten years. (MAYOR looks for hidden treasure. The fireworks begin.)

1ST ROCKET: Whizz! Bang!

MAYOR: Missing! (Falls in a faint.)

VOICES: It's a rocket-stick hit him! Take him away! Carry him into the hospital! Our first patient!

2ND ROCKET: Whizz! Bang, bang! (Curtain.)

ACT III.—THE HOSPITAL.

(MAYOR and B. C. are playing chess.)

B. C.: You're a sodger, I'm a sailor. On the ship we used to say, a messmate afore a shipmate, a shipmate afore a dog—(Laughter)—and a dog afore a sodger! Well, messmate, ye're not a sailor, but ye're a man. (Enter CAI.)

CAI: I'm curator, on fifteen shillings a week! O dear! An' that's the worst of being what the vicar calls a pessimist—you may find any moment a damn' fool who agrees with you! (They discuss the old MAYOR.) 'E 'ad a leg; that's what made 'im so popular with the ladies. 'E on'y lef' me fifty pound. (LOMAX enters and, on MAYOR disclosing his identity, offers him five guineas to go away. Enter WICKED BROTHER.)

MAYOR: Once upon a time there were two brothers (etc., etc., etc.). You owe me two hundred pounds less ten guineas. Ho, ho, ho, by the gods! their sport though I may be! William! Go! (Exit BROTHER. Enter BRIDE, bringing MAYOR flowers. Sympathetic applause.)

CAI (re-enters): She's romantic, that's wot she is. Now, the Mayor, what 'e suffered from was wind in the stummick. 'E was puffed up. 'E lef' me fifty pound. But still, 'e was a man.

MAYOR: Cai, you're a liar!

CAI: A wot! (Recognises MAYOR.) Ma-a-aster! Ma-a-aster! (Falls on MAYOR'S stomach.) Nay, nay, master, 'tis yuman nater. Where's the man on earth oo can leave thirty thousand pound and be welcomed back. (Tremendous laughter and some applause. Enter MRS. BEN CHOPE.)

MRS. B. C.: W'ere be my man, w'ere be 'e?

MAYOR: Madame?

MRS. B. C.: None of yer madams; w'ere be 'e? (B. C. is discovered under bed! MRS. B. C. beats and then embraces him, he uttering loud nautical cries. Then MR. and MRS. B. C. sing a song and dance off. MAYOR puts on his old uniform. Enter everybody.)

ALL: Solomon!

MAYOR: I am, or was, Solomon Toogood. (Commands silence, blesses BRIDE, breaks bust, and receives back buried treasure from CAI.) Now for the road! Cai, you'll be my servant?

CAI: Will I, sir?

(After much conversation and a dance the curtain falls.)

Drama.

By John Francis Hope.

"Q.'s" first play has been produced, and the critics have said all the nice things about its being full of promise—an unfortunate phrase, for a play should be full of performance. "H. W. M." in the "Nation" seems to have been disappointed, because "The Mayor of Troy" was not Ibsen's "Pillars of Society"; and sadly he drew our attention to the fact that we live in serious times, and that modern English drama "will not, cannot be serious." There are crises even in English politics, surely there ought to be a crisis in "Q.'s" first play? Has not Mr. Asquith declared that the crisis is all right? "No crisis," observed "H. W. M." sadly, and wept at our frivolity; and threatened us with the time when "the lights must go out," and, I suppose, we shall all be compelled to laugh at German comedy. "No hopes for them as laughs," hints "H. W. M." like another John Stickles (see footnote to Byron's "Hints from Horace"). I must be one of the regenerate, for I did not laugh at "The Mayor of Troy." A frivolous generation seeketh after a joke; but strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, and few there be that find it. There is another fulfilment of prophecy!

"Q.'s" first play was appropriate to the season of its production. Its main idea is the inconvenience caused by the return of the presumably dead to life; and it was produced only a few hours before the yearly celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, Who was last seen in the trenches fighting for us. I do not mean to say that Major Solomon Hymen Toogood (for this world) was supposed to rise from the grave; "Q.'s" efforts, like those of the Royal Humane Society, were devoted to the resuscitation of the apparently drowned. Lest this should mislead my readers, I hasten to say that the body was never found; the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended. The death of Major Solomon Toogood was only presumed, like that of Enoch Arden or of Ulysses, so that artificial respiration was not necessary. Indeed, there was too much wind in "The Mayor of Troy," a curious instance of literary allusion, for has not Troy been poetically described as "windy Troy," and does not one of the characters of the play say that Major Toogood "was Troy"? You may always trust a professor of literature to be apposite in his allusions.

All criticism agrees on the importance of the other; for example, it has been definitely proved that Homer's poems were not written by Homer, but by another poet of the same name. Shakespeare's plays, we know, were not written by Shakespeare the deer-stealer and horse-holder, but by William Shakespeare, the author of the plays. In like manner, I must inform my readers that "Q.'s" Troy is not Troy, but another town of the same name. Be quite certain of this, that this new Troy is not Troynovant, for that was the original name of London. This Troy was in Cornwall in 1804; it is now in the Haymarket Theatre, London. These topographical details will be very important to the critics of posterity, and for that reason I give them here; it is not often that a professor of literature writes for the stage, and we must celebrate the occasion with due solemnity. "My Troy is in Cornwall, my Troy is not here"—a literary allusion to the works of Burns.

But no matter; when we dead awaken, or when the sleeper wakes, or "Come back to Cornwall," is the theme. Nobody wanted Major Toogood to come back to Cornwall; the Cornwallers preferred things before men, preferred Major Toogood's money before his life, his room before his company, his bust was, to them, preferable to his body. For they made a graven image, and set it up on high; and there it stands unto this day, to witness if I lie (Macaulay). A touch of subtlety! Revered as a saint, his bust was made of plaster, another literary allusion. What happens when the dead return to life! "Where wert thou, Lazarus, those four days?" asked Tennyson, with the curiosity of a housewife; as though Lazarus could tell! Christ, we know, was not recognised when He first appeared; He was mistaken for the gardener. If a story of Marion Crawford's may be believed, He was not remembered by one of the important personages of the story. "Jesus of Nazareth?" said Pontius Pilate, thoughtfully. "No, I don't remember Him." Ulysses is not evidence, for Pallas Athene played tricks, although I believe that the dog wagged his tail. Nor can Enoch Arden be cited, for he only peeped through the window, and then fled to his "ocean spoil in ocean-smelling osier." Anyhow, it is a toss-up. Bill Chope bet Solomon Toogood all that he had in the world (about ninepence, I think) that no one would recognise him; and at first nobody did. They were all too much engaged in paying homage to his memory to remember him. That is another characteristic of this play: every act is a celebration. The first act celebrated his seventh successive occupation of the Mayoralty of Troy, a record which reduces that of Dick Whittington to insignificance; the second act, ten years after (Dumas preferred twenty), celebrates the anniversary of his birth, death, or Mayoralty, I am not sure which; the third act celebrates the marriage of his nephew, and the opening of the Solomon Toogood Memorial Hospital, of which Solomon Toogood is, by the irony of fate, the first inmate. Note well that touch of irony; it is another instance of "Q.'s" astonishing appositeness. That a celebrity should write nothing but celebrations is yet another instance.

That nobody recognised him is not surprising. When he disappeared, he was Mayor of Troy and Major of the Trojan "Die-Hards," and possessed about thirty thousand pounds. When he returned, he was a released prisoner of war with a lame leg, about one and threepence, and a poor opinion of his former self. Ten years' meditation in a French prison had taught him the vanity of human pretensions: "Vanitas, vanitatum; I bet you they remember me," thus he mused. As a military man, he must often have uttered the command: "As you were"; it is the most characteristic feature of military science, of which the most striking example is the Western battle-front. Everybody remembered him as he was; everything his bust, his biography, represented him as he was. Being no longer as he was, he believed that he never had been as he was (this is getting very complicated); just as Iago said: "I am not what I am": so Solomon Toogood mused: "I was not what I was." If this were so, these people had never known him; if they had never known him, they could not recognise him; he was not the man he was, in any case. The question that really arose was: "Who was he?" Shakespeare produced the same effect of bewilderment in the lines: "Tut! I have lost myself. I am not here. This is not Romeo: he is some otherwhere."

But this simply would not do. The faithful servant told him that he was himself, that he always was himself, and always would be himself. The wicked brother confirmed this assurance of his identity, but told him that he must not be himself; he must be a hallowed and revered corpse, "live, or dead, or fashioned to his fancy," he must remain as he was. His bust was modelled, his biography was written, his memorial hospital was opened, his money was divided, his Mayoralty was occupied, his lover was married, even his Majorate was now filled by his successor. As his faithful servant had discovered and saved the secret store of wealth, he determined to remain dead after having dismissed his "Die-Hards," and having proved to everybody that he was not dead. Here is a curious point for a lawyer. His death had been legally presumed, and probate of his will granted; the secret store on which he intended to live consisted mainly of investments. How could he draw his dividends without legally proving his existence? "Q." is only a professor of literature, and he did not make the point clear; but we excuse everything in a first play that is full of promise, and has no room for anything else.

Readers and Writers.

WHEN Dr. Levy in his letter of last week referred to "humanity and its goals" as "meaningless cant" and "the Divine order of progress" as "a senseless phrase," he was too polite to mention the fact that both these phrases had been used only a week or two before in these editorial columns. I hope, however, that they will continue to be employed in the sense which they were there intended to convey; for the phrases to my mind are as true and explicit as words for such facts can be. That German thought, on the evidence of both Dr. Levy and Mr. J. M. Kennedy, has no cognisance of "humanity" or of any "divine order of progress" would, even if it were true, carry no weight with me. Unlike Dr. Levy, I should simply remark that the Germans are a stupid people, and wrong in this as in so much else. But, as a matter of fact, quite as many Germans employ the phrases as any other nation; and only a few days ago the "Hamburger Fremdenblatt" was disposed to despair of mankind and to confess that "faith in humanity had been driven out of it." But you cannot drive out something that was never in. Consequently some belief in mankind or humanity must have been entertained by Germans if only upon the lips of German journalists.

* * *

What the word "humanity" connotes and the precise meaning to be attached to the phrase "the divine order of progress" are, of course, matters of taste. I say taste as a concession to people who cannot think long enough or clearly enough upon such subjects to get beyond feeling about them. But even as matters of taste or common sense, I see no difficulty in distinguishing the genus Man from the genus Horse, or in conceiving of his "becoming" as a "divine order of progress." There are certainly things "proper" to Man as there are things "proper" to the Horse; and the sum total of these proprieties make up the definition of humanity as the sum of the latter define equinity. And, again, since even in the absence of Nietzscheans during the very early periods of nascent man, humanity nevertheless groped its way progressively forwards, we are surely entitled to speak of a "divine order"—an order, that is, which was certainly not of man's own creation and institution. Dr. Levy has probably allowed himself to be misled by certain criticisms passed by Nietzsche upon every mode of movement that is not deliberately directed towards a yea and a nay, a straight line and a goal. But not even Nietzsche would have pretended that *any* goal was possible to Man, but only such goals as were within the defined potentialities of the genus—themselves "divinely" given; and, even if we allow that Man may become a creator, Nature is made better by no means but Nature makes the means. The *instrumentality* of great men is none the less certain for the relative creativeness we attribute to them. It is still "He that made us and not we ourselves." What, therefore, we call creation is really a discovery of the future; and great men are only creators as they discover and bring into existence what is to be. *What is to be*—ah, then, you say, so progress is inevitable; and we are back in the company of the Panglosses! Not quite—for, in the first place, a divine *order* of progress is not a divine *necessity* of progress; and, in the second place, the necessity is purely human. I mean that the order is fixed, but the necessity lies with ourselves. We can either follow it or neglect it, as we please. We can only do what is possible to be done; and we need not do that. The one is divinely fixed, and is revealed in the workings of Fate; the other rests with ourselves, and we call it Will.

* * *

Mr. Bracher, who undertook last week to reply on Mr. Hyde's behalf to my notes upon the latter's book, "The Two Roads" (King, 1s. 3d.), brought his friend a Greek gift. Small as the book is, he says, it contains a good deal of irrelevant matter. The rest, however, is "an important scheme of constructive statesmanship." I confess I cannot grasp the congruity of a capacity for trivial irrelevance with a capacity for constructive statesmanship; the man, it appears to me, who cannot distinguish in a little book between the trivial and the important cannot distinguish either between the possible and the impracticable in still greater affairs. Be that as it may, however, my criticism of Mr. Hyde's scheme was on its merits as a profoundly practical suggestion; and it was disposed of, I said, on an examination of its very first clause. To assume that an International Parliament could be formed, composed of representatives of every nation in proportion to status and population, is to assume the solution of the very problem with which such a Parliament would be concerned. Granted the Parliament, the problem would, of course, be settled; but to grant the Parliament is to beg the problem. Mr. Bracher himself indulges in hypothetics in support of Mr. Hyde's exercises in the same day-dreaming. If, he says, an International Parliament were in control of all international affairs and conducted them in full publicity, there would be no need of secret diplomacy. The silliness of such speculations is Antipodean.

* * *

I trust that "A. E. R." will look another way while the present note is being written; for it concerns "Hamlet," and I bear the marks still of his last controversy with me upon the subject. The tragedy of "Hamlet," I contended, turned upon the spiritual shock the philosophically idealist Prince received on the discovery of his mother's infidelity, and not, as "A. E. R."—fresh from Freud—contended, upon an incest-motive elsewhere unknown in Shakespeare or, I believe, in Elizabethan literature. Dr. Somers, of the Manchester Playgoers' Club, has now come to my support with a medical diagnosis of Hamlet's disease, which he declares to be "male hysteria." This, he says, "supplies the word for which the critics have been painfully fumbling for two centuries, and brings out the essential tragedy of Hamlet, which is the infidelity of the Queen-Mother." "Male hysteria" is not as pleasing a diagnosis as incest to minds determined on requiring tragedies to be tragical; but from its consanguinity with insanity, the varieties of which certainly interested Shakespeare, it appears to me much more probable. I will say no more.

* * *

The tercentenarian essays upon Shakespeare (perhaps I should say upon King Charles' head!) have served to make a greater mystery than ever of the author of the Plays. He seems to have been at once the most idle and the most industrious, the most unoriginal and the most original of men. Sir John M. Robertson holds that not only large fragments of indubitably Shakespearean plays were the work of other men, but that whole plays, included in the present canon, were written by one or other of Shakespeare's contemporaries. By and by, in fact, at this rate of progress, Shakespeare will be left without a Play to cover him. Nor will the Sonnets even be left to keep his memory warm; for to the various mysteries already arising out of them Mr. Robert Palk adds (in the "'Times' Literary Supplement") the final mystery of their actual authorship. Not Shakespeare at all, he says, was their author, but Sir Walter Raleigh, who addressed them from the Tower to the young Prince Henry! I care nothing, as my readers know, for the authorship of either the Plays or the Sonnets. My concern is with the state of literary criticism that allows their authorship to be in doubt or to depend upon criteria that are not purely literary. That Sir Sidney Lee should be an "authority" upon Shakespeare strikes me as ridiculous; and that our knowledge of the authorship of Shakespeare's works should have to turn upon anything Sir Sidney Lee can discover appears to me an affront to literary criticism.

R. H. C.

Tales of To-day.

By C. E. Bechhöfer.

I.—HOW LORD NORTHCLIFFE WON THE BATTLE OF VERDUN.

It was morning around Verdun. Far behind the firing-line, though well within sight and sound of the screeching shells, a man was striding along the road to the headquarters of the French Commandant. He was dressed in clanking ancient armour cap-à-pie, only in place of a vizor he wore a pair of airman's goggles. Behind him, attired in similar fashion, but more shabbily, marched a well-disciplined band of men. The leader turned. A man approached him from the ranks, bearing a map.

The leader removed his goggles and placed a great pair of horn spectacles on his enormous nose. The gesture betrayed the man. The fleshy jaw, the imperious eye, the raven's beak and the horn spectacles —it was Lord Northcliffe, the Iron Journalist.

"Men," he cried to the company, "behold me in sight of Verdun. This is an immemorial day in our incorporated history. I reduce your salaries a third in honour of the occasion."

"God bless you, Chief," cried the enthusiastic men.

"Onwards," he cried, and led the way.

General Eventail sat in his tent, dispatching orders to the armies under his charge. The defence of Verdun was settled in him, this unremarkable little man; like all French generals, he was only four foot high. He heard a commotion outside his tent. "Sacré bleu," he roared, "fils d'un canon, silence!" In vain; the noise increased. Then a strange figure entered the tent. "Who are you?" cried the French General. The mysterious stranger bared his face. "Napoleon!" screamed the General, and fell on his knees before him. The stranger stood calmly and magnificently there for the space of a few minutes; then he put out his hand and helped the Frenchman to rise.

The General was weeping like a little child. "O hero of our race," he murmured, "O genius of all war, art thou returned from the Elysian fields to aid our arms? Speak; art thou not the Corsican himself?"

"No," said the stranger, "I am greater than Napoleon. The perfidious English broke his might at last, but I have laid my foot upon their neck." The General turned all white with fear. "Speak, speak," he cried, "who art thou? Ghostly apparition, cow hypocrite, who art thou?"

The stranger stretched out a mailed arm imperiously; his eyes gleamed as he answered. "I am the Chief," he cried: "le chef, le Lord Northcliffe, Alfred Harmsworth, victor of 'Tit-bits,' 'Answers,' 'Daily Mail,' 'Times,' and a thousand others." "Sacré nom de Dieu," cried the Frenchman, who had recovered all his self-possession, "my own wife reads the Paris 'Daily Mail'! A la bonne heure, camarade! Welcome! A bas les Boches!" And he flung his arms round the visitor, standing on the table to embrace him. All his awe had vanished. "Ah, mon gar," he cried, "so thou hast come to see our little spectacles. A la bonne heure, cheri; heep, heep, hurré! But what's this strange old armour for?"

Lord Northcliffe was rather offended at the unwonted familiarity of the Frenchman, who spoke to him as if to an equal. However, he replied with dignity, "It is a uniform designed by me for the underground air service."

General Eventail shook his head in bewilderment, until the remembrance that all Englishmen are mad came into his head. He called in his chief of staff and invited Lord Northcliffe to come with him to breakfast. The Iron Journalist stiffly assented, and leaving the tent, gave the following commands to his troops. "Edition, 'shun! Half columns to the right, by paragraphs to the front—Quick march! Halt! As you were! Advance by sections of small type! Leaders; quick march!" And, led by the General and Lord Northcliffe, the party set off at a smart pace for the mess. Meanwhile the battle in the trenches continued.

Breakfast was nearly over when General Eventail rose on his chair. "Friends, officers, gentlemen, Lord Northcliffe! I give you a toast—our gallant allies, the English! Vivent les anglais!"

"Damn 'em!" cried Lord Northcliffe.

"What did your lordship say?" asked the little General.

"I said, 'Damn the English,'" replied Lord Northcliffe calmly, "and may God damn them as I have damned them in the last twenty years."

Crash! The little General had thrown his glass at Lord Northcliffe, and it had smashed on his armour. "Come here, me bhoys," cried Northcliffe, and hurled the first row of his young men at the General and his staff. These were taken by surprise, but, recovering, they repulsed the attack with Gallic valour. "A bas les Boches and Lord Northcliffe, the foe of the English," cried the little General, hurling himself through the opposing ranks at the cold figure in the antique armour. Lord Northcliffe screamed with terror, but, luckily, a fresh force of his partisans interposed. With all the villainous and unfair tricks in which their Chief had instructed them they threw themselves upon the unlucky Frenchmen and hurled them to the ground.

Just then there came loud sounds of cheering. Lord Northcliffe went to the door of the tent. A French soldier rushed up, wildly waving his rifle. "General! Monsieur! Milord!" he cried; "the Germans are evacuating their trenches."

"Thank God!" said Northcliffe solemnly, pressing his hands to his heart, "Victory is mine!"

With that he gave a great shout of joy and rushed off to his hotel. There he found his brightest young man, whom he had left on guard, and hurried him off to the front to find out what had happened. Meanwhile he adjusted his horn spectacles in the rims of his air-goggles. In an hour the young man brought a long type-written account of all he had learned. At the Chief's command, he put in a few facts at intervals to give the whole an appearance of verisimilitude; for example, "The 22nd Company of the 119th Regt. of Junkers advanced to the attack at 10.46 a.m." This done, he set to work to address envelopes to the "Daily Mail" ("by courtesy of the Editor of the 'Times'"), to the "Times" ("by courtesy of the Editor of the 'Evening News'"), to the "Evening News" ("by courtesy of the Editor of the 'Daily Mail'"), and to the "Daily News and Leader" ("by courtesy of 'His Lordship'").

Meanwhile Lord Northcliffe sat down beside a mound of British dead, and rounded off the report as follows:

"It is a fair Spring morning. As I mount the steep path towards the wooded height of Verdun, a melodious lark trills blithely above me in the firmament. The road is littered with the dead and dying, and, as I step on them in passing, I reflect that I never enjoyed a battle before so much in my life." Then, in his biggest handwriting he signed it, "NORTHCLIFFE, VICTOR OF VERDUN," and took off his spectacles.

All the papers praised him, and the "Daily News" published his photograph on the front page, with a eulogy by A. G. G.

Interlude.

VERY provoking! Crowds of disputants in the new forest of ethics and scarcely a soul with me where I am working out on the flat the old ethic, sound as ever: Do as you would be done by, or the other animals will make you! Two souls, however, to applaud, both writers themselves; one is enthusiastically discontented at doing nothing, the other professes to have been rivalrously set to doing. It is amusing to have made two fellow performers want to get up and dance. On the other hand, a mob goes by, saying in effect: "Yah!" "Several other people, too, who had not the patience to continue reading about incarnated Peris. The tales lack human interest and it is thought wonderful that you can be in Paris and write like that."

* * *

Paris, my friends, like London, expensively advertises thirty to forty large places of amusement; the number of cinemas and cabarets open is not far short of two hundred. The shops are crowded, the chief literature is "The Mysteries of New York"; the poor are too richly pauperised to do a hand's turn, except for double its value, and the rich are making fortunes out of the war. The only dull, desolate and disgusted are the *permissionaires,* for whom the Government has at last voted 10,000 francs in order that they may not be left to sleep on the benches. I saw a letter which probably sums up their feelings from smart officer to indignant, muddy, heavy, bewildered *piou-piou*: "I hope the Zeppelins do go to Paris and smash them all flat in their cinemas." A cabaret in Montmartre was condemned last week because the singers made insulting references to the military. But a very little may be considered such nowadays. Quite right, too! Are the soldiers keeping the Germans off Paris, or are they not? Paris since 1914 has been just like Paris about 1814. I have compared my Impressions with some written here at that date by an unsensational Englishwoman. Neither avoiding nor seeking "experiences," she has left the sort of account which can be tested by reference to human nature. Nothing changes. People are just the same as ever they were, except that the war films and illustrations have bored them rather quicker with this war than others. I don't pretend to judge or explain, however; I merely state. Even to state is silly on the part of one who has no taste for martyrdom by hypocrites.

* * *

The world, according to pessimism, is as wicked as it could well be without destroying itself root and branch. What is wrong is probably only stupidity and ignorance. Things are certainly all terrible; nobody knows, or ever will know, who is to blame; everyone wants to blame someone: but all have contributed a mite to the disaster by bad international manners. Not we English, of course! We have always been polite to everyone from a Hun to a nigger (there's our neat English style of joke to convey our sporty good-feeling! I actually overheard this speech). The German outrages are just honest, active expressions of what the whole world—English, French, Japs, Americans, everybody—is always passively expressing, naïvely mutual contempt. What I have discovered of French opinion of us English wouldn't bear repeating just now. Their ignorance of us beats ours of them, it does really!

Free travel is the sort of free education needed. We leave international travel to traders and snobs. Lord knows which is more mischievous! And, in the name of Humanity—down with the Passport! Not that I believe nowadays in Humanity.

Consistently I refuse to hate the whole German nation. If anyone wishes to hang me for this treason, I shall reply that "every day the papers say" that ruin awaits the German Government when the German people shall learn the Truth. Clearly, then, the German people is more to be pitied than blamed, which, from my own experience of Germans, I have always believed.

* * *

My Tales. They sprang out of a conversation where I suggested that artists have amused themselves long enough with the æsthetic misrepresentation of devils in human form—Faust, Lorenzaccio, Nikola, Juan, Dorian Grey, I'm afraid that I lumped them all together. About the same time I was becoming disconsolate at the decay of the short story, this decay being largely due to that great blot of a realistic full-stop, Coherence. I meant to have a fling at Coherence; not, of course, that Coherence at which life works for generations and which the great poets and dramatists recreate from cause to result, not either that mad, merry Coherence which Mr. Wells made in his mad, merry days; but the kind which is manufactured ten thousand times a week in as many magazines the world over, and which is nothing more necessary or profound than ten thousand writers' cold-blooded piling up of accident—incidents of "human interest" which no psychology obliges to culminate coincidentally, but which are stuck together to last a dupe's reading. So far my theories.

Well, my Peri afforded me somewhat the puppet for working them out. Given her two feet upon earth, something had to happen, but as she had no more psychological life than the puppets in the magazines, no complexity to ensure her any complex adventure, she could only move as I pushed her; and, moved towards humanity, she came up against the fact that, even for a devil while in human form, self-preservation lies in doing more or less as one would be done by. Faust, Juan and the rest played the hypocrite to preserve themselves. Frederic William had to impress his soldiers. Even Moloch could not have devoured the children unless their parents had agreed that it was for their good.

I need not say that my intention in exposing the fraud of Faust, etc., and of Realistic Coherence, was not in the least to do good to the public, purveyors to Moloch. I hate the public and don't care what happens to them. Perhaps I need say it, after all, seeing what a conceit the public has of itself! No, but I myself am bored with the state of literature. There is absolutely nothing to read. If two or three artists could recapture the short story, the great playing-field, something fresh might come along. Comedy, of course, has gone down completely to the public's hatred of play and fancy, of everything but its own dull face in the mirror. Which brings me to the subject of "human interest." The charge of lacking human interest was historically first brought by Mary Shelley, author of the monster, "Frankenstein," against Shelley's "Witch." I don't want to be severe on Mary in making a comparison of such charge-bringers with—Caliban; people whom not the gift of language, the love of Nature, or all the bounty of the poets can persuade to keep their hands off Miranda; these people who see nothing interesting in any work which does not reproduce themselves, who reckon a work, as Caliban reckoned Miranda—valuable for peopling the island with Calibans. In modern life these persons are particularly dangerous. They predominate, and are in such power that theirs is the exterior settling of our lives, not to mention our deaths and future existences. Naturally these persons want to control Art, for Art is a menace to their conceited Calibanistic realism. Art is their enemy, always representing them in just the fantastic forms with which they have no patience—Calibans, Atta Trolls, Yahoos, and so on; they pretend that the artists meant under these

forms the Lower Classes. Nothing of the sort! Their semi-educated, conceited themselves are meant. In my little tales they'll find themselves if they care to look; probably they did find themselves and that's why they had no patience to continue reading. There! as the Dorian lady said to the person of whom she was no relation, "that's all I care for you and your opinion."

* * *

Fellow-artists—"'Ware Caliban, 'ware Yahoos!" Their faces are becoming so frequently photographed by the realists that we are getting comfortably used to them. I was greatly cheered when Mr. Arnold Bennett gave his Hilda Yahoo such a slap in the face. Slap all their faces! What is wanted now is the romantic satire which so often precedes a new movement in Art. The reviewers will begin to dare to say that they are sick of realism. Really, there is no such thing as realism in art: what we call realism amounts to a statement of brute facts amid whatever psychological humours the artist happens to experience himself each working day—realistic work is done by mood, the artist has to force his pen because such work precludes creative imagination, which preclusion leaves him chained to his mood; this mood he savagely rivets on to his characters. What wild tricks realism plays on artists may be seen in literary tragedies such as "Jude the Obscure," "Richard Feverel," and "Lord Jim." We do not live by realism; the realist reader is reading fiction all the time; the realists themselves live lives nothing like their characters, they live in concocting fiction. The greater the artist and the greater the reader—the more literary will be the stuff circulated as realism; but it is no more literature than the magazine tales.

* * *

I would not like to risk a solemn pronouncement once and for all as to whether the novel can possibly be real literature. It is not so tremendous, however, to say that there is nothing more for artists to draw out of the novel as it has become fixed down among the conventions. It is now the property of people like Mr. W. L. George and that, and ought to be left to them. Mr. Wells and Mr. Bennett and these could do something if they liked. Why don't they? I should think that their impressions of life would come out much clearer unattached to fictional characters, or at least to characters absurdly coherently finished and done with in the last chapter. Nothing, nobody is ever finished like that; we all die long before we are finished.

* * *

Now my Peri is going to die. I'm going to kill her. One evening she found herself in the grounds of a lunatic asylum. The visiting doctor dodged, for the naked lunatic was coming straight at him, stark mad, wandering majestically and resolutely over the turf. When she was secured, the staff made inquiries but could not tell each other who she was. However, they made jokes about her being quite in order to have come there to be found. They shut her up in a cell where she talked most insanely to herself about their mortal madness in supposing her to be insane. When dawn came she turned into a beetle and flew up the chimney, and they couldn't find her when they opened the door. When night came she flew down and turned into a woman, and they found her. And that went on for three days. The news began to leak out. All the nurses, cooks and bottle-washers left, and the police had to be called in to look after the lunatics. By the fourth day the whole asylum, police, doctors and all, was insane. The Mayor and Municipality then took charge. The Mayor had been a butcher in his undistinguished days. When the lunatic appeared on the fourth evening he just simply poleaxed her, but when he rushed forward to finish her off with a large knife, she wasn't there. And as she never came back, the Municipality had the laugh of him.

ALICE MORNING.

Views and Reviews.

Murder!

A FORTNIGHT ago, the writer of "Unedited Opinions" confuted the pacifists who, in their horror of killing, identify war with murder. But he left in some obscurity the meaning he attached to the word "murder," the reason being, in my opinion, his failure to recognise that "murder" is a legal term describing a criminal action, and indicating a certain penalty. It is true that the idea of duty differentiates war from murder; but the idea of duty also differentiates other forms of homicide from murder. Murder, in the legal sense, is a crime; but homicide, in certain circumstances, is both a duty and a right. A man has a right to kill if he has reasonable apprehension of danger to his own life; he has a duty to kill in certain well-defined circumstances. Foster, in his second Discourse on Homicide, says: "Where a felony is committed and the felon flyeth from justice, or a dangerous wound is given, it is the duty of every man to use his best endeavours for preventing an escape. And if in the pursuit the party flying is killed, *where he cannot otherwise be overtaken*, this will be deemed justifiable homicide. For the pursuit was not barely warrantable; it is what the law requireth, and will punish the *wilful* neglect of." A famous story told of Mr. Justice Willes, and quoted by Dicey in his "Law of the Constitution," emphasises the duty of preventing the commission of felony: "Mr. Justice Willes was asked: 'If I look into my drawing-room, and see a burglar packing up the clock, and he cannot see me, what ought I to do?' Willes replied, as nearly as may be: 'My advice to you, which I give as a man, as a lawyer, and as an English judge, is as follows: In the supposed circumstances this is what you have a right to do, and I am by no means sure that it is not your duty to do it. Take a double-barrelled gun, carefully load both barrels, and then, without attracting the burglar's attention, aim steadily at his heart, and shoot him dead.'" Finally, Stephen in his "Digest" says: "The intentional infliction of death is not a crime when it is done by any person . . . in order to arrest a traitor, felon, or pirate, or keep in lawful custody a traitor, felon, or pirate, who has escaped, or is about to escape from such custody, although such traitor, felon, or pirate offers no violence to any person."

It is clear, then, that homicide is not always a crime, that the element which differentiates homicide from murder is duty; but that duty is itself a legal creation, not a moral conception. "To keep the peace is the legislator's first object, and it is not easy," says Maitland in his "Constitutional History of England." "To force the injured man or the slain man's kinsfolk to accept a money compensation instead of resorting to reprisals is the main aim of the law-giver." All law begins with a recognition of the right to retaliate; "the Teutonic nations, like the free peoples they were, always assumed that for a crime to have been committed, an individual must have suffered injury. And they conceived the aggrieved plaintiff as no cowed weakling (or he would not have counted), but as a fighting freeman with spear and shield, who would repay a wrong with interest, and whom, if slain, his kinsmen would avenge." I quote from Mr. George Ives' "History of Penal Methods." To get such a man to accept a money compensation was itself a notable triumph for the legislator; but there can be no doubt that the compensation

system of the codes arose more from fear of the vendetta than from humane principles; if the fines were not paid, vengeance would be let loose.

Every man had his price, long before Walpole was misquoted: "In Mercia, the wer-gild of a king was fixed at 7,200 shillings, or 120 Mercian pounds of silver, to which great sum was added the cynebot of a similar amount which was payable to his people. The wergild of a thane came to 1,200 shillings, that of a ceorl was 200 shillings." If a slave were slain only eight shillings were payable to his kinsfolk, while his master could claim a man-bot of thirty shillings. It was not until the twelfth century, in this country, that "the old system of bôt and wer, designed to compensate the injured and to keep the peace among the fierce and warlike race of freemen, began to give place to one under which the king exacted punishment and tribute, which he administered and collected through itinerant judges, sheriffs, and other officers. . . The State was growing strong enough to take vengeance; the common man was no longer feared as had been the well-armed Saxon citizen of old, and to the 'common' criminal was extended the ruthless severity once reserved for slaves. Then likewise Glanville and the lawyers, under the influence of Rome and Constantinople, draw a sharp and arbitrary distinction between the criminal and the civil pleas, and the idea of compensation began to wane before the revenge instinct now backed by power. If there was money obtainable, the King's judges would seize it; the idea of damage done to the individual was merged and lost in the greater trespass alleged to have been committed by the offender against the peace, against the code and King." Duty was born of the King's will, and enforced by the King's power; and to this day, the laws that prescribe our duties or define our rights are finally sanctioned by "Le Roy le veult." By exactly the same authority that murder is condemned, war and justifiable homicide are sanctioned; the distinction between war and murder is really a legal one.

But the pacifists, who denounce all homicide as "wrong," seem to me to be in the strongest ethical position. Ethics must always be attempting to answer the question put by Waldo in Olive Schreiner's "Story of an African Farm," and by so many of us in our youth: "Is there nothing that is always right or always wrong?" If ethics can only approve of legal definitions, it is obviously a superfluous science (I suspect that this is the case); really there is no need to prove that what is legally right is also morally right. We do not need to grease the fat sow's ear. Law presents us with realities, with rights and not with right, with duties and not with duty, with liberties and not with liberty. If moral judgments are to have any validity, they must be more universal than legal judgments; ethics must assume and show that what is right is always right, that what is wrong is always wrong. Its imperatives must always be categorical, if they are to be distinguished from merely legal prohibitions or commands; ethics must say: "Thou shalt not kill"; and leave to the law the other rendering of the phrase: "Thou shalt do no murder." And if ethics determines that killing is wrong, or right, I know of no ethical means of distinguishing between forms of killing; all alike must be condemned as morally wrong, or approved as morally right. If it commits itself to the search for the "general opinion of the world" to determine what is right, it will have a task that will last it to all eternity; for there are tides of opinion, and substantial differences of moral judgment of homicide that cannot be reconciled. Besides, if the basis of right is the general opinion of the world, ethics is committed to the method of science; instead of announcing a higher law, it must look for the solution of its problems at the end of its researches, its judgment must be delayed until it is useless. If killing be wrong, war has no ethical justification; but it has, and always had, legal sanction, and is therefore not murder.

A. E. R.

REVIEWS

Naples and Southern Italy. By Edward Hutton. (Methuen. 6s.)

The chief interest of this book lies in the record of Mr. Hutton's excursions into Southern Italy, a district which the Neapolitans declared was "unsafe, uncivilised, a country of brigands, hopelessly lost to the modern world, and reeking with malaria." Mr. Hutton returned safely, bringing with him stores of History and a very good report of this "barbarous" land. "The roads everywhere in the South are good, the trains are, as a rule, punctual, if slow, the inns in the larger places fairly clean and comfortable, the food a little rough and monotonous but plentiful." He has certainly opened up a country rich in historical associations from the time of the Greek colonists to the mediæval Popes and conquerors; and of its natural beauty he gives more than one description. Indeed, he practically reverses the verdict of the Neapolitans, says that "as for the two things we were chiefly warned against, robbery and fever, we had not to complain of the one or the other The people of the South are as full of humanity as are other Italians. Every day you live you will be robbed in Naples, and that with your eyes open, for you are helpless and they unashamed; but in the South it is not so. On the contrary, people are there rough-mannered but good-hearted, and as honesty goes in Italy, very honest. You will be fleeced in Milan but not in Cosenza, you will receive bad money in Naples but not in Catanzaro, and considering the poverty there is an extraordinary absence of begging." The journey was well worth taking, and the record is as well worth reading, as is the copious quotation of the history of the famous cities of the South. The book has many illustrations in colour and monotone, and is a classic guide book to a classic area.

Francesca da Rimini: A Tragedy. Translated from the Italian of Silvio Pellico by A. O'D. Bartholeyas. (Allen and Unwin. 2s. net.)

It is not easy to praise new renderings of the story of Paolo and Francesca. In this case, the blank verse is tolerable (it is no more), but the handling of the story is crude; and Pellico misses the chance of the scene of which Stephen Phillips made so much beauty, the reading of the story of Lancelot and Guinevere. All the mystery of that trembling growth into love is ignored by Pellico; Francesca appears in the first scene fearful of meeting Paolo, who killed her brother in battle, already hiding and condemning her love. The struggle is thus reduced to its most obvious terms, and already the husband wonders if he has a rival. The crude brutality of this setting of the story makes melodrama of a spiritual tragedy; the challenges, the protests of innocence, the threats, of the first act are well-nigh intolerable. From thenceforward, the play is comic in the seriousness with which Paolo and Francesca avoid meeting each other, only to meet at last; and Francesca's ravings, her denial of her love, rank with Mrs. Malaprop's assertion that "it is better to begin with a little aversion." Francesca in this play is guilty from the beginning, guilty and self-condemned. "Alone we were, and no suspicion near us," so Dante's Francesca explained. But Pellico's Francesca is a woman already suspect, an adulteress preserved from sin by fear of the jealousy she has already aroused, a woman tortured with her thoughts and terror-stricken by her foreboding of the consequences. Where Dante saw a tragedy comparable in its innocence and fatality with the tragedy of Adam and Eve, Pellico sees no more than a common play of adultery, an abandoned woman calling upon herself the just vengeance of an outraged husband. The conception lends itself neither to poetic treatment, to psychological subtlety, nor to spiritual conflict. Paolo is just a silly soldier who gets himself into trouble over a woman; Francesca is not a fallen angel but a fearful strumpet; Lanciotto is nearest the original; the tyrant, the strong man armed who keepeth his goods. And for

the sake of this crude conception, we must tolerate a murder on the stage, and a ridiculous scene of the meeting between Paolo and Francesca when she, like a sulky child, hides her face against her husband's breast and refuses to look at Paolo. It simply will not do.

The Vanished Messenger. By E. Phillips Oppenheim. (Methuen. 6s.)

Among much which is familiar (for surely Seton Merriman exhausted the melodramatic possibilities of secret diplomacy), we recognise a new touch in Mr. Oppenheim's work. Certainly, it is new only to him; the deformed mind in the deformed or maimed body has been made famous by Hugo in "Notre Dame." But Mr. Oppenheim's malign creation has its own fascination; to the purely intellectual malice of Iago he adds a lust for cruelty to others which is equally malignant and without apparent motive. He says himself that it is "whim"; but he explores the possibilities of cruelty so thoroughly, from the purely psychological torture that he inflicts on his women-kind to the dastardly wrecking of fishermen by showing a false light for them to steer by, that "whim" hardly explains his character. His interference in European politics for the purpose of precipitating a European war is horrible enough; but his treatment of "the vanished messenger" whose secret code-word he desires to get, a treatment that includes brain surgery without anæsthetics, adds the final touch of horror to a creation that is as ruthlessly rational as a tiger. Surrounded by every luxury, fostered with all care, in perfect physical health, this cripple sits and plans new tortures, and utilises all the resources of modern science to secure his ends. Strictly, he is a Renaissance type; that period showed us to perfection the man of delicate sensibilities, artistic tastes and powers, wide culture and trained intellect, devoting all his power to the service of his lusts. Mr. Phillips Oppenheim has revived the monster in English literature, shown him as a twice-proved traitor to his country; and brought him to a fitting end at the hands of a woman who had been driven mad by the loss of her husband, due to the devilry of this cripple. Beyond the incidents necessary to reveal the possibilities of this creature there is very little story; indeed, all Mr. Oppenheim's skill in characterisation is devoted to this one person, the rest are mere shadows. Hamel, particularly, fluctuates unnecessarily between suspicion and indifference; and his love-affair with the cripple's niece is merely a tardy concession to a sentimental public. The book is thrilling melodrama, much more delicately obtained than is usual with Mr. Oppenheim. Only a cliché can adequately describe it; it is the refinement of cruelty.

Our Cottage and a Motor. By Margaret Moncrieff. (Allen and Unwin. 3s. 6d. net.)

This is a series of letters to "Dear Rosalind" which deserve the sub-title of "Drivel From Home." The cottage was in Sussex; and on several occasions the motor ran noiselessly to such places as Bodiam, Rye, and Pevensey, where "Iseult" enjoyed the scenery and the history, and the company of her "Grey Knight." Their children were called "Baby Blossom," the "Gnome," and the "Witch" respectively. There is also a love-story: Joan, a very wealthy heiress, had got into the habit of refusing a man every week, because she thought that men loved her money and not herself; so when Julian Bevan proposed she made him feel that she thought him contemptible. When he left her, she knew that she loved him; and she came down to Sussex for a rest-cure. How fortunate it was that Julian was a friend of the Grey Knight, and that his people also lived in Sussex! After a few trifling complications, the matter was easily put right; Julian was, of course, a very rich man, an inventor, and, therefore, above suspicion of fortune-hunting. There will be a wedding, and "Iseult" contemplates wearing "a rose-coloured velvet gown, edged with chinchilla, a granny muff, and a picture hat." And, of course, Iseult and her "Grey Knight" are happier than any other married couple.

David Penstephen. By Richard Pryce. (Methuen. 6s.)

Mr. Pryce seems to have lost his way in this story. The first part of it is treated with real skill, and contains a real problem. It begins midway in a disastrous experiment in rationalism. An experiment made by a man who, because he denied the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, denied the validity of the social sanction of marriage. The consequence was that he outlawed himself and his wife from the only society to which they were accustomed or suited; and she was doomed to live for years against her conscience. In everything but the lack of ceremonial sanction their marriage was a quite normal one; but it was only when his wife collapsed under a final insult that Mr. Penstephen relaxed his rationalistic principles sufficiently to legitimise his relations with her. Then came the turning point of his career; by an accident which swept away the holder of and the heir to a baronetcy, he succeeded, and the problem of compromise between his conscience and the conventions appertaining to his station arose. But Mr. Pryce does not devote the rest of his book to a careful elaboration of the problem; he devotes his efforts to a description of the life of one of the illegitimate children. Here, where there is no problem, there is no subtlety; the book drifts into mere description of the boy's preoccupation with a toy theatre, his vivid feeling for the ceremonies and literature of the Church, and his development into an amateur actor. The only purpose animating all this description is the delaying of the boy's knowledge of his illegitimacy; and when that is revealed to him, and he declares his intention to go on the stage and make a name for himself, the book ends. Mr. Pryce has shirked the problem that he raised, and has not offered a satisfactory substitute.

Above What He Could Bear. By Charles Cress. (A. H. Stockwell.)

The publishers have a habit of including indescribable books under the heading of "miscellaneous"; and we can find no other description for this nondescript work. We should have thought that it was written by a boy for boys, but for the dedication to "my beloved wife, who for 41 years"—well, you know the rest. But we doubt even if the story is intended for boys, for accidents followed by premature birth are not usually recounted in boys' stories. We can only conclude that some incompetent duffer has wasted paper in these hard times, and flung another edition at the pulping mills. The story deals with life on a coffee plantation in India, as only the author, let us hope, could deal with it. All that we need to say is that the coffee grew, it was sold, the planter married, his wife (after one slip) had children, she warned him against hunting, he went and was killed, she departed to England, her brother remained in charge of the plantation, he married, and sent no more money to his sister, and, at last, he died, very sorry for his sister. But his wife, having ruined the estate by her extravagance, secured its reversion to herself; and it is now, we believe, rum and coffee.

The Evolution of an English Town. By Gordon Home. (Dent. 3s. 6d. net.)

This is a new and cheaper edition of Mr. Home's story of the ancient town of Pickering, in Yorkshire, from pre-historic times to the twentieth century. It is the work of an antiquarian rather than of an evolutionist; and by the time that he reaches the twentieth century, and should be describing, if not explaining, the characteristics of Pickering at the present day, he concludes that such a record would not be interesting to his readers. The book is copiously illustrated, and is most scholarly written; but it shows a tendency to linger over details of interpretation, and does not really indicate the process of evolution. But it is full of quaint lore and photographs of queer things; and it makes very interesting reading.

Pastiche.

THE WAGE-SLAVE'S GRATITUDE.

On a certain day, in a small central town of a county conscious of its fame for the making of boots and shoes, Student-Craftsmen were proud to sit at the same table with Condescending Employers who took much kindly interest in their work. Neither was it any mean act of condescension. It was a "sign of the times"; O beloved phrase!

An Instructor, too, sat with the Condescending Employers and the Student-Craftsmen.

For 23 years these Student-Craftsmen had sat at the feet of their Instructor, who was the greatest Student of them all. He had given them of his best, and had taught them all the technical arts of their craft, so that they in their turn might give of their best to their employers for wages. The Instructor was paid for his teachings, but not by the craftless and crafty employers. The Borough and County Authorities did give the man his dues; and the Student-Craftsmen gave of their little to hear his teachings, that they might sell themselves for higher wages to their employers.

And the Instructor was glad to sit at that table. His gladness was the gladness of realised ideals, for were they not, that night, to perpetuate his name and establish a diploma scheme that would bestow honour upon two Student-Craftsmen each year, who were found most worthy of doing the best work for the wage of the employer?

And all the company made speeches. The buttered mouths of the Employers puked forth their adulation upon the Instructor, and they told the Student-Craftsmen, with all gravity, of their Good Fortune, that they should have had such an Instructor to teach them. They frothed out upon the wondrous goodness of their noble selves, who, by their influence with the Borough and County Authorities, had done these things for the Craftsmen, giving them the opportunity to command higher wages. And the Employers made no bones about lauding the usefulness and superiority of the Student-Craftsmen to their Fellow Slaves; for, thought they, these wise men of their craft are not learned in the subtilties of Business. They know not of the Rent and the Profits, neither know they of the Law of Supply and Demand, nor of the Commodity of Labour.

And the Student-Craftsmen, flattered by these words, did make speeches to the Employers. They acknowledged their debt to the Instructor, who had laid bare to them the secrets of good boot-making; and they bowed down on bended knee in their gratitude to their Masters, who had deigned to have kindly thoughts of such unworthy slaves. Who were they, that they should have the blessings of Considerate Profiteers showered upon them? Above all, was it not an Act of Godly Magnanimity that these men should help to find them—yea, even they who worked for wages—a capable Instructor, so cheaply?

And two Students, whose merit showed they had their hearts in their craft, received from the Employers a Diploma each—the first that had been given under the New Scheme.

All these things, and many more, came to pass on this certain day, but no man's lips uttered the word Guild. Nor did anyone dare to say the word that has been dragged through the mire—Union. There was no man among them to say, We will band ourselves together in unity and have our own Instructor, and our Craft Guild shall take to itself all the responsibility of its work.

S. R. W. S.

DON QUIXOTE'S WILL.

From the Spanish of Francisco de Quevedo (1580-1645).

Don Quixote de la Mancha is black and blue and red,
With stick and knuckle beating and stretches almost dead:
His buckler laid above him, a spreading shield below,
His head, out like a turtle's, is wagging to and fro.
Thro' jaws abused and toothless, he whistles more than speaks,
And to the Scrivener near him he thus forlornly squeaks.
"Write down, I prithee, maister, and God reward thy worth,
The final declaration I'll make upon this earth.
Let any wills I've issued in my unbalanced past
Be cancelled by this present, this sane one, this my last.
To earth I leave my body; the worms have appetite,
Yet as I am so skinny they'll scarcely have a bite.
Yea, lay me in the scabbard where long hath lain my sword,
'Twill serve me for a coffin and save some feet of board.
When to the church ye bear me and I embalmed have been
Let on a slab above me this epitaph be seen:
Beneath is laid Don Quixote who roamed among mankind
T'avenge the squints and blinkards while he himself was blind.
I leave those Isles to Sancho, the spoil of many fights,
And he, although no richer, may yet acclaim his rights.
Now to good Rozinanté I leave the fields and meads
That God of Heaven created to feed the brutish breeds;
That he may browse for ever I leave him all my woes,
Which are the only fodder that from my fortune grows.
Unto the Moor enchanter who drubbed me in the inn
I now bequeath the bruises he left upon my skin.
I leave unto the muleboys that gallant set of kicks
Whose keeping hurts my shoulders and hard my conscience pricks.
Of sticks that I've been struck with, ten tons, upon my soul,
I leave to Dulcinea to save her winter's coal.
And let my sword, unweaponed, a tenterhook be made,
Despite its rusty clothing 'tis still a naked blade;
My lance, forgetting dragons, become a household broom
T'expatriate the spiders from corners of the room.
My helmet and my cuirass, my famous panoply,
Shall make wail decorations, heir-looms for heraldry.
As to my other riches that in the world remain,
Use them to pay the ransoms of princesses in pain.
For me instead of masses have tournaments and war,
As all the world remembers that these my masses were.
As witnesses I order Don Belian of Greece,
The mighty knight of Phœbus and Jason of the Fleece."
When had good Sancho Panza his dying master heard
These words befraught with sorrow came crawling thro' his beard.
"It be not right, my maister, that on thy latest day
Thou speakest haughty babble. To face thy Maker, pray!
'Tis Sancho, sir, who speaks now, he's standing by thy bed:
In bucketsful his sorrow as hail and rain is shed.
Please, sir, command as witness our good and honest priest,
The mayor and Gil the goatherd to tend thy last behest.
Don't mention Belianis, Phœbus and Jason too,
But call upon religion to come and pull thee through."
Quoth Quixote: "Thou hast said well—but with no minute's loss.
Run quick to Peña Pobre and fetch Belténebros."
E'en now the priest was knocking upon the chamber door,
But when he stepped the threshold our hero thought him Moor,
That very vile enchanter, of honest deed the bane;
Upon his feet rose Quixote to cut the rogue in twain.
But as they saw his madness, his lack of sense and sight,
The scrivener quick departed, the priest pursued his flight.

TRIBOULET.

BALLADE OF A WEARY READER.

When, long ago, I strove to cut a dash
And shine among the Upper Tooting clique,
Bang went my scanty hoard of surplus cash
Upon the Standard Volume of the week
(I doted on the flabbiest critique)
But now I'm older and a shade more wise,
Of grosser calibre are joys I seek—
I've built a bonfire of colossal size.

On Mudie's counters there are rows of trash
That I've lugged home (and bent my spine oblique),
Kickshaws of verse and realistic hash,
And plays wherein you hear the cogwheels creak,
And every character's a raving freak.
Upon this pandemonium of guys
I squandered precious years; now hear my shriek—
I've built a bonfire of colossal size.

The crowds of geniuses whose fame went smash—
I've seen them scamper off with rattish squeak!
And I have heard the microscopic crash
Of reputations as they sprang a leak.
But I've seen too, by dint of bounce and cheek,
And boom and puffery, the blatant rise
Of mountebanks upon the topmost peak—
I've built a bonfire of colossal size.

Envoi.

Prince, there are noses that I'd love to tweak;
And, ah, what bliss, to blacken sundry eyes!
Vain thought! Yet there is vengeance I can wreak—
I've built a bonfire of colossal size.

L. M.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

THE PRESENT CRISIS.

Sir,—Everyone is aware that the weak men in the present Ministry have been the cause of our falling into a slough of confusion and discontent, and that the only way of escape from this desperate situation is for the government of the country to be placed in strong and capable hands. Now, there is no lack of men capable of conducting the war in the most brilliant manner possible, for hardly a day passes but some fresh patriot is put forward who is capable of removing every evil that afflicts the country. Unfortunately, this plethora of great men makes it impossible for us to adopt the course urged by many, and choose a Cromwell as dictator. Since we possess a Milner, a Curzon, a Derby, and a Northcliffe (to name only a few of our possible dictators), the difficulty is to decide who is greatest where all are great. It has been resolved that the only solution of the problem is for a Government to be formed which will include all the strong and able men who have been telling us how everything can be managed perfectly.

The English people will be very much deceived if they think that they will be able to continue their present mode of life under the new Government. The object of this article is to make them understand what government by strong men really means, and to warn them that any resistance will be futile. They entirely mistake the temper of those who will soon be their masters if they think these stern and ruthless men will be discouraged by discontent or insubordination at home. Has not Lord Milner intimated that even a mutiny of the Fleet would not deflect him from the stern path of duty?

The keynote of the new policy will be ruthlessness. Now, this does not mean that the Germans alone are to endure ruthlessness, for, at present, their armies are unbeaten, and you can only be ruthless to those who are weaker than yourself. Something, however, will be done to neutrals, especially those who have taken advantage of the war to indulge in profiteering at the expense of our soldiers' blood. They will, as far as possible, be made to understand that profiteering in war time is the privilege of the English capitalist alone. But too much must not be expected in this direction, because some of the neutrals might retaliate. The full effect of the new policy of ruthlessness will be felt by the English people, for they dare not hit back.

Since the ordinary Englishman is allowed very little leisure by his master, he has not sufficient time to read long articles, so I will summarise, as shortly as possible, the principal things he must bear in mind when adapting himself to the new conditions :—

(1) Conscription for all men of military age is now in operation. Therefore, grumbling about inequality of sacrifice will not be tolerated, and all opposition to conscription must cease.

(2) Complete industrial conscription will soon be in operation, and any opposition will be treated as treason. Of course, it follows that trade unions and standard rates of pay will disappear.

(3) Now that men can be compelled to fight, they will have to be thankful if they are as well paid as French conscripts, and their wives must not complain if they are starved like the women in Germany.

(4) Those members of the middle classes who are employed as salaried servants, or who own petty businesses, must not expect that their absurdly high standard of living will be tolerated any longer. In the interests of their masters they must sink to the level of the ordinary wage-earner.

(5) Finally, the English people must bear in mind that every offence that is odious to the governing class will be punished by death. The members of the new Government are inflexible on this point. Since the beginning of the war they have never wearied of demanding that every form of disaffection to the State or the employers should be punished by the offender being shot.

The average Englishman for generations has shown himself ready to submit to whatever his masters have chosen to inflict upon him. It is hardly likely that he will change now, in the middle of a great war. If he should be tempted to try and throw off his chains, let him reflect, before it is too late, that the iron men who rule him will crush remorselessly the slightest effort for freedom. A Milner who braved Kruger in all his might, a Derby who resisted the bloodsuckers of the Post Office, and a Carson who risked even his fees for Ulster, will not be deterred by the puny threats of a rabble of wage slaves.

W. MEARS.

* * *

THE WAR OF IDEAS.

Sir,—I have up to the present looked upon this war as the most mean and sordid struggles that have blotted the pages of history; but gradually I begin to see the light.

As Mr. Maeztu says, this war is a fight against evil. Even though I am not clear as to the evil, even when Mr. Maeztu explains in his intellectual and illuminating way that evil is just evil.

But really we are fighting the hosts of the Devil with a smile on our faces. True, some of our capitalists are making big profits; but this is all to the glory of God. High profits mean great patriotism. There is, for instance, a company, the Smithfield and Argentine Meat Company, which made a profit of £25,732 in 1914. During the year 1915 this firm became more patriotic and the profits jumped to £142,054. This concern have undoubtably been rendering great service to the country, for they have Government contracts. Then, of course, there is the British and Argentine Meat Company, who have been very energetic in this war of ideas, with the result that their profits have jumped from £67,300 to £652,500. Again, there is the Frederick Leyland Company, who have been very ardent in the prosecution of the war to a glorious end. In this case the profits have jumped from a beggarly £620,839 to £1,441,689.

Clearly it is quite time that these Normans and other hopeless white-livered peace cranks were silenced. True, during this great war of ideas they cannot make public speeches without being thrown in jail. True, they cannot write pamphlets without having them seized. True, their public meetings must be forbidden, for is not this the war of ideas? This patriotic spirit is infectious. I am becoming almost as enthusiastic as the maddest of the "New Witness" scribes.

No patched-up, miserable Peace for me. Fight on, fight on, for the great Jehovah is with us.

How this war of ideas does grow on us! I notice the Lancashire Section of the British Association of Managers of Textile Works have succumbed to this fever of ideas, so much so that they have placed the following suggestions before the Home Office and the Board of Trade :—

"That all children of from twelve to fifteen years of age should be compulsorily registered with a view to action through the Juvenile Advisory Committee with the object of recommending suitable occupations for the children."

Thus I admit my conversion; this is a war of ideas. Away with the peace cranks; let the slaughter of ideas go on.

HARRY FOWLER.

* * *

THE AGA KHAN.

Sir,—In the "Times" of April 13 appeared the following statements under the heading, "Honours for the Aga Khan. Spiritual Head of Moslems" :—

"This very exceptional honour conferred upon his Highness is the more noteworthy as his authority is spiritual and not territorial. Many millions of Islamiah (? Ismailiyeh) Moslems, not only in India and on its frontiers, but elsewhere in Asia and in various parts of Africa, owe him spiritual allegiance, but there is no State in India where he holds sway as ruler. . . . He did most valuable service in soothing the grave disquietude of Indian Moslem sentiment in respect of the Turco-Italian and the two Balkan wars, urging upon his co-religionists the imperative duty of resignation to the inevitable waning of the Ottoman star in Europe and of acquiescence in British policy. . . . When Turkey put her sword into the wrong scale the Aga Khan issued a powerful manifesto to Moslems throughout the Empire strongly condemning her action and urging that the chief duty of all was to remain loyal, faithful and obedient to their temporal and secular allegiance. All through the months that have intervened his Highness's immediate followers have constituted a solid phalanx of whole-hearted support of the British cause, and have thus formed a rallying point for Moslem loyalty. At the risk of his life he visited Egypt in the critical period immediately following Turkey's adhesion to the Central Powers, and assisted in bringing about the readjustment which followed the deposition of the Khedive. In many other ways he has earned the profound gratitude of the whole Empire for his enthusiastic and practical support of the cause of the Allies. . . . It is eminently fitting that he should be rewarded by an honour which, while supporting and confirming the unique position of authority he occupies in the Moslem world, will lead to his receiving when visiting his

followers, as a matter of right, those marks of superior honour which have been accorded to him, if at all, only as a matter of courtesy."

It is amusing and not uninstructive to compare these statements with the facts of the case. H.H. the Aga Khan is not regarded as their spiritual head by any real Mohammedans. He is so regarded only by the Ismaïl sect—the Assassins of the Middle Ages—of whose numbers "many thousands" would be a less misleading estimate than "many millions." I have come in personal contact with the Ismaïlis of Syria, and know something of their customs and beliefs. They are regarded by the Muslims of that country (alike Sunni and Shîa) as adherents of another and idolatrous religion, while their claim to be a sort of Muslim is derided as a piece of mere effrontery. I could say much of my personal knowledge in disproof of that claim, and to ridicule the idea that they could ever form "a rallying-point" for Orthodox Mohammedan opinion, much less "loyalty." But I prefer to give quotations from a well-known author, who has no Muslim bias, and is certainly no enemy to them or to the Aga Khan.

Miss Gertrude Lowthian Bell relates how, in the neighbourhood of Homs, she travelled with two ragged prisoners who shared her escort.

"I proffered a word of sympathy, to which they replied that they hoped God would prolong my life, but as for them it was the will of their lord the Sultan that they should tramp in chains. One of the Kurds interrupted with the explanation:

"'They are deserters from the Sultan's army: may God reward them according to their deeds! Moreover, they are Ismaïlis from Selemiyyeh, and they worship a strange god who lives in the land of Hind. And some say she is a woman, and for that reason they worship her. And every year she sends an embassy to this country to collect the money that is due to her, and even the poorest of the Ismaïlis provide her with a few piastres. And yet they declare that they are Muslims: who knows what they believe? Speak, O Khudr, and tell us what you believe.'

"The prisoner thus addressed replied doggedly: 'We are Muslims'; but the soldier's words had given me a clue which I was able to follow up when the luckless pair crept close to my horse's side and whispered: 'Lady, lady, have you journeyed in the land of Hind?' 'Yes,' said I. 'Have you heard of a great king called the King Muhammad?' Again I was able to reply in the affirmative, and even to add that I myself knew him and had conversed with him, for their King Muhammad was no other than my fellow-subject the Aga Khan, and the religion of the prisoners boasted a respectable antiquity, having been founded by him whom we call the Old Man of the Mountain. Khudr caught my stirrup with his free hand and said eagerly: 'Is he not a great king?'

"But I answered cautiously, for though the Aga Khan is something of a great king in the modern sense, that is to say he is exceedingly wealthy, it would have been difficult to explain to his disciples exactly what the polished, well-bred man of the world was like whom I had met at a London dinner party, and who had given me the Marlborough Club as his address. Not that these things, if they could have understood them, would have shocked them; the Aga Khan is a law unto himself, and if he chose to indulge in far greater excesses than dinner parties his actions would be sanctified by the mere fact that they were his. His father used to give letters of introduction to the Angel Gabriel, in order to secure for his clients a good place in Paradise; the son, with his English education and his familiarity with European thought, has refrained from exercising this privilege, though he has not ceased to hold, in the opinion of his followers, the keys of Heaven. They show their belief in him in a substantial manner by subscribing, in various parts of Asia and Africa, a handsome income that runs yearly into tens of thousands."*

In fact, the Aga Khan is worshipped as a god—a hereditary incarnation of the diety—by his ignorant followers; and all those I have met in Syria have been wretched and ignorant. It would appear, from Miss Bell's account, that he has been content to profit by their delusion as were his fathers before him. One would be relieved to know that this is not the case.

The Sultan Abdul Hamid, who was conscientious and correct in his discharge of all the duties of the Caliphate, refused him audience when he craved leave to present himself as representative of the Indian Shîa Muslims—to the intense satisfaction of the orthodox Muhammadans, particularly in Arabia, who regarded the refusal as a snub to the Persian heretics.† But the Sultan had received other Shî'ites. It seems at least within the bounds of possibility that the refusal was more personal to one whom a sect in the Ottoman dominions "made equal with God," and who owed his position in the world to that (for Muslims) impious misapprehension. I may be wrong in seeing some connection between that refusal and the recent anti-Turkish machinations of his Highness. In Syria the Ismaïlis have long been reckoned secret enemies of El Islâm, and his Highness may have been merely acting as their representative, trying to gain for himself, and incidentally for them, a position in the world at the expense of the real Mohammedans. Personally, I am of opinion that his Highness's exhortations and activities as champion of the British Government have done more harm than good, and that he is about the worst adviser that we could have chosen where Muslim feeling is concerned, for he is not in touch with it. Our rulers have rewarded an enthusiastic servant, or admirer: that is customary. It is the mention of Islâm and "Moslem loyalty" in this connection which appears gratuitous.

MARMADUKE PICKTHALL.

* "The Desert and the Sown," p. 195 ff.

† v. "Arabia Infelix," by G. Wyman Bury. Last chapter.

* * *

TO MR. SHAW.

Sir,—I enclose a letter addressed to Mr. Bernard Shaw which I would be glad if you could publish. The reason I desire to publish it in England rather than in Ireland is that the Press in this country is entirely commercial, and would possibly refuse it, and that Irish people do not even know of the existence of Mr. Shaw, and would not be interested in his opinions. J. S.

To Mr. Bernard Shaw, apropos of his article, "Irish Nonsense about Ireland," which the "Irish Times" reproduced from the "New York Times."

It is so easy for you, it is even so profitable for you, to be wise and to counsel the people of Ireland as to how they should bear themselves these thorny days. Earlier in the war you advised the English people on the same subject, and it is possible that the Turks and the Bulgarians are awaiting the overdue pronunciamentos which you may be now writing.

It is easy for you to do these things, for in doing them you do not incur any danger, nor do you run counter to any opinion strong enough to hurt you. You never do. No military escort will thump your door and accompany you to the quays for deportation. This has happened lately in Ireland. No policeman will tap your shoulder, preliminary to a term in prison on account of your injudicious opinions; for your opinions, when they are wild, are carefully wild, and under the energetic language they will be found to be the prescribed opinions. You flout authority by obeying it, and, even if an Englishman should be impatient, not at the things you *say but at the way you say them*, he can always shrug you away as a rather clever and well-recommended foreigner. The English fleet will protect you from German enemies, but I do not think you have any. Remembering your writings, it seemed to me that you had covered yourself there also.

Indeed, you are quite safe, and as long as your advice is marketable you can continue to reissue it. It is a pity, however, that a certain intimate feeling—shall I say a home feeling?—does not prevent you writing about your own country. You have made your peace with England (let us call them, for the joke, the hated Saxon). Your home is there, your fame, your bank. Even—and I say it with neither malice nor regret—your heart is there, for where the treasure is there will the heart be also. But the fact that you have negotiated with England does not entitle you to speak for your nation, not even in these days when the Gombeen Man straddles the world. Ireland has not made peace with England. It is true she is committing racial and economic suicide for her "dear enemy," but she is too small, too poor, too inconsiderable in every dimension to make either war or peace, or to make anything but a pitiable clamour and, perhaps, like an angry kitten, scratch a little. It, of course, serves kittens right when they are chastised with a club as big as an oak tree. Is it not better to say that England has not made her peace with Ireland, although, long enough, Ireland has been howling and begging and scratching for that peace?

If England had been your country, and if you had said of her, and in that tone, the things you have said (in America) about your own country, it would not have

been safe for you in England. But it is only your own country that you so write about, and are witty about, and superior and finely careless about, and you are quite safe in doing it. Did you not know it?

You did not send your national counsel directly to Ireland. You sent it to Ireland via America—the Trade Route.

We can all on occasion advise each other, and I will advise you to make a compact with yourself, and save your soul, by resolving, that if you can say nothing good of your country you will not say anything evil of her. It is not a too heroic resolve, and with your intellectual activity it will not be expensive. Every Irishman feels bitterly at times that there is nothing he can do for his land, but, at the least, he can hold his tongue for her, and he can refuse to make any profit out of her national bewilderment.

To all literary men words at last cease to be speech and become merchandise. This is beyond assistance, and need not be deplored, but every literary man might take a vow of silence on some subject; and I suggest that Ireland is a subject on which you should never again either write or speak, and if you can cease to think of her that will be so much gained also.

JAMES STEPHENS.

* * *

THE UNION OF DEMOCRATIC CONTROL.

Sir,—I fear there is little advantage in continuing this discussion. Mrs. King, having read most of the writings of the U.D.C. leaders, and having failed to discover in them that pro-Germanism which has delighted the Germans, is evidently invincible alike to facts and arguments. I would only suggest that she should consider whether, for example, the position adopted by several of these leaders of refusing to assist in voluntary recruiting, while vehemently opposing obligatory enlistment, is not likely in actual fact to assist Germany to win the war, if in theory that result is not desired.

As to the origin of the U.D.C., in one breath Mrs. King assures you that no suspicion is possible, and in the next declares that the Hammersmith Branch has no concern with the matter in any case. Such a cheerful sense of irresponsibility is certainly novel, but is probably natural to the "balanced minds" of Mrs. King's members, who realise what an absurdity it is to fancy this country is in any danger at all from Germany. This curious obsession of a German danger is shared, it is true, not only by the members of the British Empire Union but by nearly all prominent public men from the Prime Minister down, who believe that, apart from such trifles as Zeppelin raids and the more dangerous submarine blockade, the safety of this country is seriously threatened so long as Belgium and Northern France are in the hands of the enemy. The U.D.C., however, knows better; and what a consolation that must be to us all!

I am sorry that Mr. Mathews should have been puzzled by the appearance of the title of the British Empire Union. As was widely announced in the Press, the Anti-German Union at the close of its first year of work adopted the name of "The British Empire Union, with which is incorporated the Anti-German Union." Our objects and policy remain the same, but we feel that our new title emphasises better the constructive side of the important reform we advocate.

GEORGE MAKGILL, Secretary.

The British Empire Union,
346, Strand, London, W.C.

* * *

UNEDITED OPINIONS.

Sir,—May I express a feeling of regret that the writer of "Unedited Opinions," to whom we owe a debt of gratitude for the enlightening series of conversations which used to appear from time to time before the war, should now be preoccupied in displaying "patriotic" prejudices such as unhappily abound *ad nauseam* elsewhere, but which are distressing from such a source.

The latest article on the "Ethic of War" is particularly symptomatic of this decline in quality. It was surely to be expected of such a keen seeker after truth that he would first make sure of the soundness of his psychological premises, but very little personal acquaintance with the pacifist outlook would have prevented some of the assumptions that are here made so glibly by the first speaker and duly swallowed by his credulous interlocutor.

The pacifist *does* believe, and will never tire of insisting on the fact, that war is murder, but he cannot hope that it will, in his time, ever be at all generally felt as such. He does *not*, in his heart, admire soldiers, though he may, while abominating the profession, respect them in some cases for their devotion to a mistaken sense of common and collective duty. As for "permitting" his sons and brothers to be soldiers, the choice, being purely a question of taste or conscience, obviously cannot be individually disputed. He must rely on the gradual growth of his ideas, and will no more refuse to associate with those who find their duty in killing as soldiers than with a convinced Nihilist.

The argument of inconsistency is absurd, for it is agreed that it is, at present, only the pacifist who asserts that war is murder. If, and when, "we," the race, believe this, "we" shall no longer "erect statues and write poems to the happy warrior." Meanwhile the statement that "the world holds war to be wrong," in the face of the steady increase in armaments of the last generation, is a mere figment of the brain.

But I will not pursue your contributor through all the welter of fallacies in which the article proceeds and concludes; I would merely beg him to revert to those problems of art, philosophy, and manners in which he excels.

N. T.

* * *

THE PRIMACY OF THINGS.

Sir,—I have carefully read both the article and the letter of "A. E. R." in the last issue of THE NEW AGE, and I can only find in them one and the same single assertion, expressed in different ways. The assertion is this: "Things have no value other than that man attributes to them."

This assertion is false, and I am going to prove it. "A. E. R." says that when he writes: "This thing is good," he means: "I mean that this thing is good," but if the proposition "This thing is good" is equivalent to the other "I mean that this thing is good," then the proposition: "I mean that this thing is good," means that. "I mean that I mean that this thing is good"; and the first proposition: "This thing is good," means: "I mean that I mean that I mean that this thing is good," and also: "I mean that I mean that I mean that I mean that I mean that I mean" . . . and so *ad infinitum*. It is, then, proved that when "A. E. R." says: "This thing is good," he means that the thing itself is good, and not that he has got a good meaning about it; for if it was meant that he means, attributes or desires, or "ejects" the goodness of the thing, then the proposition: "This thing is good," would mean: "I mean that I mean . . . nothing."

Do you still find my proof inconclusive? "A. E. R." says that the proposition: "This thing is good," means: "I am putting the good into this thing." And that is false. To say: "The grass is green," is not the same thing as to say: "I am putting the green into the grass." And this reasoning, I think, is final. By which I mean two different things: that this reasoning is final, and that I judge it to be final.

As for the courteous letter of "R. M.," let me offer him, as a reply, the article, "On Functions and Values," which you may be kind enough to print in another number.

RAMIRO DE MAEZTU.

* * *

CURRENT CANTICLE.

Sir,—I do not know if the following will interest you at all, but if it does, I think you will agree that it is well worthy of a place under "Current Cant."

"Even when we get to the best pianists it is rarely if ever that we find a combination of exceptional technical mastery with tone-power, delicacy of touch, brilliance, command of colour, sensitiveness of phrasing, variety of feeling and vital passion. *Mr. Murdoch* possesses all these qualities to a high degree. He is not cold like Bauer, he is not hard as Mr. Moiseiwitsch frequently is, he is more sincere than Busoni, and he has far more depth and imaginative power than Pachmann."

This magnificent specimen of English musical criticism emanates from one W. J. Turner and appeared in the "New Statesman' of the 15th of last month.

D. K. SORABJI.

* * *

"A MERRY DEATH."

Sir,—While I agree with the main part of Mr. John Francis Hope's criticism of the "Merry Death," I cannot see how to accept it wholly. He says that "Evréinov's harlequinade is for the study, not for the stage. . . . This spirit cannot get over the footlights." Yet we know that, at the Merry Theatre (now defunct) at Petrograd, the play was a great success. Of course, the audience there was

sympathetic. I fancy that, had Mr. Hope been one of it, he, too, would have enjoyed the play as much, and more than in his study.

In a word, I attribute the partial failure of the "Merry Death" in London to the failure of the London audience. With your permission, I hope on another occasion to expand this explanation, and to remind your readers of a remedy not unknown to your columns.

C. E. BECHHÖFER.

* * *

"MR. PARKER'S CAPTURE."

Sir,—The taste and critical abilities of your correspondent "E. R.," who apparently belongs to the coterie of asthenic kickers who choose their victims haphazard, must indeed be questioned. His classification of the traits of other people is, so say the least, reckless; and, apparently, he is possessed of an inherent desire to abuse.

"Mr. Eadie is a man of ideas; Mr. Parker is absolutely bereft of them." Indeed! I wonder it does not strike "E. R." that a man who aims, and succeeds, in revivifying the great incidents in history, and manages in a masterly fashion to portray the Brobdingnagian characters, must be a person who has ambitions, ideals, and ideas. Why, "E. R." himself admits that Mr. Parker has accomplished what numerous others have attempted, and at which all but he have failed.

In these days, when life is drab, and all is suspense and nerve-racking, when "Revue" mongers are making fortunes, let us give Mr. Parker his due. He thrills us by the immensity of his theme. His characters interest us highly, and we are amused by their wit, which he has so assiduously collated. If "E. R." is so cultured that seeing "Disraeli" sets his teeth on edge, let him keep away from the "Royalty Theatre." However, I think he will agree with me that it is a far, far better thing that an ambitious work like "Disraeli" should have a good run in these days than that people, for lack of something better, should crowd to see those nauseating, barbaric, and senseless concoctions, which, through some error I have not yet discovered, have been named "Revues."

J. BULVAR SCHWARTZ.

* * *

SHAKESPEARE AS GROTESQUE.

Sir,—Mr. Huntly Carter has certainly some authority for calling Shakespeare a Grotesque. This opinion has been maintained, not only in England, but in France, where it has been expressed by some of the most prominent critics. There is this difference, however, that where the Grotesque of Shakespeare was considered a vice by these critics, it is, on the contrary, elevated by Mr. Carter to a dramatic virtue. The Grotesque was not associated with "divine Joy," I admit, but rather with an outrageous flow of natural imagination. Although the term Grotesque has not generally been used, despite of Ruskin, in literary criticism, there is a good definition by Dryden, who makes it anomalous to farce in poetry. Among the French critics, Voltaire, Abbé Le Blanc and La Place saw in the Grotesque of Shakespeare a fault only pardonable by his other good qualities. Voltaire, like Mr. Carter, did not appreciate Shakespeare's *tragic* genius, for he spoke of the plays as "the monstrous farces which are called tragedies." Again, Abbé Le Blanc, evidently wishing to pave the way for Mr. Carter, said: "The greatest parts of his works are neither tragedies nor comedies, but what the English call Historical Plays—that is to say, a history of some prince put into dialogue, interspersed with low buffoonery."

So much for the theory of the Grotesque. One can, in some ways, understand the French critics' abhorrence of this spirit which they maintained pervaded Shakespeare's works, for they did at the same time appreciate the other qualities of his dramas. But both tragedy and comedy, the two great divisions in art and life, find a perfect syncretism in the mind of Mr. Carter. It is true that Shakespeare introduced the comic into his tragedies; never, however, to the detriment of the tragic effect, but, as Coleridge remarks, only when it reacts on the tragedy by harmonious contrast.

In his second article in THE NEW AGE of March 30, Mr. Carter says: "If we like we can imagine Shakespeare as a highly imaginative, passionate sort of fellow, who would sit for days, weeks, months together in a world of his own imagining, laughing at, applauding and playing recreatively with the inheritance which his own and other times so richly showered upon him. This was the unconscious mood that caused his plays and was transmitted consciously by him to others." Tragedy, I presume, disappears, and the reader, after this communication, should lean back from his "Macbeth" or "King Lear," and laugh like Rabelais in his easy chair. Judging by the extravagant use of the words "Joy" and "Play," I should think that Mr. Carter is one of Mr. Caldwell Cook's Play Boys of the lowest form.

It was a convention of dramatic criticism, which convention has not been superseded, that the tragic dramatist used terror and reached sublimity in pathos, and Shakespeare has been accounted one of the great dramatists who used this mean and accomplished this end. In "King Lear," a play in which Mr. Carter hears divine laughter like that of Dante, a man who had not even human laughter, the true dramatic effect as understood by legions of great artists and critics is attained. Let me put alongside Mr. Carter's description of the end of this play the words of Coleridge, "How beautifully the affecting return of Lear to reason and the mild pathos of these speeches prepare the mind for the last sad, yet sweet, consolation of the aged sufferer's end." There does not seem to be a place here for laughter, human or superhuman, unless it is the Devil's. He who can interpret the conclusion of this play in such a way has no sense of tragedy and certainly has no sense of humour. To try to dissolve the world into one principle is an old, old game, and the easiest retreat from laborious research for the truth, but it is probably the most popular effort in an age when the critical faculty is neglected, when men draw philosophy from intuition and instinct, and some like Mr. Carter make such a vague word as Joy a term of supreme importance in Art.

In his article, "The Grotesque Shakespeare," Mr. Carter speaks of the "terrible laughter" which marks the third epoch of Shakespeare's plays. I don't know whether or not this is the equivalent of the "terror" the 18th century critics thought a tragic poet should inspire in his audience, but Coleridge, in his classification of the plays, 1819, speaks of the "last epoch when the energies of intellect in the cycle of genius were, though in a rich and more potentiated form, becoming predominant over passion and creative self-manifestation"! I cannot conclude without quoting Coleridge's remarks upon the ending of that very laughable grotesque "Macbeth." "This scene, dreadful as it is, is still a relief, because a variety, because domestic, and therefore soothing, as associated with the only real pleasures of life. The conversation between Lady MacDuff and her child heightens the pathos, and is preparatory for the deep tragedy of their assassination."

Perhaps, however, this is Mr. Carter's idea of the Grotesque:—

> Out, out, brief candle!
> Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player,
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
> And then is heard no more; it is a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing?

One wonders, by the way, whether Mr. Carter has ever read Coleridge's criticisms. It is hard to think so. Indeed, judging by his very grotesque articles, one doubts if he has ever read Shakespeare.

C. S. J. D.

* * *

NEW PHRASES.

Sir,—The use of the fatuous verb "to join-up," which is making itself offensively at home here, should put us on our guard against similar top-heavy intruders. "To close-down" has also taken the public fancy, and is now used by all competent blockheads. I believe that this style of hyphenated verb hails from the United States, and, like other linguistic epidemics which originally broke out in that country, this fester of prepositional verbs is due to contagion from the German word-tank.

L. M.

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

	United Kingdom.	Abroad.
One Year	... **28s. 0d.**	... **30s. 0d.**
Six Months	... **14s. 0d.**	... **15s. 0d.**
Three Months	... **7s. 0d.**	... **7s. 6d.**

All communications relative to THE NEW AGE *should be addressed to* THE NEW AGE, 38, *Cursitor Street E.C.*

Press Cuttings.

["Press Cutter" will be glad to receive current extracts suitable to this page.]

We now learn that the action of the United States Treasury in issuing a new regulation imposing a one per cent. tax on the income of non-resident aliens when derived from American securities was taken in consequence of a decision given in the United States Supreme Court. Full particulars of this decision have not yet reached this country, but, according to private advices by cable, the Court ruled that the Government had no power to exempt foreign holders from the tax. The impost will be collected as from May 1. Of course, it will not apply to shares, which under the income-tax law are exempt, because the moneys with which dividends are paid are taxed as part of the net earnings of a company. Thus the company alone pays the tax, and not the shareholder. But as regards bonds, the tax will now be deducted on payment of coupons. Up to the present the foreign bondholder has been required to sign a certificate to the effect that, as a non-resident alien, he was not liable to the tax.—"The Times."

In January last Dr. Borsa, the editor of the "Secolo," had interviews with Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Runciman. Both expressed sympathy with Italy, but both made a statement which seemed to show a failure to comprehend the true situation. They said that England was suffering from the rise in freights as much as Italy. This view ignored the fact that while British consumers were suffering from inflated prices, British shippers were reaping great harvests; and that to this extent the financial situation of the country as a whole did not suffer. Moreover, this view took no account of the coal question. It seemed to have been forgotten that Italy has to import all her coal supply by sea.

Unfortunately the problem was obscured, almost from the first, by polemics which strayed far from the facts. Italians whose sympathies were not with England, or with the war, insinuated that England was wringing exorbitant profits out of the needs of her Allies. As time went on and freights grew higher and neither the British nor the Italian Government made any clear sign the suggestions of the anti-British party bore fruit. The situation was made much worse by the publication of the profits made last year by certain British shipping companies, and by the protest of Sir Walter Runciman against any further requisitioning of ships on behalf of the Allies. It seemed as though British shippers did wish to insist upon their right to get full benefit of the law of supply and demand.

Our own idea is that all the machinery suggested, including that which is urged particularly upon women, should be utilised to collect a loan for the State; but that loan should bear no interest. Cannot leaders conceive that, as many rich men have already risked and given their lives without being induced to do so by the promise of material gain, so others are willing to do the same with their wealth? Are these leaders not aware of the sacrifices that have already been made by many in giving up comparatively big incomes, and enlisting as privates? We ourselves know of more than one instance where the question of interest has stood in the way of the subscription of money.—"The Athenæum."

UNREST ON THE CLYDE—THE ROOT OF THE TROUBLE.

In the judgment recently delivered by Sheriff Fyfe in the case of the strikers who were charged before him under the Munitions Act, there occurred the following words, which were so pointed as to receive verbatim quotation in the Press: "You" (*i.e.*, the accused) "have taken up the attitude that a certain shop steward is to manage the work. That is your attitude. You are going to manage the shop, and that is the sort of thing to which the law will give no countenance. I venture to think that not only the law of the land, but also the common sense of the nation, is against any such preposterous doctrine."

The attitude of the workmen to whom the above remarks were directed is an interesting illustration of the fruit that may be borne of seed cast into receptive soil. The seed in this case was the doctrine of syndicalism, which had its origin and fullest development in France, and which, though now almost forgotten by the general public, provoked much discussion prior to the war. The aim of syndicalism, in short, is to transfer the control of industry, and with the control a greater proportion of the profits of industry, to the worker. The old-fashioned Labour Party, with its collective bargaining and its gradual improvements in wages and conditions, is too slow for the new theorists. They demand liberty for the worker to determine the conditions of his labour; and their weapon is, of course, the strike.

Some will perhaps remember how in the days before the war these principles were received by the British Labour leaders, how they did not countenance the idea of the general strike, and continued to put their trust in political reform through Parliament and Trade Union bargaining with the employers. But, nevertheless, the general principle of syndicalism received a practical application from a group of able writers here, which, while falling short of the complete idealism of the French agitators, yet proved to be a far-reaching conception, and one which we are not yet done with by any means.

This school retained the central idea of syndicalism that the producer should control, and endeavoured to inspire with it the whole machinery of trade unionism. Instead of confining themselves to fighting employers over wages, conditions, and hours, the Unions were told to add to their duties the making of demands on behalf of the workers that had nothing to do with wages or hours, and to attempt not merely to raise the standard of life or to better conditions, but to change the industrial system and to substitute democracy for autocracy in the workshop.

In carrying out this programme it was seen to be essential that every worker would become a Trade Unionist, a result which the Welsh miners have just achieved and which every other large Union is strenuously working for, with every appearance of success. At the same time there should be developed gradually the powers and faculties necessary for control, all negotiations with capitalists to be, as indeed they now are, conducted through Unions; and, in fact, these bodies are exercising pressure and making protests which are in some instances not distinguishable from indirect control. "Then," and here we quote the words of one of the writers referred to, "will come a number of stages where the Union is being taken more and more into partnership and the system of dual management will be developed."

By the time this stage is reached, however, it is anticipated that most industries will be nationalised, and on that change taking place the hold of the Unions on industry will be increased. Finally will come the stage when the Union will be an all-embracing organism *including all the workers in any way engaged in the particular* industry to which it applies, at which point complete control of industry in the interest of the producers will have been attained. This is the English version of syndicalism, or as it is termed in some quarters, Guild Socialism, the Trade Union in its glorified form being considered analogous to the old Trade Guild.

This theory has many other implications which cannot here be described, but we think enough has been said to show that the "preposterous doctrine" referred to by Sheriff Fyfe was no mere isolated notion of the accused men themselves, but the outcome of the teaching of a school of social reconstruction "which is going to manage the shop," and between which and existing law and order there is bound to be conflict.—"The Scotsman."

The Guild Socialist proposals if accepted as a working philosophy for the Trade Union side of the Socialist movement demand certain changes in the policy and programme alike of Socialists and Trade Unions. It would mean additions to the Socialist stock of ideas, it would mean radical alteration of the form and outlook of many of our Trade Unions. It is a hard matter to make the British worker a revolutionary. It is a harder matter to imagine any future for Socialism unless this is done. Whatever be the conclusions as to the ultimate structure of Society, one thing is certain. The Socialist movement can no longer go forward blithely believing in pure and simple Collectivism. Control by the workers by the workers must be added to their tenets, if their tenets are to spread any further among Trade Unionists.—"The Labour Leader."

Published by the Proprietors, THE NEW AGE PRESS, LTD., 38, Cursitor Street, Chancery Lane, and Printed for them by BONNER & CO., The Chancery Lane Press, 1, 2, and 3, Rolls Passage, E.C. Agents for South Africa: Central News Agency, Ltd.