

THE NEW AGE

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF POLITICS, LITERATURE, AND ART.

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

It was suggested in these columns last week that the Economic Conference in Paris would almost certainly devote more attention to measures for combating German trade after the war, on a protectionist basis, than to some of the objects which, according to the newspapers, were actually to be discussed. The "recommendations" of the Conference may now be pointed to as demonstrative proof of our prediction; and, as frequent reference must necessarily be made to these resolutions in the course of future economic discussions, it will be pertinent to cast a rapid glance over their potentialities for good and evil. True, it has been announced that the Conference met with no executive powers—it was a purely consultative body, formed for the purpose of discussing certain questions and of subsequently reporting to the Governments concerned. But Mr. Bonar Law, when speaking at one of the innumerable dinners to Mr. Hughes, last Friday assured his fellow-guests that the "recommendations" made represented in general the "settled mind" of the British Government, and that they would almost certainly be adopted by Parliament when presented to both Houses. In dealing with the resolutions passed, therefore, we are dealing with what is an all but official document. Before we proceed, let us acknowledge that the delegates were justified in casting the blame for the Conference itself on the Central Empires. Germany and Austria-Hungary, declares the second resolution, after having forced upon the Allies a military contest, "are to-day preparing, in concert with their Allies, for a contest on the economic plane, which will not only survive the re-establishment of peace, but will at that moment attain its full scope and intensity." It is well to set down, once and for all, the definite fact that an anti-European trade combination was first devised in Prussia, and first applied to present economic and political circumstances by a German writer of considerable standing, Dr. Friedrich Naumann. It is true that German shipping circles do not altogether care for this policy as outlined by Naumann; it is certain that many industrialists in Austria and many landowners in Hungary are opposed to it. The fact remains, nevertheless, that it is precisely this policy of isolation on a large scale

to which the Governments of the Central Empires now stand committed, and with the Governments the majority of business houses, industrialists, bankers, economists, and public men.

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An economic alliance of Germany, Austria, Hungary, Turkey, and the Balkan States—an alliance which, to a large extent, has been carried into effect already—would undoubtedly present a serious problem for the world to consider; but we are bound to admit that the counter-measures recommended at Paris are likely to cause at least as great a departure from pre-war ideas in international economics. With the "A" measures—the measures to be adopted during the continuance of the war—we are not particularly concerned; for, as we stated last week, those measures, with all their anomalies, good points, and inequalities, were arranged long ago. The additional "A" measures proposed cannot be carried into effect, taking them generally. For example, the Allies "will prohibit their own subjects and citizens and all persons residing in their territories from carrying on any trade with . . . persons, firms, and companies whose business is controlled wholly or partially by enemy subjects, or is subject to enemy influence, and whose names are included in a special list." Unless there is a quibble in the last clause of the sentence, this would prevent nearly all our trade with the United States of America; and that is a trade which, at the present time, we cannot afford to tamper with. The "B" and "C" measures may be considered together. The "B" measures are applicable to the period of reconstruction after the war, and the "C" measures are to be, we gather, practically permanent; but the period of reconstruction is expected to last for a few years, and at the end of a few years it will be next to impossible to take away from the persons affected the privileges accorded them. A more detailed consideration of the plans suggested will make this clear.

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"During a number of years to be fixed by mutual agreement among themselves," it seems, the most-favoured-nation treatment is not to be granted to Enemy Powers, and the Allies undertake to assure one another "compensatory outlets for trade." Further,

during these years, again, the Allied countries are to "conserve for the Allied countries, before all others, their natural resources during the whole period of commercial, industrial, agricultural, and maritime reconstruction, and for this purpose they undertake to establish special arrangements to facilitate the interchange of these resources." During the reconstruction period, too, a period of time is to be fixed "during which the commerce of Enemy Powers shall be submitted to special treatment, and the goods originating in their countries shall be subjected either to prohibition or to a special regime of an effective character." The "C" measures provide for independence in the "key" industries; and, to assure an uninterrupted supply of raw materials, the Allies may "have recourse either to enterprises subsidised, directed, or controlled by the Governments themselves, or to the grant of financial assistance for the encouragement of scientific or technical research and the development of national industries and resources; to customs duties or prohibitions of a temporary or permanent character; or to a combination of these different methods." Technical delegates are to consider the application of these principles to patent laws, shipping, transport generally, postal rates, and so on.

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The fact that these proposals have been formulated at all indicates a decided change in economic and political outlook. There has hardly ever been a period in the world's history, after man emerged from barbarism, in which trading between nations was not carried on. Before the industrial age, however, it seemed to be understood that countries ought to be, for the most part, self-contained and economically independent. With the progress of industry in the eighteenth century, and its infinitely more rapid progress in the nineteenth, this old view came to be abandoned, for no country could assure to itself an adequate supply of raw materials for industrial purposes without dependence on another—if not raw materials, then at least manufactured articles had to be thought of. It seemed, up to two years ago, that commerce, if not humanitarian ideals, would at last unite the nations. The war has set an entirely new standard. The political groups in Europe, which have existed in their present form for a decade or so, have resolved themselves into politico-economic groups; so that we now find ourselves back at a modification of the economic assumption of the Dark Ages. A country need not in itself be independent and self-supplying; but a group of countries may be. From this there necessarily follow the corollaries of the older assumption—the struggle for trade abroad over and above the requirements of the homeland; the struggle for the carrying trade; the struggle for closed markets. In some respects classic theories on economics and foreign trade may be dispensed with, in so far as they date from the new regime inaugurated by the introduction of steam and railways, and we have to base our views henceforth on the conditions prevailing before the American Revolution, the Dutch Wars, and the development of our colonial possessions.

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As we have seen from the quotations given, an essential element in the measures recommended, both "B" and "C," is protection; but protection in these new circumstances must necessarily become a highly complicated economic instrument. If the Allies are not to confer the most-favoured-nation treatment on enemy goods during the period of reconstruction, and possibly not afterwards as well, it follows that Great Britain must fall into line with her partners and colonies and keep out enemy goods by tariff measures, such a tariff to be reduced or suspended in the case of friendly products. This leads us to the point which we have already made in *THE NEW AGE* when criticising some of Mr. Hughes's earlier speeches. How are the tariffs to be adjusted? The Russian tariff, to all comers, of 130 per cent. is the largest in Europe; and the French and Italian tariffs are, on the whole, larger than those

of Germany and Austria. Any adjustment of tariffs, as among the Allies, must demand a very careful consideration of a question first formulated, in not over-clear terms, by Mill, and not exhausted by the subsequent discussions of Cairns, Torrens, Nicholson, Edgeworth, and Bastable. This is, in Mill's phrase, the question of "the equation of reciprocal demand," and if our trade connections with Germany and Austria are to be broken off we shall require to deal with it all the intelligence the nation can produce. It must be recollected that European trade—let us confine ourselves to Europe for the moment—has developed throughout the centuries, since the time of Augustus at least, in accordance with the normal requirements of the peoples. The Hanse League acted its part as a body of middlemen; Spain produced finely tempered swords, Switzerland watches and clocks; Germany toys; England iron and manufactured articles; the Low Countries dealt in wool. There were wars for European markets and for or against customs duties; but, even after the Napoleonic wars, economic blockades were dropped and trading was resumed as before on the basis of the "reciprocal demand." Further, let it not be forgotten that it was the "reciprocal demand" which largely determined international values, as it determines to-day the ratio of international exchange. But the ratio of exchange itself reacts upon, or may be affected by, the prices ruling in any one country; and, as Bastable emphasises in this international connection, prices themselves vary (to take the most relevant instance) according to the "law" of increasing or diminishing returns. How fluctuations in prices or conditions in one country may influence prices and conditions in another is seen in Bastable's allusion to the recent development of agriculture in the United States and Canada, which "has taken place under the law of increasing return," and its effect on British farming "is more noticeable, since the latter comes under the law of diminishing return." And then he adds a paragraph which has become particularly significant since the Conference:

The same considerations may, too, explain the pre-dominance of a manufacturing country, when once attained, since its productive power is steadily increasing, and thus extending the field of international exchange to the dismay of the native producers of manufactures in other countries; but whatever be the limits of their operation, it is demonstrable that the operation of the law of diminishing return tends to limit the area of international exchange, while that of the law of increasing return is calculated to extend it.—"Theory of International Trade," Chapter II.

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We can imagine the "dismay" which is certain to arise if it becomes necessary to persist in a tariff policy as enunciated at the Conference; and we venture to predict, with more certainty than we attach to the prophecies of Mr. Wells, that under modern conditions this battle of tariffs must fail by both sides being driven off the field. It is, in our view, utterly impracticable for military adversaries to draw lines round areas of the world and declare that the countries comprised within definite boundaries shall not trade with countries within the limits of other boundaries. In practice, if it were found possible to maintain these utterly abnormal conditions for any length of time, we should simply have neutral countries piling up profits hand over fist as the result of facilitating the exchange of products between "enemy" countries. And the problems raised by an artificial exchange could not be practically solved at all. There is—let us take an instance—a rising iron industry in France and Belgium, which could at times, before the war, compete with German industries in Germany, and can much more than hold its own with German and Austrian manufactures in regions bordering on the Mediterranean, as well as in Scandinavia. Under the new conditions proposed the Allies would be compelled, in practice, to regard themselves as excluded from Austro-German markets, as they certainly would be, military victory or no military victory; and French iron-workers would find themselves suffering,

in their own country, from the competition of the better-organised and more productive foundries of Great Britain—for it may be assumed that the tariff adjustments would be such as to enable Great Britain to send her products into Allied countries. Or perhaps not? Perhaps Great Britain would be expected to adopt a merely nominal tariff, leaving free competition to be carried on among the Allies as before the war? Or perhaps inequalities of tariffs would be made up by exchanges from Ally A to Ally B in payment of goods to Ally C and to Ally D? Or perhaps the question of the amputation of our best markets and the creation of a purely artificial market, with the resultant problems of prices, production, and "reciprocal demand" involved, has never been considered at all? This, we fancy, is somewhere near the truth. We believe that the Conference did its best to humour Mr. Hughes. Whether it did or no, there could have been no better way of allowing the Antipodean house of cards to collapse than to build it up carefully in accordance with the plans of the architect. We fear Mr. Hughes would ill pass an examination in geometry.

For, in truth, both Mr. Hughes and his supporters have overlooked two essential factors of some magnitude: one, the opinion of neutral countries on the extraordinary scheme we have quoted; and, two, the attitude of Labour—we do not mean the attitude of Labour with regard to wages, which is a relatively unimportant matter, but rather the attitude of Labour with regard to co-management in industry, which will be one of the most pressing problems of the next decade. In his exhaustive volume on "The Trade Policy of Great Britain" Carl Johannes Fuchs (whose learning, even in England, must survive the odium of his nationality) insists time and again on the point which he makes in the final words of his concluding chapter: "Questions of trade policy by themselves have not the primary importance they are generally assumed to have; and to-day they fall relatively into the background as compared with the great problem of the national organisation of production and of labour." And this after the most profound consideration of every aspect of British trade policy in the nineteenth century! Decidedly the delegates to the Conference did not set out well documented. Let us investigate this aspect of the problem a little further.

First, as to neutrals. We have stated the fact that tariffs in Austria and Germany were before the war, taking them on an average, lower than those of Italy and France, and very much lower than the Russian tariff. If our Allies have to increase their tariffs after the war (and this may be regarded as a certainty), and if we are forced to adopt a tariff for the purpose of aiding them, if not "for revenue only," it follows that the entire Allied combination will not find itself in a very favourable position to compete in neutral markets with (a) important neutral productive countries, such as the United States, or with (b) Germany and Austria. Let it be remembered that we cannot interfere with the Central Powers to the extent of refusing to carry their goods; for, if we did so, we should lose an important factor in our carrying trade, and, even if we were prepared to risk this loss (though our shipping companies are not—imagine them!), we should see a rapid development of neutral shipping, e.g., Dutch and American. To express this more pointedly, the recommendations of the Conference would despoil us of our Austro-German markets, shatter many of our staple industries, menace our carrying trade, deprive us of a third of our exchange business, reduce our wealth, and add enormously to the cost of living. For we cannot blink the fact that when production is mentioned, with special reference to the Allies, Great Britain is meant, and Great Britain alone. Our overseas possessions do not produce, our Allies do not produce, in anything like the same ratio; and they will not do so for many years to come. We speak, of course, of manufactured

goods; for after the war our wheat and meat will come to us, as to others, from Canada, the Argentine, and Russia, and no artificial interference with tariffs can in the end lead to a different result. The difficulty we can foresee is that before the nation realises where the new policy is leading it our ghoulish profiteers may have ruined it, body and soul, by skilful exploitation. It will be bad enough to lose our trade with the present enemy countries, even for a short spell; but to lose our neutral trade likewise would ruin the country in a few months. And if we are to preserve our neutral trade we must look with suspicion on all forms of tariffs.

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Secondly, as to production and labour. While we are not prepared to deny that certain tariff adjustments might be desirable, and even valuable, after the war, we are certainly not prepared to lend our sanction to any tariff changes of a nature likely to enrich our profiteers, while impoverishing the community. We do not overlook the fact that there are tariffs in operation in this country now, ostensibly for the purpose of keeping out luxuries and of decreasing consumption. The people of England have not been allowed, such is the character of their newspapers, to know how the prohibitions and tariffs have driven up prices by "pools" and "rings" and "Trusts"; but these pernicious institutions, hitherto associated only with the United States and the worst forms of laissez-faire, are inseparable from tariffs. The Trust after the tariff is inevitable; for tariffs must necessarily be drawn up under the guidance of manufacturers, who naturally look well after their own interests and are forced, willy-nilly, under such a system, to protect their interests by organising themselves into trusts or corporations. Some of the results we have already seen. Bacon and meat are, for many classes, luxuries which cannot be thought of; for the prices of these everyday commodities have been raised as high as Haman by the time-honoured method of holding up stocks. This has been done in the United States time after time, from the Michigan Salt Association down to the Steel Corporation and the latest developments in Standard Oil. The English profiteers have not driven prices up without having kept the examples of their American forerunners closely in mind. Let us mention one. A classic form of Trust is provided by the Addyston Pipe Company (1894-1895), which was the first Trust to develop the principle of "reserved cities" and "pay territory" or "bonus territory" on a large scale—the prices quoted for manufactured goods being calculated (irrespective of freights) on local conditions, the absence of competition, and, in general, the ability of the company to "put on the screw" where occasion offered. The result was that in a very short time there was, by arrangement, no competition for most public contracts, and local manufacturers were either absorbed or "frozen out" by specially low prices. Further, in order that stocks might be kept low and prices high the pipe-making concerns forming the Trust deliberately worked their respective plants at only one-third to half capacity. Our dealers in pork and meat; our dealers in coal; and, let it be whispered, our dealers in munitions as well, have acted in a precisely similar manner. We read of bacon and chilled meat, in particular, being held up in storehouses until they rotted, solely in order that there might be an inadequate supply for the public. Of course, the profiteers who act in this way are the first to complain that the British workman deliberately restricts his output ("ca'canny"), and must be taught better in view of the conditions to come after the war. How many such firms, we wonder, does the Government propose to subsidise after the war, in accordance with the Conference resolution?

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Not content with having increased the prices of essential foodstuffs by fifty-nine per cent. since the war began (see the Board of Trade "Labour Gazette" for June), the profiteers are now assuring the working

classes that they must be prepared for hardship after the war, alleging the reasons (shortage of capital, and so forth) mentioned in these Notes last week. Alternatively, the workman is assured that if only he will accept protection all the other desiderata will follow—higher wages, shorter hours, better conditions of employment, and the like. On this point we take leave to make a comment. In an admirable little volume ("Introduction to the Study of Prices") Professor W. T. Layton summarises the effect of a tariff on wages and subsequently on Trusts themselves. As against the contention, often made in these pages, that strikes for wages are ineffective because the extra wage is added to the price of the article, Mr. Layton adduces the American argument with special reference to the Trusts—namely, that there comes a point at which wage concessions, although they "cut into profits," cannot be "passed on" to the public. Higher wages are demanded; they are granted by the Trust; profits fall; business suffers. An application is then made for an increased tariff on the goods sold by the Trust, and the process begins again. But the purse of the public, after all, is limited. Mr. Layton, however, mentions an exceptional principle which, as he wrote before the war he has not unduly emphasised, and that is the influence of currency:

Behind the tariff barrier, the influx of gold has produced, in conjunction with the increased requirements of the population, a brisk demand for all kinds of commodities. Prices once having risen, fresh supplies of gold and paper currency have been called into circulation. In a free-trade country this rise would soon have been stopped by the importation of lower-priced goods from other countries, and the level of prices reduced once more to that of the open market. But this has been prevented in the case of the United States by the existence of the tariff, while competition in the home market, which might otherwise have been effective in reducing prices to a lower level, has been eliminated by the existence of large industrial and commercial trusts.—"Study of Prices," Chapter VIII.

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The vicious circle, in other words, begins with tariffs, and proceeds by way of higher wages, higher prices, smaller profits, additional currency, and political intrigue, to tariffs again. Before the war nobody would have thought of England as a country in which tariffs stood the slightest chance of being buoyed up by an inflated currency. But the opportunity of the Trust "magnate" has come with the issue of paper currency during the war. As the returns show, within the first few months of war we had thirty millions of paper against a reserve of eighteen millions in gold; but now the ratio is about a hundred and twenty millions to thirty millions. The tariffs, it is little exaggeration to say, have been raised in anticipation, by inflated currency, even before they have been adopted on a scientific scale. We can well imagine Mr. Lloyd George, always a far-seeing opportunist, making a name for himself in five or six years by imitating Mr. Roosevelt—appearing in public as the daring "Trust buster" and in private as the capitalists' friend.

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Our working classes—and the expression here must be held to include the professional classes and the salariat—have stood much; and more than once their patience has surprised us. But we question whether they will stand the effects of the Paris policy; they are more likely to become as restive as neutrals now are. We have not much to thank America for; but she is at least entitled to our passive gratitude for having provided a passive warning of the fate of an enormously rich country, and of an active, enterprising people, at the hands of unscrupulous profiteers. Participation in the management of industry by workmen and salariat is the only effective check on the profiteer which can be devised—the only form of industrial re-organisation which will enable us to compete on efficient terms with our rivals in the world-markets.

Foreign Affairs.

By S. Verdad.

As the German Government is making an unusually strong effort, through its ordinary propagandist channels, to distort the meaning of the action taken by the Allied Powers with regard to Greece, it is well that the essential points of the Note handed to the Greek Government last week, and the circumstances relating to it, should be borne clearly in mind. The Note makes reference to England, France and Russia as the "Protecting Powers" of Greece. This is in full accordance with the Treaty of London (1863), whereby the seven Ionian Islands, until then administered under British protection, were ceded on the distinct understanding that Greece was to be governed as a constitutional State. A king was chosen; a constitution was laid down; elections were held regularly with no more than the normal amount of corruption associated with the Balkan States. No interference of any kind was attempted when Greece, leagued with Serbia, Bulgaria, and Montenegro, went to war with Turkey in 1912. Such procedure may not have been to the interests of Russia or France, or even our own; but the matter was one for Greece to decide, and she was left to do so unhindered. In consequence of the eventual outcome of that war a treaty was signed whereby Greece and Serbia undertook to help one another in the event of either being wantonly attacked. Bulgaria, of course, was the cause of this treaty and its stipulations.

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Towards the end of last year Serbia was attacked by Bulgaria with the very minimum of warning. It might have been held to be doubtful under the Serbo-Greek Treaty whether or no Greece should have come to the aid of Serbia when the Austrian invasion took place; but there was no doubt whatsoever with regard to the attitude of Greece when Bulgaria joined in the war. M. Venizelos had just been returned to power with a large majority, and he made preparations for helping the Serbians to drive out their enemies. With this object the Greek Army was placed on a war footing, and an invitation was sent to the Entente Governments to land forces at Salonika. The Greek people, as we have every reason to suppose from their unmistakable proofs of friendship, sympathise wholly with the cause of the Allies and are unfriendly to Germany and Austria and bitter enemies of Bulgaria. This was the case last year; but the people were opposed in their constitutional aims by intrigues in Court circles. The King was suspected of having made a private arrangement with King Ferdinand of Bulgaria and with the Kaiser regarding the disposal of Macedonia and the partitioning of certain disputed areas. The Queen of Greece, being the sister of the Kaiser, was presumed to be influencing her consort in a sense inimical to the Entente Powers; and undoubtedly there were many influential German elements in high administrative positions. What cannot be disputed, again, is that the action taken by King Constantine at the time of the Allies' landing in Salonika was arbitrary, unconstitutional, and unwarranted. He refused to consider himself as bound by the Serbo-Greek Treaty, dismissed M. Venizelos, and dissolved Parliament.

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The next Chamber was admittedly the product of corruption and unfair dealing, and most of the followers of M. Venizelos stayed away from the polling-booths. M. Zaimis, the successor to M. Venizelos, adopted a policy which was too mild for the Court, and he soon disappeared to make way for M. Skouloudis, who has just been forced to resign in favour of M. Zaimis by the action of the Entente Powers. The policy of M. Skouloudis was all along hostile to Serbia and to England, France, and Russia. Not only was help refused to King Peter, but even the pretence of benevolent neutrality was not kept up. Angry protests were made against the continued presence of the Allied armies in

Salonika, despite the fact that M. Venizelos, in his capacity as Prime Minister, had invited them to go there; and the climax came when the Greek Government connived at attacks on the Entente Legations, and on Greek politicians known to be favourable to the Allies. It was suspected that the army which had been mobilised to aid Serbia might very soon be turned against Serbia's friends; but repeated requests for its demobilisation were ignored. At last the Allies took the only possible course consistent with their own safety and with the Treaty of London by which Greece had become an independent country. A Note couched in strong terms was presented to the Skouloudis Government just as the Premier was about to resign in order not to have the onus of dealing with it. The Note demanded the dismissal of pro-German police functionaries, the demobilisation of the army, the resignation of the Cabinet in favour of a thoroughly neutral Ministry, and the holding of free elections. These demands have been accepted, and it is reported as I write that King Constantine has signed decrees demobilising the army and providing for a general election.

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No matter how this action of the Allied Powers may be regarded, from the diplomatic point of view or any other, no possible exception can be taken to it. Everything that has been done has been done in accordance with constitutional procedure, and, indeed, in favour of a constitutional as contrasted with an arbitrary regime. The distinction between the Allies' treatment of Greece and Germany's treatment of Belgium is most marked, and no Greek newspaper has seriously attempted to make a comparison between the position of Greece and that of Belgium, though this is a point which German propagandists have sought to bring into prominence. The feeling in Athens appears to be one of relief that a strained situation has come to an end. The Greek people might have remained indifferent, though unwillingly, to the fate of Serbia and to their country's prestige; for the power of the Court, pro-German through and through, was too great for them. But the surrender of Fort Ruppel to the Bulgarians was an event which called forth violent comments even in the heavily censored Press; and even if the Allies had taken no steps at all it is likely that a popular rising would have been attempted against the Bulgarian invasion—an invasion which was not resisted by the army and appeared to be welcomed by the Court.

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It is premature to speak of the future policy of the Allies in the Balkans, for political policy depends on military strategy. It will doubtless be the duty of the Entente Ministers in the immediate future to make sure that the Germanophile officials are dismissed from their posts at Athens and throughout the country, and to make sure, also, that satisfactory arrangements are made for holding elections. M. Zaimis is known to be a close friend of M. Venizelos, whom he may consult from time to time, and whose policy he will almost certainly adopt. It is not suggested by the Allies that Greece shall take part in the war—that is a point which is made quite clear in the Note. The chief result of the *démarche* is that the Entente armies at Salonika will no longer be threatened by a combination of enemies, including Greece. It is assumed that we can deal with our known enemies, but that there must be no possible opportunity for treachery. An aspect of the new situation which ought to be mentioned is the action taken by Italy. As Italy was not a Protecting Power under the treaty of 1863 she could not sign the joint Note; but, acting in agreement with her Allies, she presented a simultaneous demand that the Greek Government should withdraw its troops from Southern Albania, where they were threatening the Italian forces in the neighbourhood of Vallona. This demand was instantly agreed to by M. Zaimis; and the fact that it was made is adequate proof of the solidarity of the Quadruple Entente with respect to Balkan questions.

The Alleged Confusions of Mr. Bernard Shaw.

I HASTEN to acknowledge that the critical article of Don Ramiro (if he will allow me to designate him thus briefly and honourably) is an excellent and instructive one. But I do not see why he should assume that I am an Englishman. Let me explain.

The subject of his criticism is an article of mine addressed to the Germans in America. Its object was to engage their sympathies for the Allies. Now an Englishman—Sir Edward Grey, for example—would undoubtedly have begun by a patient, kindly, only slightly patronising attempt to make these foolish people see that Germany is entirely in the wrong, and England, as ever, spotlessly, loftily, and necessarily in the right. He would measure his success by the heartiness of the reception of his demonstration by the English papers. If it incidentally led to an exasperated declaration of war on England by President Wilson under hyphenated pressure, he would become the darling of his countrymen and the hero of the hour.

But I happen to be an Irishman. When I address a jury I do so with a view to winning the verdict, and not, as English barristers do, to becoming famous through the hanging of my client. In addressing the American German jury it was clear to me that the one thing I must not say was that Germany is in the wrong. On the contrary, I began by saying everything nice about Germany that I could, and, in particular, by dwelling on her numerous superiorities to her present enemies. Having thus gained the ear of the jurors, I proceeded with my case. That case was not in the least, as Don Ramiro suggests, that efficiency is right, or is an attribute of the Life Force (whose inefficiency I have repeatedly and publicly deplored), or is anything else than itself. My case was that the Germans, though as averse as we to the tyranny of Prussia, and submitting to it only for the sake of its alleged superlative efficiency, had not found their confidence justified by the Hohenzollern conduct of the war, seeing that Republicanism was proving quite as efficient in the field.

I further argued that this was a natural result, because a Republican army can sacrifice everything to efficiency, whereas the Hohenzollern can only sacrifice everything to efficiency *except themselves*. In vain, as against this argument, does Don Ramiro urge that the Kaiser has sacked Von Tirpitz, Von Kluck, and all the rest of them. He has not sacked the Crown Prince; and he has not sacked himself. Don Ramiro says truly that "When the Hohenzollern family has a competent man like Frederick the Great at its head, the Hohenzollern regime is competent; and when not, not." But my point is that when a Republic has an incompetent President or Premier, it can get rid of him; but when Germany has an incompetent Hohenzollern, it can't. Therefore, a German convinced (rightly or wrongly) of the importance of efficiency, should support Republicanism against Hohenzollernism.

Pretty lucid, that: eh? Where is the confusion?

Infant mortality is not a matter of kindness. It is kind to share your rashers and gin with your children; have them all to sleep in the same bed with you; and spend a month's wages on their funerals. But infant vitality is a first-rate test of social organisation. Don Ramiro must not say that infant vitality is one thing, and social organisation another; that sometimes they coincide and sometimes not. He might as well say that alcohol is one thing and drunkenness another; that sometimes they coincide and sometimes not. If it be true that though you may have the first without the second (as in Connaught), yet you never have the second without the first, you may conclude that a vigilant regard to the multiversity of the universe must not be carried to the point at which the world appears so discrete that it falls to pieces intellectually. Don Ramiro

may take it from me that in places like Berlin social organisation and infant vitality are so closely connected that the one may safely be considered a function of the other in the mathematical sense. It is, therefore, fair to argue that a community with a relatively high infant mortality is not really as highly organised as a community with a relatively low one.

Don Ramiro suggests that if the mortality represented an intentional scientific elimination, it might imply a higher standard. So it might; but it doesn't. Mortality now represents neglect, not attention. That is why a high death-rate among infants involves a high invalid rate among the survivors.

I give due credit to the staff of the "Daily Mail" for seeing clearly "that England had to prepare to fight against Germany." But why restrict its foresight to Germany? It foresaw that we had to prepare to fight everybody, including France. I claim to have been a little cleverer than the "Daily Mail," because I saw clearly that England had to prepare *not* to have to fight Germany. And it was for want of that preparation that we got landed in the present mess.

Thus "the confusions of Mr. Bernard Shaw" turn out, as usual, to be Shavian lucidities so dazzling that Don Ramiro cannot see them at first. All the same, his article is an admirable one; and I acknowledge its value by answering it.

G. B. S.

The So-Called Law of Rent.

By Ramiro de Macztu.

SOME of the best minds of England are amusing themselves with a discussion of the Law of Rent. As such a discussion is of no great significance at the present time, I venture to write about it in the hope of hastening its end. In one of the first NEW AGE articles I believe I showed the impossibility of separating economic from military power, and that is why I suggested afterwards the foundation of a Cratology or doctrine of power, which should deal, in general, with all kinds of social power—economic, military, and political. What I meant by that was that Economics could not be seriously regarded as a generalising science. In the same way as a science of war has never arisen and can never arise, so also a science of Economics should not have arisen. The instruments of economic activity, such as statistics, mechanics, chemistry, agronomy, etc., may be and ought to be scientific, in the same way as the instruments of war—gunnery, tactics, engineering, etc. But, just as war cannot be scientific, so is it impossible for Economics to be scientific.

For that reason I protest against a discussion of the Law of Rent. It is said, on the one hand, in this discussion, that the Law of Rent renders impossible the distribution of land under a system of peasant proprietorships. It is maintained, on the other hand, that, in spite of the Law of Rent, the human will may establish such a system, in the same way as it is possible to erect a Roman arch in spite of the Law of Gravitation. Both sides acknowledge the validity of the Law of Rent, and give to it the character of a natural and inevitable law. There is no such thing. The Law of Rent does not exist. There is not a single economic law. Economic facts, like military facts, are not susceptible of "legal" treatment. They are susceptible only of an individual or historical treatment. Every generalising treatment of economic facts is a priori, in the very method, false, in the same way as Taine's method was false when he tried to explain with generalisations the individual works of artists. If it were true that the lagoons of Venice can explain to us the painting of Titian, why is it that the gondolieri do not paint like Titian?

What I mean is that it is not possible to anticipate the result of an economic action in the same way as we can predict in chemistry that with so much oxygen and

so much hydrogen we shall produce so much water with an electric spark. In Chemistry we can produce water from elements, such as hydrogen, oxygen, and an electric spark, in which the water was not contained. In Economics, on the other hand, we have no right to expect from any element anything beyond what is contained in it. Those so-called economic laws which happen to be true are not laws but definitions. When Gresham tells us that bad money takes the place of the good he only defines money. But if the Law of Rent were true, Economics could then be a generalising and deductive science. Unfortunately, it is not true.

It is only right that when men are undertaking economic, military, or political activities, they should try to study economic, military, and political facts, so that they may learn "from analogies"; but they would be wrong if they attempted to regulate their conduct "by identities." In Natural Science the cause is always equal to the effect. In History the cause is never equal to the effect. Economic, military, or political virtue cannot be founded upon economic, military, or political science; for it is only a mixture of wisdom and fortitude, two of the cardinal virtues. There are no such sciences; they can exist only as aspects of History.

If we did not know that Ricardo was an excellent man, we could say that the so-called Law of Rent was invented by him with the unholy object of proving to the English poor that rent was based upon a natural monopoly, and was, therefore, unchangeable. Most people believe, on the other hand, that rent is based upon property—that is to say, upon the right that the laws grant to the landowner of getting as much rent as possible for the use of his land. In other words, most people believe that rent is a juridical monopoly, and, therefore, changeable. Hence, when the people feel themselves oppressed by high rents, they ask for reforms so that the owner may be compelled to sell his lands, as has been done in Ireland, or to lower the rents, or to leave his tenants in possession. But those scientific people who believe that rent arises from a natural monopoly oppose these reforms, as if they were contrary to Nature. Such people are either conservatives, like Ricardo, or "scientific" socialists, like Marx.

The proof on which Ricardo based his Law of Rent was very subtle; and it is probable that if it had not been for the work of his commentators it would never have been understood except by a comparatively few persons. "Economics is a science which pays great honour to the intellect," Hegel used to say. What he meant by that was that in the classic books on Economics much more subtlety than truth was to be found. But the history of Astronomy teaches us that subtlety is not truth. Before it occurred to Copernicus that the earth was not perhaps the centre of the Universe, there prevailed highly complicated systems by which it was sought to explain the movements of the stars. Only a few superior people could grasp these systems. It may be that the psychological impulse which originated the Copernican discovery was the sheer inability of Copernicus himself to understand these systems. Copernicus felt the need of explaining to himself simply these complex things of heaven. And, although the astronomical conception of Copernicus is much easier to understand than those of the fifteenth century, it is, nevertheless, true in its essentials.

The Ricardian proof that rent is a natural and not a juridical monopoly is more or less as follows. Every sedentary society exploits first of all the lands of the best quality; those which yield the largest product with the smallest expenditure and effort. In such a society there is no rent. But as the population increases it finds it necessary to increase the products of the land. This it does by putting more labour or more capital into the land. Still, there is no rent.

But it happens that as the population goes on increasing the Law of Diminishing Returns begins to operate,

according to which it is not possible to increase indefinitely the productivity of the soil, for there comes a point at which, if you put more labour into the land, you do not obtain from it a quantity of products proportionate to the labour expended. When this point is reached the lands of second quality begin to be cultivated; and, when the Law of Diminishing Returns begins to operate again, the lands of third quality; then the lands of fourth quality, and so on.

Then society discovers the phenomenon that by putting the same quantity of labour and capital into a soil of the first quality as into a soil of the second quality, it obtains more products from the first than from the second. *This difference is the Rent.* This theory of Ricardo becomes more complex; for the difference in the rentability of lands does not depend only on their different quality; but also upon their lesser or greater distance from the market, the greater or lesser density of population, and the greater or lesser abundance of capital ready to be invested in agriculture. But the essential feature of Ricardo's theory is that it explains rent by the difference in the rentability of lands. In order to do this he pre-supposes the existence of marginal lands, which produce no rent, because they are so poor that they return only the amount of labour and capital put into them, without any surplus. From this it is deduced that if the rent of marginal lands is equal to 0, that of the lands which produce a surplus of 10 is equal to 10, that of lands producing a surplus of 9 is equal to 9, and so forth. All of which is very pretty; but we need no science to tell us that we can get more from productive lands than from non-productive lands.

What the theory of Ricardo does not explain is rent. Rent, he tells us, consists of the differences in rents. That is why the Ricardian theory is known by the name of the Theory of Differential Rent; and it has been regarded for nearly a century as the most precious treasure of economic science.

The consequences of the Ricardian theory are very clear. It says to the tenants: "Don't complain of the rent. Rent does not arise from a changeable juridical monopoly. Rent arises from a fatal fact—the difference in the productivity of lands. Except in cases of undue interference on the part of Governments, you pay no other rent than the natural or just rent." On the other hand, it says to the consumers: "Do not complain of the prices. Prices do not arise from rent, but rent from prices. Prices spring from the Law of Supply and Demand." It says the same thing to workmen and capitalists: the interest on capital is determined by the competition of capital; the wages of workmen by the competition among workmen. The evils arising hence are irremediable. The best we can do is to let Nature take its course—laissez-faire; laissez-passer. The selfishness of the individual coincides in the long run with the interests of humanity.

Against all these ideas we need only make one simple observation. The differences in rent are one thing; rent is another thing. Rent is qualitative; the differences in rent are quantitative. The differences in lands may explain the differences in rents; what they do not explain is rent. Rodbertus destroyed the Ricardian theory by postulating an inaccessible and uniformly and entirely populated island, all the lands of which were of the same quality. If in this island there still existed the present titles and rights of property, rent would still exist also. "So long as this objection is not answered, I must believe that it cannot be answered," added Rodbertus. This objection of Rodbertus has never been answered. But people go on talking of the Law of Rent.

The truth is that rent does not arise from the different productivity of lands. It is a tribute of a feudal character, born with conquest, and preserved by laws and customs, but reformed also, in some countries, by laws and customs. Ricardo tells us that the science of Economics deals with the laws regulating the distribution of products in the three social classes of landowners,

capitalists, and workmen, under the names of rent, profits, and wages. There are no such laws. Each social class makes away with what it can, according to its moral sense, its ambition, and its strength; and the proof that there are no such laws is seen in the fact that at the last moment there has arisen a fourth social class, the bureaucracy, which, by means of the tax-gatherers, is about to carry off the greater part of the products of the soil and the subsoil—unless the other men, with the help of God, can make up their minds to prevent it.

As every student of Economics who does not close his eyes to reality must be confronted by the interference of politics (war and legislation) in the course of economic facts, there has arisen in Germany a younger school of economists, led by Franz Oppenheimer, who seeks to revive the methods of the English school, and to construct a pure Economics—that is to say, an Economics in which the political factor does not interfere. Oppenheimer is a very clever man, and his critical work is very valuable. But the task he has set for himself is a priori absurd. It consists of studying the mechanism of facts of will (as economic facts are) on the supposition that the will does not exist. In truth, the economic fact is impure; heterogeneous. It arises from the intermingling of men with Nature. The difference in the productivity of lands must be studied, I suppose, in Geology, and in the application of Geology to agriculture. Rent, on the other hand, is an historic fact, which cannot be the object of any natural science. The economic fact is a heterogeneous composition of history and Nature. And, as it is impure, Economics cannot be pure.

To be quite exact, there cannot be more Economics than those dictated by wisdom. Economic rules are only prudential norms. For example, it is better that all men should work than that they should rob one another; it is better that they should preserve some of the products of their work than that they should consume them all; it is better that they should employ their savings in instruments of new production than in sterile luxuries. These prudential norms cannot be promoted to the rank of scientific laws; but wisdom itself ought to moderate them, saying, for instance, that in some circumstances it is better for men to devote themselves to confiscating riches than to go on working for the rich; in others, it is better to spend than to be eaten up by stinginess; and in others it is better to sacrifice economic productivity to other and higher productivities.

As for the conflict between the upholders of peasant proprietorship and the advocates of agrarian collectivism, I have only to say that with the functional principle the question is superseded. The functional principle says that the land must be in the hands of those who can best exploit it. If you incorporate this principle in the laws of the land, and demand that the land of the first quality shall produce the grain corresponding to its quality, without putting more capital and labour into it than is necessary to secure the maximum yield, I do not care twopence whether you turn that land over to a large landowner or to peasant proprietors or to a socialist phalanstery.

Impose on all men legally the obligation of producing, and we shall see afterwards whether it suits better to set them exclusively to produce and consume things of the earth, or also to produce and consume things of the spirit. The functional principle is as good for a materialistic society as for a spiritual one. I, of course, prefer the spiritual. But the important thing is that land shall not be given unless on the condition that it is properly exploited, and that no right be granted to any man except by virtue of the function he fulfils. Neither property nor rent is a principle. The sole principle is that every man has the duty of paying to other men, to the earth, and to God, for what he receives from God, from the earth, and from other men. And this principle is a principle because it is not founded on history (or on war, or on law, or on economics), but on eternal and immutable morality.

The Innocents Abroad.

IV.

FROM the direction of a floating straw you can tell the way in which the river runs. In its contempt for trade modern English diplomacy only reflects a tendency common, more or less, to the whole of modern England. It represents a change of mental attitude in the nation itself. To appreciate this change at its full value, one has but to glance back at the social history of this country. So long ago as the tenth century we find Athelstan enacting that a merchant who had made three long sea voyages on his own account was entitled to the rank of "thegn," and eventually to that of an "eorl." The democratic spirit of Anglo-Saxon legislation survived even the establishment of the Norman aristocracy. In England heralds declared that gentility is not degraded by the exercise of commerce, and during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and earlier part of the eighteenth centuries mercantile employment was for younger sons of good families, who on the Continent would have been reckoned nobles and forbidden trade, the usual road to economic independence. The Livery Companies of the City of London—to say nothing of such mighty corporations as the Levant and the East India Companies—numbered many youths of gentle birth among their apprentices, and the same was the case in much humbler business spheres. As Gibbon, in speaking of his own ancestry, truly remarks, "Our most respectable families have not disdained the counting-house or even the shop." The nickname "Proud Preston," which still clings to that Lancashire town, is traced to the fact that in the seventeenth century many of its tradesmen were cadets of old county families, and claiming the right to bear arms, entered their pedigrees at the Heralds' Visitations. When Voltaire came to this country in 1726 his sharp eye noted this typical trait of English life, and in the dedicatory epistle to his tragedy "Zaire" he extols the respect in which merchants are held in England: an implicit reflection on the immeasurable void that separated the upper from the middle class in his own country under the *ancien régime*.*

By an odd coincidence, while France was advancing towards the English standard of values, England was retrogressing towards the French; and the movement on both sides was so rapid that the generation which witnessed the uprooting of caste prejudices from the soil of France beheld their triumph in England: "Your Prince and your Ministers," sneered Napoleon, "appear to wish to change altogether the spirit of the English, and to render you another nation, to make you ashamed of your shops and your trade which have made you what you are, and to sigh after nobility, titles, and crosses; in fact, to assimilate you with the French." The reaction was shrewdly observed, though the explanation lacks philosophical depth. The Prince and the Ministers doubtless had much to answer for, but to hold them answerable for English snobbishness is to credit them with quite disproportionate powers for evil. The profuse supply of titles and trinkets only fostered a prevailing demand; it did not create it. Such things are the symptoms, but seldom the causes, of national decline, and their chief merit is to accentuate the weakness from which they derive their force.

The true causes of this new shame for the shop, this tone and tendency of thought, which finds its supreme and most pernicious expression in our Foreign Office, must be sought in other than personal influences. Like all great currents, this also owes its existence not to any one source, but to the combination of many. Those which contributed most largely to it are, probably, the growth of our Indian Empire, the multiplication of our home administrative departments, the expansion of our army and navy. All these developments opened gradually so many fresh fields of employment and

* It was this void that gave its whole point to Molière's comedy, "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme."

emolument for the gentlemen who once flocked to the counter. It was inevitable that an occupation which gentlefolk ceased to favour should in time come to be considered unfit for gentlemen. There is a good illustration of the converse process in the vicissitudes of another profession. After the Reformation and the spoliation of the Church of England, the sacerdotal office lost its attraction for the higher classes, and simultaneously the esteem in which it was formerly held. During the seventeenth century, when few if any persons of birth took orders, the clergy were regarded as, on the whole, a plebeian class: hardly superior to menial servants. When the Church recovered its pecuniary attraction, in the eighteenth century, scions of the nobility and gentry found their way back to holy orders with the unerring instinct which guides a fly to a jam pot; and the clerical calling was restored to its pristine respectability. So great is the effect of fashion even with the service of God: how could it be less with the Government service?

The detachment of our Diplomacy from commercial interests marks a departure from realities which constitutes a melancholy and sure sign of decadence. It is a decadent spirit that dictates this scorn for the things which have made us what we are. It is a decadent spirit, too, that regards birth but not brains, and sets considerations of caste above considerations of competence. It is the spirit that characterises all nations in their decay: from India with her worthless Brahmins to Spain with her useless *hidalgos*. Our diplomatic body in the reign of George V has its counterpart in the diplomatic body of Spain in the reign of Philip II. Thus Diego de Mendoza, himself a contemporary diplomat, depicts his brethren of the craft:

O embajadores, puros majaderos,
Que si los reyes quieren engañar,
Comienzan por nosotros los primeros.
Nuestro mayor negocio es, no dañar,
Y jamas hacer cosa, ni dezilla,
Que no corramos riesgo de enseñar.

With the exception of the fourth line, all this applies to our own modern ambassadors and has so applied for a much longer time than most people imagine. When recent events in the Balkan Peninsula revealed the full measure of our diplomatists' debility, a critical but somewhat hasty leader-writer shouted: "There is a sad contrast between England's diplomacy in the Napoleonic period, when her representatives abounded with energy, were usually admirably informed, and knew what they were about, and these days of the twentieth century!" The contrast was singularly ill-chosen. For it was in that very period that Baron von Humboldt, brother of the great traveller, paid our Mr. Coleridge the following compliment at Rome: "I confess, Mr. Coleridge, I had my suspicions that you were here in a political capacity of some sort or other; but upon reflection I acquit you. For in Germany, and, I believe, elsewhere on the Continent, it is generally understood that the English Government, in order to divert the envy and jealousy of the world at the power, wealth, and ingenuity of your nation, makes a point, as a 'ruse de guerre,' of sending out none but fools of gentlemanly birth and connections as diplomatists to the courts abroad. An exception is, perhaps, sometimes made for a clever fellow, if sufficiently libertine and unprincipled."

Coleridge himself sums up his own opinion of the English diplomatists of the day in the one terse phrase, "dull coxcombs."

They were bad then: they have become worse since. Decadence, like growth, is progressive. What else can you expect from a system rooted in the vicious superstition of caste? A system which attaches far greater importance to family influence than to a life of honest toil? A system that seems to say to its victims: "Only be well-connected enough, mediocre enough, pliant enough, good enough at stooping and crawling, and you shall have your reward?" 'Tis in vain that genius or virtue or energy of character strive

against such a system. 'Tis in vain that all the time-dishonoured sophisms are employed to screen its flamboyant imbecility.

It is pretended, for example, that in these days of rapid postal, telegraphic and telephonic communications the business of an ambassador is rather to carry out the instructions he receives from headquarters than to exercise any initiative of his own, and, consequently, he requires no individual capacity of a high order. If that be so, why have permanent embassies at all? Why not carry on negotiations by letter, telegraph, or telephone direct from London, and only on exceptional occasions send an envoy on a special mission? Why spend so many thousands a year, when a few hundreds would suffice? Either diplomatists have a genuine reason for being, or they have not. If they have, the only sensible course is to get the best men we can find. If they have not, the sooner they cease to be the better.

V.

I have mentioned this plea, because it is based on the characteristic English fallacy that first-hand knowledge is unnecessary—the fallacy that lies at the root of all our administrative troubles. Our armies, our finances, our foreign policy, all our national interests suffer from this egregious fallacy. All sound minds should rise against it. John Bull should be made to get out of his head the insane idea that ignorance, which spells incompetence in private concerns, can possibly mean anything else in public. One of the many lessons which the present war should drive home to us is the imperative need for a radical change in the composition and organisation of the Foreign Office body: a change from the top downwards. We want for the conduct of our external as of our internal affairs men who have a strong affinity for facts, men who have a natural aptitude for realities, men who do not disdain trade, men of sense, men who know. Knowledge comes last in my list, because it presupposes and includes all the other qualifications.

Coleridge was a wise man, and like other wise men he has said many silly things. But, perhaps, the silliest of all was this: "The sure way to make a foolish ambassador is to bring him up to it. What can an English minister abroad really want but an honest and bold heart, a love of his country, and the ten commandments? Your art diplomatic is stuff."

Stuff, no doubt, and very sorry stuff, is the art diplomatic as practised by the common run of diplomatists: their insidious suavity of mien, their calculated ambiguity of speech, their dissimulation, their finesse, all these shallow, stale, and unprofitable tricks are the favourite stock-in-trade of weak minds and mean souls; "for it asketh a strong wit, and a strong heart, to know when to tell Truth, and to do it." The poorer name for this feeble and futile sort of art is not diplomacy, but pettifoggery. No wonder that statesmen of strong wit and strong heart, like Napoleon and Bismarck, had the profoundest contempt for it. Far different are the attributes of the true diplomatist. Definite, clearly thought-out political goals, accurate perception alike of one's own and of foreign interests, correct estimation of the forces of friends and enemies, prudent adaptation of means to ends—these are the terms of success in a game that is not a game of chance which any fool can play, but a game of skill which every man cannot play, which few men can play well. To these gifts the great masters of the game add a certain individual quality which is not a second sight, but the normal far-sight carried to abnormal lengths. Thanks to this endowment, they are able to combine many and remote moves with the accuracy which less gifted men exhibit in simpler and nearer combinations, and so to arrive at results that appear to the multitude miraculous. But they, like the others, must, on pain of failure, obey the first law of the game: an exact knowledge of the facts. This is the basis. No diplomatist who lacks this basic qualification can hope to do any good to his country or credit to himself by lying abroad.

The task of the people concerned should be to create conditions which will breed for us this virile and resourceful race of diplomatists—diplomatists who will shake themselves free from the outworn and fossilised methods of the service—business-like diplomatists, worthy representatives of a business community. The first step towards this consummation is the demolition of the social and fiscal walls which now make of the Foreign Office the hunting ground of a privileged few. In other words, the Diplomatic Service must be democratised; which does not mean in the least that any man should be permitted to get in, but that no man should be kept out on account of his want of a private fortune and of powerful friends. We must see that the gates of opportunity are slammed in no man's face simply because he lacks these tickets of admission. Every man must have his chance, and let merit be the sole judge. Every man has some kind of talent: one for planning, another for carrying out plans, one for fighting, another for bargaining, and so on through the gamut of human activities. That is the rich city which can avail itself of all its children's faculties, which knows how to draw a benefit from the abilities of the greatest number of citizens; and how to give each access to the particular kind of labour for which he is fitted. This is the only principle on which a State can live.

In France, under the old regime, this principle had been forgotten. Favouritism and nepotism, caste and corruption threatened that once flourishing Empire with death. The Revolution came, and with it a temporary return to realities. Napoleon boasted that he took the son of a peasant and made him a duke or a marshal when he found he had talents: "I made most of my generals out of mud," he says. "Wherever I found talent and courage I rewarded it. My principle was, a career open to talent, without asking if there were any quarterings of nobility to show." This is the principle which every British employer of labour instinctively acts upon in his household and factory and shop. Like all true principles, it needs no philosopher to recommend it: common sense suffices. Let the common sense of the British democracy insist upon its application to the Diplomatic Service.

Needless to say that such a change cannot be brought about without agitation. The oligarchy of England, like every other oligarchy, ancient or modern, do not wish that any person except one of themselves should be eligible for any important position. They have always and everywhere opposed every effort that militates against their privileges and interests. They will oppose this effort the more vigorously because the Diplomatic Service is the last of their Governmental preserves. With their will, birth and not capacity should regulate the choice. The opposition, in the absence of other weapons, will take the familiar form of argument, or of what passes for such. Excuses will be found in abundance. Weighty reasons will be produced to demonstrate that the change suggested is either undesirable or impracticable, or both. This exercise in dust-throwing has already begun:

"If you wish for a more democratic system," Lord Robert Cecil told the House of Commons some months ago, "you must pay diplomatists more; and in these days of economy, etc., etc."

The truest economy for a State, as for an individual, my Lord, is to save in superfluities and spend on necessities; and a competent diplomatic service is a national necessity. Who can compute, even in mere cash, what the diplomatic blunders of his servants have cost John Bull during this war, let alone all the years that went before? So much for the argument of economy.

Less sensible persons than Lord Robert prattle about "manners." I ask, Is a private income of several hundreds a year a guarantee of the possession of good manners, or the absence of such an income evidence of the want of them? To go further, who that has mixed with our diplomatists will have the temerity to affirm

that, as a class, they have good manners? There are nice men among them as there are everywhere; but there also are—well, men who might be nicer. Even if it were the case that every man who enters the Foreign Office service is a pattern of good manners, and that none of those who are prevented by lack of funds and friends from entering can have equally good manners, what then? Manners maketh man; but other qualities, far more substantial than manners, go to make a statesman. Is it not the height of fatuity to value the frill more than the cutlet?

Be it admitted by all means that dull coxcombs and befrilled fops have their uses (they must, else God would not have created them): find them, in the name of common sense, the employment in which they can be useful, or, at least, in which they cannot be harmful. The Romans, I remember reading in history, had a great veneration for geese—they kept them in the Capitol at the public expense; but, to echo the witty Marquis of Halifax, I do not remember that those geese were made Consuls.

VERAX.

Our Un-idea'd Press.

II.

A FEW weeks ago there appeared simultaneously in Pastiche and in "Punch" parodies of the "Spectator." In each case the heart of the joke was the shameless manner in which the "Spectator" avoided committing itself upon any current topic. There can be no question of collusion: the two parodists had clearly no political aims in common. No, it needs must be true; the "Spectator" has no ideas!

Let us again imagine our hypothetical statesman, say, Mr. Asquith, approaching the weekly papers in search of solutions of the problems before him. A recent issue of the "Spectator" is in his hands. Passing by (perhaps not without a smile) the string of pious ejaculations—"God speed," "Heaven grant"—which so often represent its comments on affairs, his eye will be arrested by an article headed "The 'Credo' of a Free Trader," and initialled by the editor Mr. J. St. Loe Strachey himself. It is well known, of course, that the "Spectator," alone among the Tory papers, has always been a supporter of a Free Trade policy. Mr. Asquith, then, may feel that here Mr. Strachey will review the "New Protection," weigh its value against what is at stake, utter a considered judgment, and, if new ground is to be broken, set out at least one clear proposal.

Mr. Asquith begins to read.

The article is headed with a quotation from one of Mr. Austen Chamberlain's recent speeches in the Commons. This gentleman, speaking particularly of tariffs, said that "he was not at a time like this or in the future going to consider himself bound to the exact measures which he advocated before the war." In essence this means that Mr. Chamberlain is prepared, like his father before him, to turn his fiscal coat if he thinks this expedient. These words, says Mr. Strachey, "will raise Mr. Chamberlain's reputation for sanity, moderation and fairness even higher than it was before. . . . When a Tariff Reform makes admissions so freely and so generously, it would be an act of meanness for a Free Trader, who has been thinking on similar lines, not to make a similar acknowledgment." The reader will observe from this that Mr. Strachey, like the good sportsman he is, means to play the game as we played it beneath the elms at the dear old school.

Mr. Strachey goes on to confess that he now sees the need of certain essential modifications in his old opinions. There is one consideration to which he always attached importance, but, as he now sees, not importance enough. It is the "State of Siege" argument. Our economics must find us prepared for war as for peace. We must place "the nation in a posture

of economic as well as of military and naval defence." (Seconds out of the ring, gentlemen; a clean fight, and may the best man win!)

A nation like our own, which will always have to be fed partly from abroad, must obviously keep not only the command of the sea in the military sense, but the command of the carrying trade. This means that we cannot leave the production and ownership of the mercantile marine purely to chance.

There are also certain other industries whereof "the State should see to it" that we hold the producing plant. This, then, is the argument which Mr. Strachey formerly under-estimated; but, he warns us, not to run it to death. With him we give up the pursuit here, and follow him into a few forecasts of the form Protection may take.

The ideal would, of course, be, Free Trade within the Empire. Whether this is obtainable remains to be seen.

By whom it remains to be seen is not stated. A little later Mr. Strachey says that he sees "no reason why certain relaxations from this tariff for revenue may not be given to our own [i.e., England's] flesh and blood, and also in appropriate proportion to our Allies."

Are we not over-running ourselves in our new pursuit? Indeed, we nearly were in at a death; in fact, two deaths. So we must turn from considering what system of tariffs we are to have, and see first why Mr. Strachey, the Free Trader, wants them at all. These are the reasons, as Mr. Asquith will read:

(i) "I still hold in the abstract as firmly as before" that a tariff is "a wasteful way of raising revenue," whereas direct taxation "is by far the best method of raising revenue." BUT "mankind will not bear more than a certain proportion of direct taxation!" (Tax me, tax my dog, say they.) THEREFORE:

To liquidate the charges of the war, we shall have to follow the example of all other States and make use of a general tariff. In no other way shall we be able to draw sufficient revenue for the needs of the Exchequer.

(ii) "And here comes in the essential part of my contention." The abolition of Free Trade, it may be said, might ruin our economic position. BUT,

Mankind are naturally so lazy and so inclined to be demoralised by ease and advantage that things in the workaday world do not shape themselves as they ought. . . . What the British consumer gained through Free Trade he threw away by his failing to attend to the teachings of science, by his thriftlessness, by his use of old machinery and antiquated methods."

THEREFORE, Free Trade tends to demoralise us.

It will occur to Mr. Asquith that, on this reasoning, we ought to have let von Kluck take Paris, because then we should have fought so bravely to turn him out again. And at this point we may imagine Mr. Asquith, having reached the end of the article, to put down the "Spectator" and regret the waste of precious time in reading it. He has learned nothing from Mr. Strachey.

Let us, however, permit ourselves one or two comments on Mr. Strachey's incredible "Credo."

First, it did not follow from Mr. Chamberlain's offer to turn his coat (without his so doing) that his opponent, Mr. Strachey, need have turned his. To those of us who have regarded Free Trade and Tariff Reform as just the two sides of a manufacturers' quarrel, this mutual tenderness of the two protagonists smells not so much of "freedom and generosity" as of collusion: let us compromise, and call it simply Trust. And what are we to think of Mr. Strachey's sudden confession that he, who would certainly claim not to have been surprised by the outbreak of hostilities, had never properly considered his policy in the light of war?

But, after all, the "New Protection" is intended not so much for war-time as for the peace which is to follow it. By Mr. Strachey's own showing in this article, nothing could be better for England's prosperity in the period of peace than its Free Trade. What is wrong with Free Trade England, according to Mr. Strachey,

is that it knows when it is well off. Hats off, gentlemen! we exclaim spectatorially, this is psychology; and as such it should be cured; an overwhelming campaign of "moral uplift," such as Mr. Strachey loves, would make us all so heartily miserable that we should go to work simply to forget how happy we were.

We have, says Mr. Strachey, to "liquidate the charges of the war"—and the interest on them—but there must not be too much direct taxation because "for good or evil, mankind will not bear more than a certain proportion of direct taxation." It seems almost a pity that mankind, which is to suffer Protection for its sins, is not to be made to bear direct taxation, which "is by far the best method of raising revenue"; it looks like a kink in the treatment. Indeed, we might say that mankind must learn to grin and bear it, did we not remember that Mr. Strachey has just shown us that grinning is the very vice which has destroyed our national energy. Indirect taxation, then, is to be introduced, in the shape of tariffs. What will happen? What always happens? What is happening now? The only consumers who pay the indirect taxes are those who cannot pass them on to someone else. We might even say that the reason why they are called "indirect" is because, while aimed at the rich, they hit the poor—were it not that the same thing happens in the case of "direct" taxation.

We need say no more of the workings of Mr. Strachey's new love in peace-time, either before or after the war. Let us rather consider his remarks on the economics of a "state of siege" like the present. "The State must see to it that we have in existence" the plant whereby liquid fuel, munitions, dye-stuffs, chemicals and other articles essential to our key industries can be manufactured inside the country. But why does that persuade Mr. Strachey that we must have Protection? His argument presumably is that unless foreign competition is removed, home manufacturers will not be able to dart in and develop these industries. But what of the terrible laziness and demoralisation that Mr. Strachey has shown to be concomitant with "ease and advantage"? Is not a profiteer a man and a brother? If you prick him, does he not bleed? if you tickle him, does he not laugh? if he poisons us, do we not die? Granted that he has all and more than our virtues; has he not also our national vices? Why, what else but a doubt of the perfect nature of the profiteer can be meant by this of Mr. Strachey's:

We cannot leave the production and ownership of the mercantile marine purely to chance.

In whose hands, then, must we leave it?—No answer from Mr. Strachey.

How could we prevent other industries, protected against German competition as well as our mercantile marine is now, from becoming equally demoralised?—Again, no answer from Mr. Strachey.

And this is Mr. Strachey's credo; we feel that we owe it to our sanity to remain heretics. Instead, we may offer him this from the columns of THE NEW AGE:

"Protect by all means; but nationalise the industries you protect." CHARLES BROOKFARMER.

PASTICHE'S ADVICE TO THE NATION.

Don't wait for news till AFTER the event!—READ THE NORTHCLIFFE PRESS!!!

THE SCARLET SOJOURNALIST.

(With Apologies to Baroness Orczy.)

He's sojourned here,
He's sojourned there,
Lord Northcliffe's sojourned everywhere!
Is it Atlantis?—
Or no man knows where?—
"Some years ago I sojourned there!"

C. E. B.

Notes on Economic Terms.

THE WAGE SYSTEM. The first condition of the wage-system is that there shall be propertyless men—men, that is, with no access to the tools of production. This state is brought about by divers means in various times and places. In native communities our exploiting governors contrive it by robbing natives of their land or herds or trees, or, alternatively, by requiring payment in specie that can only be obtained by wage-labour. In civilised countries the method is better concealed. Usually, however, the distinguishing feature is the enclosure of the common lands. Thus shut out of the use of the necessary tools of production, the propertyless man, now become proletarian, must go and ask an alms. But charity without work is demoralising, so they must work. Upon what? Upon and with the tools belonging to the more fortunate few who have retained their property. But there are so many of the workers—who among them shall find an owner to hire them? Why, the cheapest—those, in fact, who can shift on least wages. Wages thus tend to a minimum owing to the numbers of the proletariat. What, however, if they combine in unions and by all co-operating with each and each with all, fix a minimum price for their labour? Why, even then the resources of capitalist civilisation are not exhausted. If English workmen, let us say, can no longer be got cheap, foreign workmen of a cheap pattern can be imported. But public opinion will not allow much of this alien importation. Very well, Mahomet will go to the mountain. In other words, capitalist tools are sent where cheap labour abounds; and this is called foreign investment.

SOCIAL REFORM. The impulses of Social Reform are two: Humanitarian-commercial and commercial-humanitarian. In the first the humanitarian motive is predominant; in the second the commercial motive is predominant.

(a) The first includes every provision made for wage-slaves who break down in health, become too old to work, or are unable to command a wage sufficient to support them. The humanitarian motive in it is the distress of society at the spectacle of the suffering poor. The commercial motive in it is the desire of capitalists to transfer the cost of keeping their useless wage-slaves from themselves to society in general. Better charity out of the rates, they say, than out of our pockets exclusively!

(b) The second includes all the forms of popular education. Its prime object is commercial, being to catch wage-slaves young and to dwarf and train them to become skilled yet docile labourers. The secondary motive is the desire of society to become intelligent.

WAGE AND CHATTEL-SLAVERY. An outcry was raised when we first called the proletariat wage-slaves and their condition one of wage-slavery. On the contrary, the wage-slaves profess to be free men, and regard their state as a great advance upon chattel-slavery or serfdom. But let us note that it was not by their exertions that the change from chatteldom to wage-dom was brought about. If, therefore, it was progress for them, the motive was not theirs, nor do they deserve any credit for it. As for the advantages, let us see. In general, commercial men have discovered that for some forms of tool-labour hiring is cheaper than purchase. For instance, many printers prefer hiring their expensive type-setting machines to buying them outright. By this means, and for a comparatively small additional cost, they have the use of the machines without the real responsibility. Even amongst the old slave communities the axiom prevailed that it is cheaper to buy than to breed. This meant that it was less trouble and expense for a slave-owner to buy slaves already prepared for the market than to prepare them himself. A step further, and we are at the point in relation to men

that printers are in relation to machines. The axiom, in short, of commercialism is that it is cheaper to hire labour than to own it. Why? For two reasons: In the first place, a man who owns labour and can hire no other is tied down to the skill his slaves happen to possess. He has not the free choice that an open market for labour gives him. And, in the second place, the privileges that were demanded by slaves grew to be excessive: they actually expected to be reared and educated, to have leisure while they were working, and provision made for illness and old age, as if they were human! The trouble alone was great, and the cost was terrible. How much better it would be to set the slaves at liberty and to throw upon themselves the burden of breeding, provision for sickness, and so on. Then the employers would have only their working years to consider. They could go into the proletariat quarters and select only the fit, leaving the unfit to die or to become fit at the expense of the rest. Is it not obvious from this consideration that if the substitution of wage-slavery for chattel-slavery, hiring for owning, was one step forward for labour, it was at least two for capital? And the proof is that capital has immensely increased its wealth, while the wages of labour are much the same as they were when labourers were chattels.

WAGES. Wages are paid in money; but money is worth only what it can buy. In other words, money wages may vary in value even while their nominal value remains the same. Two years ago a money-wage of a sovereign could purchase 80 loaves. To-day it purchases only about 45 loaves. If nominal wages are to-day what they were two years ago, their real value is only a little more than half what it was. Nominal wages are fixed by the Supply and Demand of labourers. Their amount thus has no relation with the prices of goods, which are fixed by the Supply and Demand of goods. If prices fixed wages, the nominal amount of wages would rise with the price of goods. But they obviously do not. No, wages, being the price of labourers, their amount is determined by the supply and demand of labourers. Why are wages comparatively high during the war? Because labourers available for ordinary industry are few. Why will wages be low after the war? Because labourers will be in numbers far exceeding the demand. It might be thought that legislation or sentiment could fix the price of labourers. But only the power that holds a monopoly of any commodity can fix its price. If, for example, the Imperial Tobacco Trust had a complete monopoly of tobacco in this country (as it has very nearly), and could forbid any other company to import tobacco, the Trust could fix the price of tobacco as it pleased; and we may be sure that it would charge to the last farthing what we could pay for it. Being as yet, however, an incomplete monopoly, the Trust cannot fix prices. Now, as neither sentiment nor Parliament has a monopoly of labourers, cannot compel labourers to refuse lower wages, cannot make employers pay high wages, and cannot forbid the importation of labourers or (what is the same thing) the exportation of capital, neither sentiment nor Parliament can fix wages. The only method of fixing wages is to obtain a monopoly of labourers; and the only means of obtaining a monopoly of labourers is to create a national trade union which is blackleg-proof. In a foregoing note it was said that wages are much the same to-day as they were in the days of chattel-slavery. The proof is obvious. Somehow or other chattel-slaves got food, shelter, and clothing sufficient to keep them fit for work and to enable them to reproduce and multiply themselves. The slave-population of Greece actually waxed fat and kicked. Some slaves saved and bought their freedom. Well, to-day, somehow or other, wage-slaves do no more than obtain food, clothing, and shelter sufficient to keep them fit for work (and nothing else), and to enable them to reproduce and multiply themselves. Out of their wages, however, they can save no more than chattel-slaves could. In short, "wages" are much the same as the "keep" of serfs.

Drama.

By John Francis Hope.

WHEN Madame Roland asked Liberty what sins were committed in its name, the apostles of Liberty straightway knocked off Madame Roland's head. It was a silly question to ask, and the penalty was perhaps excessive; but with that precedent to remind me of the danger of asking questions, I shall not address interrogations to Unity; I shall enumerate the sins. Before the war, Shaw's "Getting Married" was a sin committed in the name of Unity; most of Granville Barker's productions were equally hateful to God; since the war, Mr. Walter Hackett has tried to commend "The Barton Mystery" to the shade of Sophocles by preserving the unity of time and place, and now "The Riddle," recently produced at the New Theatre, tries to commend itself to Mr. Walter Hackett. "The action of the play takes place in the drawing-room of the Slieve Ard Hotel, Ardcastle, Co. Down, Ireland, and is comprised within the space of eight hours." Mr. Walter Hackett will notice with pride that two men were required to "comprise" the action of "The Riddle" within the space of eight hours; and Messrs. Anthony Wharton and Morley Roberts will notice with regret that their "unitarianism" has not produced so entertaining a person as the beatific Beverley.

This is to be regretted, for the only dramatic value of the unity of time and place is that attention can be concentrated on the diversity of persons. The dramatic moment should be critical of character—but I must not talk of technique. The point that I want to make is that the authors of "The Riddle" are so obsessed with the idea of unity that they are really as bad as Buddhists. "All is one," may be an admirable doctrine for a philosopher; but a dramatist should try to show that at least one is all. It may be true that the civilising function of the lettered arts is to show the essential likeness of human nature under all disguises; but without the presentation of difference there can be no demonstration of similarity. For example, the Irish and the English are supposed to be, and apparently are, unlike each other (chorus in unison, "Thank God"); and we do not expect a play of which the scene is Ireland to be a replica of the theatrical successes of Sir Charles Wyndham. Not even the fact that Ireland is at present under martial law can make us believe that its hotel life reproduces the situations of the London stage of ten years ago. Ireland may be behind the times, but not so far as that.

The authors do their best to make the situation credible; for example, the adventuress borrows "fivers" or "tenners," but an adventuress in a London hotel would borrow nothing under a hundred pounds, and that she would probably win by cheating at cards. The requests of Mrs. Lytton have the rustic quality of modesty; they reveal the fact that it is cheaper to live in Ireland than in London, and also that Mrs. Lytton is a tyro in "tapping." This is very important, for it implies that she is not so far committed to what (with reminiscences of "Tiger's Cub") she calls "the lone wolf's trail" as to be beyond redemption. Mrs. Lytton has the makings or the marrings of a good woman in her, I am not quite sure which; and she must be saved. Back we come to unity; salvation is the same everywhere, in Ireland as in England, and perhaps the most reassuring revelation of Irish hotel life is that there, as here, the task of salvation is committed to the Senior Bar. Our greater reverence for the Law sometimes induces us to call in even the Bench for this pur-

pcse; but as Mrs. Lytton was only a beginner, her case fell within the competence of the Senior Bar.

The Senior Bar had good reason for its interference. So long as the lone wolf only borrowed money from scientists, and such trash, the K.C. need only study Bradshaw and raise his eyebrows and think the action lupine. But when the K.C.'s god-daughter began to weep because the adventuress was making love to her betrothed, something had to be done. The weeping prevented the god-daughter from playing the piano to the K.C., and the necessity of suspecting the adventuress became apparent. She must be living under a false name if she borrowed money and flirted; the problem was, how to discover her real name. Enter a blackmailer with a letter addressed to Mrs. Lytton, places it on the table and retires. A clue! The K.C. holds the letter to the light, sees that it contains another envelope, and bribes the blackmailer to leave the letter in its original envelope addressed in the lady's real name, which, by the way, is that of a woman who had been tried and acquitted for poisoning her husband. The adventuress then comes in to confirm the suspicion of the K.C. that she is the person to whom the letter is addressed; she does so in the most obliging way, by the very ostentation with which she repudiates any knowledge of this person's identity. Being now quite certain of her identity, the K.C. proceeds to exposure. For this purpose, he requires very wet weather (Ireland, I believe, has a heavier rainfall than England, if that be possible), an audience, a pipe, about fifteen minutes, a good memory, and an opportunity. The audience is provided by the guests, who assemble in the drawing-room because of the wet weather provided by the authors, the opportunity is provided by the request of one of them that he shall tell them a story; and the rest is tedium tempered by tobacco. He tells the story of the Leadbetter case, in which he had taken great interest; and by suggesting that Mrs. Leadbetter had poisoned her dog before she poisoned her husband he gives Miss Irene Vanbrugh her chance of an hysterical outburst. She does it extremely well, as she always did; but it is a shame to throw away her gifts on such trumpery. An actress of her quality ought to have something better to do than to betray her identity to a most tedious old bore of the Senior Bar; and if I had my way I would fine the authors all their royalties for this misuse of the talents of our finest actress. "Riddle," indeed! Mrs. Lytton is as full of holes as a colander, and only the art of Miss Vanbrugh makes her presentable.

Having confessed to the satisfaction of the K.C., the god-child, and the blackmailer (the others had no suspicions to be confirmed, and remained unsuspecting), the next step, of course, is repentance. Then it is discovered that the circumstantial evidence leads to a false conclusion; she had poisoned the dog to save it from suffering, but her husband had accidentally poisoned himself with the same poison. A pathetic story of an unhappy marriage converts the K.C. into a friend; she must give up his god-child's betrothed, much as she loved him for his resemblance to her lover, and call on the K.C. in London. He will help her back to the path from which she has strayed, but not too far; instead of borrowing "fivers" from comparative strangers in hotels, apparently the K.C. intends to provide her with an income. If that is so, the adventuress wins; and the last act with its elaborate farewells, the exhortations of youthful innocence to middle-aged experience to return to the fold of good women, who do not flirt or borrow money, should be played for its comedic effect. Apparently, the authors want us to believe that Mrs. Lytton is a brand plucked from the burning, and the scene is played with great solemnity. Innocence kisses experience, experience promises to try to become like innocence, the young man returns to his betrothed; while the adventuress travels in the K.C.'s car, at his invitation, and will call upon him in London. Salvation has no joyful sound.

Readers and Writers.

THE idea has probably struck us all at one time or another to attempt to read the New Testament as if it had made its first appearance yesterday. It is some months ago now that I took up a khaki-bound edition, specially prepared for soldiers, with the intention of treating it as if it were just sent in for review. A few verses and I had lost my critical standard, my modern judgment, my impartial mind; they had all completely deserted me; and I was left with a document of which my judgment was traditional or nothing. It is impossible, I believe, to read the Bible with a fresh mind, for we have not a fresh mind to bring to it. We can no more read the Testaments as if we had never heard anything about them than we can look at ourselves as if we were newly introduced. And when we attempt the task we find that we cannot make head or tail of the narrative. That, at any rate, is my experience; and Mr. Shaw's experiment in his Preface to "Androcles and the Lion" (Constable, 4s. 6d. net) only confirms my opinion by its ludicrous failure. For the industry, almost Prussian in its dull pertinacity, of Mr. Shaw's effort to extract a coherent and rational story out of the Gospels I have what must, I suppose, be called admiration. It is a feat of human endurance. But as for serving any purpose beyond exhibiting Mr. Shaw as a laborious trifler I can see no use in it whatever.

* * *

It is well known that everybody can find in the Bible what he looks for. Such a rag-bag as both Testaments are of fragments of history, fragments of mysticism, fragments of ethics, fragments of symbology, of poetry, of religion, of politics and of personal biography, we need not wonder that everybody can find a scrap in them to suit him. When it comes, however, to making a pattern of the whole, and to piecing the fragments of the jigsaw puzzle to form a single picture, nobody has ever succeeded in it and nobody ever will. It would be just as easy to construct a story out of the chance collection of the British Museum as to construct a story out of the New Testament; for the New Testament is a museum, and the principles which governed its collection were quite as fortuitous as those that govern the collection of any other museum. What happens when anybody sets about the impossible task, is, in the first place, an arbitrary selection of a point of view; and, in the second place, an arbitrary rejection or interpretation of everything that does not fit into it. Thus one man will set out with the intention of proving the hero of the Gospels to have been a Dionysian, let us say. There are plenty of texts to support his view, and by a judicious parallelism of passages between the Bible and the Dionysian writers he can appear to establish his case. But only by tacitly suppressing as many equally authentic texts that bear a precisely contrary meaning. Another man, again, will wish to show that Jesus was first and foremost a Jewish religious reformer. Still another represents Him as a man of sorrows, while a different school holds Him to have been a child of joy. And each of these views is firmly based upon a selection of texts—and upon the suppression of the rest. Mr. Shaw is no exception to the hitherto unbroken rule of procedure in this matter. Setting out with the fixed intention of reading the Gospels impartially, he finds himself (or we find him) first selecting his point of view and next selecting or rejecting among the texts to fit it. What his selected point of view is his readers might have guessed before ever they saw it set to work. It is that Jesus was an early forerunner of the modern founder of the Fabian Society—a man, that is, like Mr. Shaw himself in his virtues, but with weaknesses which his successful disciple has been too wise to share. The founder of Christianity, in short, turns out to have been Mr. Shaw in an earlier imperfect incarnation, and His doctrine to have been an intelligent anticipation of Fabianism. All this, as I say, was to be expected from Mr.

Shaw's engagement in the impossible task of making a unity of the New Testament. It was doubly to be expected from Mr. Shaw's obstinate obsession that the meaning of history is Fabianism.

What is new in Mr. Shaw's "Preface" is not his view of the New Testament, but the evidence of his fear of Mr. G. K. Chesterton. This comes out vividly in several passages that I shall quote and in a philosophic admission that made me open my eyes. The quotations are as follows:

We have always had a curious feeling that, though we crucified Christ on a stick, He somehow managed to get hold of the right end of it.

Paul's natural hatred of the Teacher for whom Sin and Death had no terrors turned into a wild personal worship of Him which has the gentleness of a beautiful thing seen in a false light.

... will rise again in golden beauty amidst a great burst of sunshine and bird-music.

These passages, I venture to say, are not Mr. Shaw, but Mr. Shaw writing to conciliate Mr. Chesterton. And the observation is supported by the strange doctrine which Mr. Shaw has borrowed from Mr. Chesterton concerning the subjectivity of truth, and hence of the credibility of miracles. Some years ago a debate took place between these two friendly parties in which the point turned upon the credibility of the miracle of the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius. Mr. Chesterton contended that the evidence for the fact of the miracle was sufficient for belief; and Mr. Shaw, I remember, not only denied that it was sufficient, but challenged Mr. Chesterton to assert that the miracle was a fact. Since that day a change appears to have taken place, for Mr. Shaw now agrees that "there is as much evidence that the miracles occurred as that the battle of Waterloo occurred." It is enough to say upon this point that nobody can believe it, and that nobody does. The less serious implication is that Mr. Shaw has succumbed to Mr. Chesterton; and the more serious implication is that he has become a romantic. If, as he now says, belief is not dependent upon evidence and reason, but upon fashion and the prevailing prejudices, then all that can be asserted of any man's belief is that the only certain truth about it is that he believes it. Its truth or falsity is another thing altogether; and a thing apparently which there is no means of settling. Whether, for example, the blood of St. Januarius liquefies annually or whether the battle of Waterloo was ever fought you will believe or not believe according to the prevailing fashions. Under the influence of the Catholic Church you will believe the one or as good evidence and with as good reason as, under the influence of historical research, you will believe the other. Both are equally matters of taste, and hence of belief or of disbelief according to the accepted standards of the day. To admit such "reasoning" is, however, to fly in the face of reason which, while distinguishing between beliefs founded upon fashions and beliefs founded upon fact, denies that the same class of facts support the miracle as support the reality of Waterloo. We can never have established for us by the same means that the fact of Waterloo is established for us, the fact of the St. Januarius miracle; and the means by which Waterloo is established are the very means by which St. Januarius is disestablished. Over and above this objection there is the objection that if we abandon the belief in the objectivity of truth, leaving nothing but subjective truth or truth determined by our will and no longer by our intellect, not only has objective truth no meaning, but the subjective truth that is left has no value. What is it to us that men should give us a catalogue of their beliefs if their beliefs are professedly idiosyncrasies, exempt even from the claim to be based upon truths for everybody? It would require a psychopathic doctor to become interested in such autobiographies, and their value would then be as symptoms of a state of mind rather than as affirmations of a state of reality. In conceding to Mr. Chesterton's Catholicism the equal value of the evi-

dence for miracles and for Waterloo Mr. Shaw has really sold the pass of truth. He has become an out-and-out romantic to whom the criterion of truth is the intensity of conviction. Mr. Shaw has been in strange company, but I never expected to see him among the romantics.

R. H. C.

A Modern Document.

Edited by Herbert Lawrence.

V.—From Acton Reed.

DEAR MR. LAWRENCE,—I feel in the embarrassing position of the man who has to write his own testimonial; the favour I want being one of acquittal in your eyes. Knowing the kind of criticisms most people would pass on them I fear lest some of my disclosures may dispose you, even with all your understanding, to come to undeserved judgments about me. It does not really do to be extraordinary in this world. Any variation from type is viewed over the left. You must either be a poseur or an unclean spirit. In my previous letters I must have lavished evidence for both charges; and it is therefore to both charges that I now wish to reply by giving you another impression of myself. While the former picture, you understand, is true, it is the picture of me from an inward angle; it is by no means the same as the picture of me from without. For, after all, however extraordinary I am when compared with other people, at least I am on the same planet and must needs therefore have points of contact with them as well as with earthly circumstances and earthly occupations. Ginger is hot in my mouth also! Of persons for instance. I take a pleasure and find a pleasure in witty conversation among and with them. I mean in general that you must not imagine me hobnailing every occasion of social gaiety. Far from it. I think people would tell you that I am gay enough when the conversation itself is gay. But what I own I cannot endure is serious discussion. People have two possible sides for me—interest and entertainment. Of the former, as you will have gathered from my letters, I have found a very lenten supply; but of the latter I have found sufficient to conclude that the aspect of people with which I get on best is what they would call their superficialities. The point in the conversation at which I lose contact with them is just when they become what they call serious, but what I cannot help calling superficial. What I want, I suppose, is a profounder seriousness. And yet that does not describe the missing element. I wonder what it is. I know I should recognise it in an instant if I heard it. A tone of voice, one word even, might mark its existence for me; or even a look might. But whatever the sign, that I should never miss it or have ever passed it over I am certain. This same negative sensibility that perceives this something missing (let me call it) is furnished, in my mind, with a patrol of scouts—antennæ which are for ever searching for the forage their secret commander wants. At the sound of a new voice out they jump. I am aware of them at work; running and turning over the words that people say to discover whether the object of their quest is contained in them, and always I feel them turn away with the disappointed comment—this is not what we are looking for: this is not what we want—and at the same time I am conscious that somehow I have lost contact with my company. The worst of it is I feel, too, that if only this missing element could be discovered I should discover with it the key to myself. For exactly as I seek myself and yet do not know where to look, so I seek this unknown sign. They are, at any rate, very near one another. All this must sound very foolish to you; it is all very real to me nevertheless. But what in particular I wished to assure you was that I have at least some points of contact with other people, that I get on quite well with certain aspects of them (thank them!) and that in a group which sits at the receipt of repartee and wit and even cynicism (for cynicism

after all is only humour, is it not?), believe me I am always as gay as anyone. But this, you may say, is sheer hedonism. The world is to be my entertainment. But you must not imagine that I think only of myself and my troubles. Accept my word that it is not so. I feel family and friendly ties as much as most people. I am never out of touch, for instance, with my sisters and brothers, to say nothing of a county of cousins, and they would never tell you, I think, that I am indifferent to their affairs or inconsiderate when considering them. To continue my catalogue—I love the country. I really love it. You might think that the country would be the worst place in the world for me, since the solitude and silence would provide no retreat from my thoughts. But this again is not at all my experience. For me the sky and earth are an escape from myself, and a rest for my mind; under their influence I almost forget my troubles and myself as well. But this effect I must explain belongs to English country only; it is not distilled in the cinema scenery of Switzerland or from the kaleidospectacles of the East. These are an active exercise for the mind; what I want is the rest so artlessly provided by English hills, streams and woods, and by the flowers that grow in cottage gardens, in lanes and under hedges. Do you know anything more divine in this world than a white violet? I love moors, too—brown and purple over the sea—and grass, just plain honest grass. All the perfumes of Arabia have not so sweet a scent for me as grass in the rain of summer. But I shall be getting lost in the country! Already I am miles away from what I set out next to say, namely, that I have a natural love not only for the country but for a country life. Nearly everything that can be done outdoors I like. I am always pleased to be swimming or boating or climbing or walking or, of course, riding. Many and many are the bad hours I have put to flight on horseback! With the exception of tennis I do not care much for games. Hockey may be all right if you want a fight; and let who will play golf. Then let me take you indoors and show you that I have other mitigations besides those of the elements, passive pleasures as well as active. Here my greatest enjoyment is in listening to music. As a matter of fact I find music and the country and religion very similar in effect. While all are pleasing as influences none can cure. They calm and dignify and provide a rest for the mind, but that is all. Reading, on the other hand, I do not find a rest but a change. Perhaps I have been unfortunate in my books, for here once more I am aware of that missing element to which I have already referred. Though, therefore, reading is my frequent pastime it is never an unqualified delight, for it leaves me with the feeling that a vital part of me is being left unexercised. A strange fancy of mine is for work. Of what kind it does not seem very much to matter. I like work for work's sake. Anything from indexing to a very original version of the Greek Testament keeps me occupied for hours. Sometimes I try to write, but I have nothing to say that would interest anyone, and to write for one's own eyes alone is not a sufficient stimulus. Nevertheless, I have drowned many a miserable hour in ink. On the whole, I am inclined to believe that the solution to my problem will come, if at all, through my mind and not through circumstances. However, I have perhaps said enough to prove my case and procure my acquittal. Surely one who can be as gay on occasion as a jester and content with a blade of grass can be neither morose nor hard to please. And even now I have not mentioned my secret store of resources, invented for the express purpose of diverting my thoughts from myself. Mine is the sort of trouble that in its need creates resources. It sharpens my wits while it strengthens my resolution not to be overcome. I might say of this stumbling-block of mine that it has been also a stepping-stone to more fortitude than I thought I should ever possess. And even should the apprehended day arrive when my trouble is greater than I can bear I shall still have fought a better fight

than had I not fought at all. Ah, here comes a letter from you. How well timed, for I was becoming unreadable, was I not?—Shall I, you ask me, have time before leaving England to write any more letters to you? You would like to hear my views on men, women, religion and so on. Men and women! The Alpha and Omega! But really, let me thank you, for I know your request is designedly medicinal. Well, I am an obliging patient, ready to contribute anything to my improvement. As for time!—I must say hospitals move in a procrastinating way their wonders to perform! I have eaten my farewell dinners so often that I am now embarrassed to meet my hosts. However, we are all to be ready to leave at the end of next week. But the week before last it was last week and last week it was this week: so that next week may well be next month if not next year. If therefore I can arrange my thoughts on any of such subjects as you mention you shall have them.—Yours sincerely, ACTON REED.

The Disposal of Disabled Soldiers.

A FEW SUGGESTIONS TOWARDS THE SOLUTION OF THIS PROBLEM, ADDRESSED TO THE GOVERNING CLASS.

By W. Mears.

THE disposal of the human débris created by the war is a question that demands the serious attention of the best minds in this country. Unfortunately, the whole matter has been obscured by a sentimental agitation carried on by an irresponsible baronet, assisted by the disloyal section of the Press. It is most regrettable that such an agitation should be initiated by a member of the one class that has shown no disposition to hamper the successful prosecution of the war by selfish concern for personal interests. If the demand for extravagant pensions for disabled soldiers had been made by the Labour leaders there would have been no danger of any of the cultivated and patriotic members of the community being diverted from the destruction of Prussianism by insidious appeals to their generosity. The one satisfactory feature in this unfortunate affair is the upright conduct of the Labour leaders. They have treated the interests of the disabled soldiers with the same careful consideration for profits that they have shown when dealing with all the other interests of the class they represent. Their patriotism has, not only in this case, but throughout the war, been a standing rebuke to the disloyal section of the working class. The attitude of the bishops and clergy towards those maimed in the war has also been most exemplary, although there is less cause here for any feeling of gratified surprise, as they have never pretended to represent the lower orders, or to be swayed by foolish notions of humanity when profiteering interests are at stake.

It is essential, when considering this problem, that all sentiment should be rigidly suppressed. When the Empire is fighting for its very existence, victory cannot be imperilled by the wasting of national resources on those who can never be of use in the production of profits. Our wealth is not inexhaustible, and if Prussianism is to be utterly destroyed our financial resources must be carefully husbanded. Furthermore, after the war the struggle for trade will be severe, and it is essential that taxation should be as light as possible. Let those who are inclined to receive favourably the demand for extravagant pensions consider the effect of a heavy annual charge for such. It would be impossible to pay all the interest on the national debt. There is no need to press the point further; every patriot knows that the Government stock-holders must obtain their full interest, or the whole capitalist system, which has made the Empire what it is, will be in danger of collapse.

Another aspect of the demand for large pensions deserves the careful attention of our captains of industry. If pensions are granted liberally there will be thousands of partially disabled soldiers capable of performing some work who will be able to live in idleness. Now this will have a serious effect on wages. If we are to hold our own against foreign competition after the war the present high level of wages must be greatly reduced, and it will be difficult to cut down wages if disabled soldiers can live on their pensions. No man will work for wages if he can live in any other way. It is, therefore, essential that disabled soldiers, glad to get work on any terms, should be thrown on the labour market. Besides, if men of the lower orders are permitted to live in idleness it will have a bad effect on the working class generally, quite apart from the moral effect on the pensioners themselves. There is a possibility that some pensioners, relieved from the economic control of employers, may become Socialists and agitators. The moral effect of idleness on the pensioners, however, need not be dealt with here, as there is no doubt that the clergy, the economists, and the Labour leaders will do full justice to this question.

Of course, it will be useless to throw the totally disabled soldiers upon the labour market; they would only fill up the workhouses and become a burden to the ratepayers. The more logical members of the governing class would undoubtedly be glad to dispose of them according to recognised profiteering principles and let them starve like worn-out workmen; nor is it likely that the English people would do more than protest in a pacific manner. There is, however, a danger that the able-bodied soldiers might prove refractory out of foolish sentiment for their comrades. Under these circumstances the most suitable method of dealing with the commercially useless soldiers would be to place them in compounds, where they could be kept at a cheaper rate than if pensioned, and their maimed bodies would then cease to be an eyesore to members of the plutocracy travelling about the country.

Another very serious problem will arise if pensions can be claimed by disabled soldiers as a matter of right. The workers in the factories have been told again and again that their service is just as essential towards winning the war as that of the men in the trenches. Now many of the men and women who are making munitions have had their constitutions permanently impaired by overwork, and not a few have been totally disabled. If a soldier can claim a pension as a right, then it is inevitable that a munition-worker will demand one too, and the demand will not stop here, but will extend to all the workers. At a time when the lower orders have been successfully deprived of such rights and privileges that they happened to possess it is surely the height of folly for the governing class to present them with new rights.

There is nothing in the above proposals that is contrary to the morals of a capitalist State. It is almost universally recognised that the profiteering class has the right to impose such conditions of existence as it chooses upon the proletariat. Indeed, the lower orders will, if the above suggestions are carried out, be much better treated than they have any right to expect according to those principles of profiteering which few of them deny.

It will have been observed that no suggestions have been made as to pensions for the widows of soldiers. There is not the slightest likelihood of any member of the governing class being so foolish as to reduce the numbers of a type of labour so cheap, unorganised, and so easily exploited.

Now that the true aspect of the matter has been put before them there can be no doubt that our rulers will deal with the pensions question in a manner beneficial to themselves. Whatever solution they adopt they can rest assured that there are plenty of journalists and others ready to persuade the public that the interests of the profiteers are the interests of all true patriots.

Tales of To-day.

By C. E. Bechhofer.

IX.—THE NARRATIVE OF CAPTAIN JENKINSON. (With a Commentary by Anthony Nietzsche Smudge, M.A.)

I WAS born at Lyndhurst, in Hampshire, in the year of our Lord 1759, on the seventeenth day of April¹. My parents were mercers of that place in a fair way of business. I was baptised at the parish church and was given the names of Alfred² George³ in addition to my surname Jenkinson. My parents sent me to school at the early age of seven⁴. The local schoolmaster was a notorious atheist⁵ and evil liver, and it was his barbarous custom to birch us tender children when we were unlucky enough as to incur his wrath⁶. The brutal treatment I suffered at his hands occasioned in me such a horror of my existence that, when I was ten years old, I made an attempt upon my life with a rusty nail. Fortunately for my fate, my elder sister⁷ observed signs of blood, and, rushing into my little closet, discovered me lying motionless and unconscious at the very door of Death. She hastily summoned my parents, and these in their turn sent for a doctor, the speedy arrival of whom was the cause of my young life being saved. Needless to say, my parents never again let me fall into the hands of the villain who had driven me to so terrible an extremity⁸.

At fifteen I entered my father's business and spent two years in it, although I held in utter aversion a calling so foreign to my nature and inclinations. At

¹ This date is remarkable in more ways than one. On April 17, 306 B.C., the Chinese Emperor Twang-tu came to the throne. On April 17, A.D. 1623, Henry Mortimer, Bishop of Glengarry, was burnt at the stake. In more recent years the battle of Taraponga (1819), the fatal division which sealed Mr. Gladstone's political fate (1885), and the birth of my daughter Henrietta (1890) have all occurred on April 17th.

² Alfred is one of the most famous names in universal history. A whole book would be necessary even to sketch the identity of the many distinguished personages who have borne it. Alfreds have always been noted for the acuteness of their vision, the vicissitudes of their careers and the suddenness of their ends. I had a brother Alfred who exactly fulfilled these conditions.

³ George, in the language of flowers, has the original signification of "husbandman." A disquisition on the associations of this great name would be both inconveniently long and out of place here. Suffice it to say that in all my experience of Georges I have never known one who was really unworthy of the name. In 1897, during the coal riots at Los Angeles, in California, the leader of the strikers was one George Birdcage, while the spokesman of the mineowners was a Mr. George Lethaby—a truly remarkable coincidence.

⁴ Opinions are greatly divided as to the best age for the commencement of a child's studies. John Bunyan, the famous tinker author, is said to have asserted that the age of nine is the ripest moment for Youth's inauguration in the Temple of Learning. On the other hand, I was first put to study at the age of five, and have never had any reason for regretting it; for which no small thanks are due to Dr. Mann, of Cleopatra House, Eastbourne, Sussex, my earliest preceptor. From him I went to the Charterhouse, concluding my education at the Alma Mater on the Cam. At both of these latter establishments I had ample reason to be satisfied with my early start.

⁵ The mention of atheism reminds me that one of my earliest literary achievements was a lively pamphlet entitled "A Challenge to the Godly." Copies may still be obtained from the publishers of this work, price 6d., or with gilt edges, 1s., postage extra.

⁶ No words of mine are needed here to deprecate this practice, now luckily denounced by all educational authorities of any standing.

⁷ If it were not for this definite statement of Captain Jenkinson, I should have felt far more inclined to plump for his having an elder brother and no sisters at all. I put it to the reader that, but for this statement, there is just as much likelihood, *cæteris paribus*, that the instrument of the Captain's salvation was a brother as a sister.

⁸ See my note 6, *supra*.

last, my parents being deaf to all my entreaties to apprentice me to a profession more adapted to my own desires, I decided upon a desperate remedy, and, escaping on foot to Southampton, I took service upon a barque⁹ which was on the point of sailing for Amsterdam. A war, however, happening to break out among the nations of South America, the owners of the vessel found themselves forced by the fluctuations of the market to change its destination, and, much to their regret and ours, we set sail for Buenos Ayres¹⁰. Half-way out, our unhappy boat was wrecked by a terrible storm, and I alone of the ship's company was saved, being cast up by the waves upon an uncharted island¹¹. Here I lived in indescribable privations and misery for the space of several hours, until a frigate bound for Plymouth and blown out of its true course by easterly gales, sighted me and took me off.

I cannot describe the emotions with which I gazed upon the fair Cornish cliffs as we rode in sight of them at last!¹² Falling on my knees in full view of the worthy captain and crew of the frigate, I rendered thanks to the Almighty for my restoration to my country and the bosom of my near ones. From that day to this I have never been to sea again.

My story is nearly told. I made known to some of my father's friends the enormous wealth deposited by sea-birds¹³, which covered the island whereon I had been cast away. This account of mine, in the telling of which I spared neither my own powers of description nor the imagination of my hearers, so prevailed upon the spirit of adventure in them that they soon afterwards fitted out a vessel to the site of my hardships and sufferings. By virtue of a fair portion in the Company¹⁴, which was formed to garner the wealth of the island, I became a comparatively rich man. Since then I have retired to my ease in my native village, amusing myself with decent amusements, and not unmindful of

the immeasurable goodness of Providence, Who, at a single stroke,¹⁵ turned my awful casting-away into a source of untold advantage to the world and myself.

(Signed) A. G. JENKINSON, Capt.¹⁶.

Views and Reviews.

THE WRONG TURNING.

WHEN Thomas Broadbent landed in "John Bull's Other Island," he noticed that the Irish sense of humour was in abeyance. "Larry," he said solemnly, "Ireland has never smiled since her hopes were buried in the grave of Gladstone." Mr. Bechhofer* attempts to find a similarly simple explanation of Russian melancholy. By looking at a map of Europe, he perceives that Russia is practically land-locked, with no outlet that is not controlled by her enemies; therefore, she feels penned in a prison, and her "goodwill to serve the world is thrown back upon its centre and turns to egoism . . . the nightmare of Russia's solitary confinement has actually led to a kind of melancholy madness that sooner or later overtakes the most optimistic reformers." This is a delightfully simple explanation, and it has the pathological merit of throwing the blame for the sufferings of Russia upon the world. But the melancholy of the Irish is as marked as that of the Russians, and Ireland is not land-locked; while Switzerland is land-locked, and is not melancholy. Besides, it is certain that the inhabitants of Russia do not spend any more time poring over the map of Europe than do the inhabitants of, say, the county of Rutland; and there is no reason to suppose that the sense of being land-locked oppresses them any more than it does the inhabitants of the central portions of any other continent. This conception places Mr. Bechhofer in this absurd position; when there were no maps of Europe there was no melancholy in Russia, and consequently no reason for the undoubted attempts at expansion that characterise Russian history. That the profound melancholy of Russia does arise from the powerful repression of normal activities is, of course, a sound psychological deduction; but that the oppression is not European, but Russian, Stepniak (who was not ignorant of Russian life) made clear in his study of "The Russian Peasantry."

But having proved to his own satisfaction that the Russian melancholy is the product of this quite imaginary poring over the map of Europe, Mr. Bechhofer proceeds to find an outlet for Russia. His conception is that of a Russia producing principally for export, and bursting with impatience to get its goods to the world-market, wherever that may be. Both Kropotkin and Stepniak have recognised that an extension of Russian freedom would mean a further growth of her industries; but both of them, strangely enough, have argued that the effect of this industrial development would be the closing of the Russian market to imported manufactured goods. Manufactured goods amount only to about one-fifth of the total imports; and for the very reason that Mr. Bechhofer thinks that Russia wants to export she will import less and less. "English and German capitalists, English engineers and foremen, have planted within Russia the improved cotton manufactures of their mother countries; they are busy now

¹⁵ How true! Had not the Captain been rescued by the frigate, which, as he says, had been blown out of its course by the wind, he might have remained solitary on the island until his death, surrounded by all that untold wealth, which would, however, have been of as little gratification to him as the diamonds the thirst-oppressed traveller describes in the sultry Arabian desert. I add this note to explain to the reader the precise significance of the Captain's words.

¹⁶ I do not know when Captain Jenkinson received his master mariner's certificate, as he himself says that, except for this interrupted voyage here described, he never went to sea again.

* "Russia at the Cross-Roads." By C. E. Bechhofer. (Kegan Paul. 5s. net.)

⁹ Something of the same kind occurred to me when a boy, except that I was discovered before my spirit of adventure had culminated in actual arrival at a sea-port.

¹⁰ It is a well-known fact in shipping circles that almost invariably the chartering, destination and cargo of mercantile vessels are entirely independent of any desire or volition on the part of the owners, and subject by natural laws to the state of the market. For instance, the mere offer of high freights in New York brings about an instantaneous alteration of atmospheric conditions, by which boats of all sizes and conditions, both sailers and steamships, are driven by the force of the elements into New York harbour, where they are compelled to accept the highest bidder. In view of the known integrity and patriotism of British ship-owners, the above is the only feasible explanation of their recent (1915-16) abnormal prosperity.

¹¹ A similar remarkable incident occurred some years ago to my uncle Arbuthnot Smudge, who was immersed in the River Arun as the result of the capsizing of an outriggered four. There was this difference, that my uncle and his companions were all saved without exception: It was the fortunate issue of this mishap, following an equally lucky escape of his own in the hunting field, that gave rise to a famous retort of my grandfather, the Rev. Adolphus Smudge. When one of his parishioners congratulated him on this double good fortune, my grandfather said: "Ah! you can't wipe out us Smudges so easily!" words which are remembered in the parish to this day.

¹² Captain Jenkinson is not alone in this. I, too, have often experienced similar emotional satisfaction on regarding again some familiar vision after a protracted absence.

¹³ This valuable article of commerce is known generally as "Guano," and both from its intrinsic value and the romantic conditions of its existence, well deserves a place beside Solomon's traditional "apes, ivory and peacocks." Some readings, indeed, give "apes, ivory and phosphates."

¹⁴ It is not known what share Captain Jenkinson received in the returns of the company, but his partners certainly were rewarded for their enterprise and courage in chartering the vessel by considerable fortunes, to which, indeed, their descendants at this day are making additions from the same source. All the original partners received further rewards in being made freemen of the city of Cardiff.

in improving the woollen industries and the production of machinery; while Belgians have rapidly created a great iron industry in South Russia." Kropotkin argues from these and from other facts that Russia "will manufacture all she needs; and yet she will remain an agricultural nation." If this be so, if Russia ceases to be an importing country, are we to suppose that her exports will be a free gift to the world? If they are not, there will be no exports; and if there are neither exports nor imports, what need is there to open the Dardanelles?

Mr. Bechhofer argues what everyone knows, that Moscow is the natural capital of Russia, and also the chief manufacturing region of Russia; and the rivers run southward. From that he argues with a curious inconsequence that the Baltic is practically useless to Russia; what he says of Petrograd is as true of Riga, that it is "a window that looks only upon a corridor." The dreaded Germans live down that corridor; and before they were dreaded the Swedes, Norwegians, and Danes locked the farther door. That corridor terrifies Russia, and she must come out another way. Southward ho! Mr. Bechhofer argues that the Dardanelles must be opened to her; let us suppose that they are. The Mediterranean is as much a corridor as the Baltic; its two outlets, Suez and Gibraltar, are controlled by England, at present Russia's friend. The great question is: "To where does Russia wish to go?" If she desires only to trade in the Mediterranean, the neutralisation of the Dardanelles will be sufficient. But surely, if she wishes to reach the world by sea, she will feel just as confined, although not so solitary, in the corridor of the Mediterranean as she does in that of the Baltic. Her melancholy will continue so long as Suez and Gibraltar are held by England; M. Goldstein, reported in the "Times" Russian Supplement of May 27 of this year, foresees that Great Britain may not always be the Ally of Russia: "I must say that on the question of the most important of all maritime routes, the Dardanelles—no matter how the war ends—we shall always have to reckon with the Queen of the Seas, Great Britain. Moreover, remaining economically isolated, that is, not proceeding hand in hand with France, Great Britain, Belgium, Italy, and Japan, in several years Russia may find herself face to face with a still more terrible catastrophe, viz., a new war in which Great Britain will no longer be our Ally, since economically she is interested in seeing that the Russian market shall not be closed to the access of her commodities." To cure the melancholy of Russia, Gibraltar and Suez must be neutralised; and the way to the Atlantic be as free for her as for others. In short, we must re-arrange the world to make Russia happy. It would be simpler to forbid the reading of European maps in Russia, and the reading of Russian literature in England.

This pre-occupation with Russia's export trade explains, but does not excuse, Mr. Bechhofer's perfunctory treatment of the internal Russian question. He writes as though an industrial proletariat has yet to be created in Russia; although Kropotkin showed that the factory workers numbered nearly two millions in 1910, and that the domestic trades of Russia occupied about seven and a half million peasants. But far more serious in Russia is the creation of an agrarian proletariat; as long ago as 1886, the chairman of the St. Petersburg Congress of Farmers estimated that there were about twenty millions of agrarian proletarians, a number equal to the number of serfs Russia possessed before the Emancipation. The number has certainly not diminished since then; but owing to the unprecedented scale of recruiting for this war, Russia is now complaining of a shortage of male labour. I learn from the "Times" Russian Supplement, June 24, 1916, that "unfortunately, owing to conditions of transport, the conveyance of Chinese labourers [into European Russia] cannot exceed 15,000 a month"; but they are coming, and the rules concerning the application of yellow labour were drafted by the Ministry of Agricul-

ture, and examined by the Council of Ministers on March 28. Russia has not lacked proletarians since the serfs were emancipated until now; and this correspondent says that "it would be irrational not to take advantage of the neighbouring capacious Chinese labour market, with its hundreds of thousands of cheap workmen, and not to utilise it at a moment when at home every pair of working hands is precious."

It is certain that Mr. Bechhofer has not done what he intended to do, viz., to explain the cause of Russian melancholy; and his suggested cure of it involves so many other problems that, without good reason, it cannot commend itself to Englishmen. Why should we bother about releasing Russian exports through the Dardanelles when Russian imports of British goods have actually declined since 1872, have changed in character so that they consist chiefly of machinery and coal (both of which Russia produces herself in increasing quantities), and have depreciated in value? Let her look to her land laws, let her develop her home market (vast enough for any manufacturing nation), let her turn her "goodwill to serve the world" into goodwill to serve her own people, and she will cease to be melancholy and a menace to the world. A. E. R.

Pastiche.

THE GILT AND THE GINGERBREAD; OR, FINIS OPUS CORONAT.

I took you from Butterick's Guide to Fashion,
From the toils of luckster Selfridge & Co.,
And stabbed you with delicate darts of passion
(Barbed to endure for a moon or so).
I took you from fivepenny brews of crass tea,
Sipped in the din of the Ingle Nook,
And pledged you in bumpers of goldenish Asti,
But me from the following things you took:

You took me from arrantest dustiness, fustiness,
From a quarto of ballads in Early Serb;
You took me from chasms of rustiness, mustiness,
From Thingumabob on the Baskish Verb;
From Stultifer Magnus, Opera Omnia,
Libri Tres De Radicibus—well,
He's a sovran specific against insomnia
With his roundabout Latin and dankness of smell.

Yes, but you took me from vellum carouses,
Among chrestomathies, glosses, and such;
And from where my Pegasus munches and browses,
Ere he flies, for a space, his terrestrial hutch;
You took me from sober inditing of quatrains,
From impish jingles and metrical quips,
And led me to dubious regions where rot reigns
Supreme amid laughter of eyes and lips.

We prattled the speech with the flimsy syntax,
Wherein the male, with the female's aid,
Since the era of mammoth and cave and flint-axe,
Has acted a droll little harlequinade.
What? Yes, in a way. The curve of your shoulder,
And a thing or two else, are in no wise amiss;
You are dexterous to fan the spark to a smoulder,
And thence to a blaze—oh, I'll grant you this!

But now? Well, honestly, iris to iris,
The potentest grapes of the vintage are culled;
Of (change of trope) the heat of the fire is
Scanted, its radiance faintly dulled.
And since you began to torment and caress me,
I've got all your tantrums off by heart;
And pout and dimple and so on—why, bless me,
I could set them all down in the daintiest chart!

So without any heroine's maudlin whimper,
And only the ghost of a pale regret,
You'll drop this affair with a puckered simper,
And return to your haberdashery set.
You'll return to the weekly supply from Mudie's,
And wade through their puddles of lukewarm gush,
Of tasteless tripe wherein nothing lewd is,
Nothing that might remind you—but hush!

And I'll abscond to thesaurus and folio,
 For a month or a week or a day, perchance,
 Till again I essay the part of Malvolio,
 Trapped by a sidelong and wayward glance.
 (And if some pert oaf should say that this clowning,
 The tune of this jagged farrago of song,
 Was filched from the garner of Robert Browning—
 Why, stap my vitals, he wouldn't be wrong!

P. SELVER.

A VICTIMISATION.

A victim am I
 Of a Cabinet crisis.
 I wish I could die
 Of pulmonary phthisis.
 I shall sit down and cry:
 O Osiris and Isis!

Why didn't I try
 To secure a commission?
 My larynx is dry,
 And we've got prohibition.
 A victim am I
 Of a stern coalition.

A victim am I
 (Defence of the Realm Act).
 The newspapers cry:
 Prush-crush! Strafe!! O'erwhelm!!! Act!!!!
 To Lloyd George let me fly.
 Wanted—"Man-at-the-Helm" Act.

My clocks are awry.
 I must rise with the grey light
 Of dawn in the sky.
 Will it ever not stay light?
 A victim am I
 Of the saving of daylight.

A victim am I
 Of the craze for compulsion.
 Sabachthani Eli,
 I am seized with convulsion.
 Rub me once, ere I die,
 With Scott's soothing emulsion.

Turned down locally by
 Tallow-chandlers—immune all—
 Refused leave to apply
 To the Central Tribunal,
 A victim am I
 Of the conscience communal.

A victim am I
 (Conscientious objector—
 To get starred I must try)
 Of a bully and hector.
 I'll become on the sly
 A smith-fitter-erector.

They suggest I should try
 To make a munition.
 I can only reply:
 They may go to perdition.
 A victim am I
 Of a war of attrition.

A victim am I
 Of Lloyd George's and Hughes's.
 The hour draweth nigh!
 In their "Mails" and their "Newses"
 They are raising a cry
 To conscribe my papooses.

Why didn't I die
 At Kut el Amara?
 I could blaspheme and cry
 All the damns of Athara.
 A victim am I
 Of Lord Northcliffe's tiara.

A victim am I—
 Not of Zepps. or of raiders—
 Prostrated I lie
 'Neath the hoofs of Free Traders,
 Whose Tariffs mount high
 As their intellect nadirs.

It were better to die
 With the gallant Sinn Feiners,
 Or deported to lie
 With Kirkwood and MacManus.
 A victim am I
 Of the modern Sejanus.

A victim am I
 Of the Liquor Control Board.
 Nonal Ale—let me die.
 It is certain the sole board
 On which to rely
 Is the Mellor and Cole Board.

Peace will come by and by.
 I am taking the shilling.
 Peace will come by and by,
 When Asquith is willing.
 Peace will come by and by,
 When we weary of killing.
 Peace will come by and by,
 Like the 'buses of Tilling.
 Peace will come by and by:
 No more tramping and drilling.
 Peace will come by and by:
 No more milling and filling.
 Peace will come by and by
 With its mafficky trilling!
 Peace will come by and by
 To the journalists' quilling.
 Peace will come by and by
 With the whisky distilling.
 Peace will come by and by:
 Exit Pemberton Billing.

A. B. C. K.

SUMMER-TIME IDYLLS.

I.—CHINGFORD.

'S after nine, Liz! . . . blimey, 'ark!
 Strike me if it ain't a lark!
 'S marvellous . . . it don't seem right,
 Singin' at this time o' night.
 Blinkin' larks at 9 p.m.
 (Summer-time).
 'E's a corker, 'e's a gem;
 Ain't 'e prime?

There's a cuckoo! . . . 'e's a lad!
 Ain't 'e solemn? Ain't 'e sad?
 There's a little whistlin' cuss
 Makin' bloomin' fun of us.
 See 'im, Liz, on that 'ere tree,
 Pipin' 'igh? . . .
 Ain't these bluebells like the sea—
 Or the sky?

Funny, Liz, we've been out 'ere
 'Eaps of evenin's . . . ain't it queer
 I ain't 'eard the birds before,
 Least of all to say "Encore!"
 P'raps it's this 'ere "Summer Time"
 Does the biz? . . .
 'S ten! Pack up! . . . yus, it's a shime. . . .
 Come on, Liz!

II.—DOWN THE ALLEY.

'Arf a mo', Joe, wiv that beer;
 'And it over, give it 'ere.
 Sittin' in the bloomin' alley
 Makes yer thirsty. . . . 'Allo, Sally!
 'Ow's the ole bloke? Not 'ome yet?
 Lumme, don't they make him sweat!

This 'ere Summer-time's a treat—
 Mikin' in the blinkin' street.
 'Ome at eight, yer eat yer grub,
 Give yer face an' 'ands a rub,
 Git a chair, a pipe, a glarss,
 An' jest let the evenin' parss.

Wot's that, Sue? . . . It's time fer bed? . . .
 Go an' fry yer silly 'ead!
 'T ain't ten yet. . . . Wot's that yer say? . . .
 'Morrer mornin' ain't ter-day. . . .
 Eh? . . . Carn't 'ear yer . . . what? . . . oh lor
 Shaht the 'ouse down . . . gaw on, jor!
 W. K. S.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

A EUROPEAN FEDERATION.

Sir,—It was apparently in vain that I laid so much emphasis upon my statement that I had no hope that an International Tribunal would prevent war: that I hoped only that it would render less frequent international quarrels on subjects that interest only small sections of people—it was of small use to write this since "A. E. R." first imputes to me the statement that European Federation would produce "so idyllic a state of peace," and then proceeds to smash that statement by pointing to the civil war and industrial riots that occurred under the Federal constitution of the U.S.A. But did I not affirm my belief that civil wars have usually been waged for more important ends than international wars, and that so long as contention arose on subjects that strongly interested large bodies of men, armed conflict was likely to arise? Why did not "A. E. R." consider this statement before turning his heavy artillery on to me?

I admit that the U.S.A. is not a perfect analogy to employ for the future U.S.E.—I don't think I advanced it as such—but let me point out where the analogy does apply. Two grounds of objection are usually offered against the Federation of Europe: (1) That the peoples of Europe are too diverse in racial feeling; (2) That the change is too great for European tradition. In reply to (1), I point out that crowds of the most uneducated peoples of Europe go to the U.S.A. and live side by side in much greater unity than their relatives in Europe: scarcely any racial quarrels arise between Europeans in U.S.A. This fact is, I think, undoubtedly to be attributed to the circumstance that the various nationalities in that country rely on law courts and not on racial armies for the settlement of differences. Against (2) it can surely be urged that propaganda alone is needed. Let the people of France and Germany note the cost in life and capital of two such wars as that in 1870 and the present one, together with the cost of the intervening competition in armament, and let them compare this with the expenditure in the same direction made by their relatives in Federal U.S.A. during the same period, and ask themselves if the pleasure of slapping their national chests and swearing that they will smash any people that does not accept their view of justice is worth the agony involved in the maintenance of the system.

Let us note, moreover, that the change from the armed camp of Europe to the Federal States of Europe would scarcely be noticed by the ordinary people except through the reduction of taxation and the relinquishment of conscription. We must drive home the view that unchecked national power to make war is as useless and dangerous as would be the accumulation of stores of dynamite in suburban gardens against possible quarrels between Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Jones.

As regards the troubles in U.S.A., the civil war arose over important ethical and economic principles. Such wars will persist as long as men's passions boil up to the point of armed conflict. The industrial riots in U.S.A. are the result of revolutionary propaganda. The employers use Pinkerton's men because the employees threaten violence, and the State is slow to offer the protection that the law allows. There is little reason why the police and soldiers of the future U.S.E. should interfere in cases of civil disturbances in particular countries. Each country would have its own police force and a small army to preserve internal peace. I think that the peoples of Europe are sufficiently aware of the cloudiness of their respective notions regarding the true direction of economic reform to permit as much liberty of experiment in strikes, etc., in the federated nations as they now permit at home. And here, surely, the constitution of U.S.A. affords an example of the grant of considerable liberty of development by the voluntarily constituted central government to the Federal States. Furthermore, it may confidently be assumed that the diminution of the danger of international conflict would enable greater individual liberty: militarism being the main cause of institutional rigidity.

Finally, the power of the new Tribunal to stamp out variation will certainly be greater than that of any government of to-day; but it should be remembered that any such action would be opposed by the united progressive forces of the federated countries, and the danger of actual oppression would thereby be minimised.

I hope that the day may be far off when Russian troops will be called in to quell strikers in England, as "A. E. R." suggests; but I am confident that "A. E. R." errs if he thinks that when the average European soberly considers the disadvantages of the present system, the latter's imagination will not easily encompass the payment of income tax to a representative international tribunal for the

policing of the Continent. No steps up flowery Pisgah are needed for this vision; but merely observation of the prosaic objects in the flat land, a little reasoning from them, and—energy to kick at the ugliest of them.

HENRY MEULEN.

* * *

NATIONAL COUNCIL AGAINST CONSCRIPTION.

Sir,—We desire to direct the attention of your readers to the following facts.

The head offices of the National Council Against Conscription were recently raided by soldiers and City detectives. This body, without giving notice or preferring a charge, seized every document, printed or written, belonging to the Council, including their notepaper, cheque-books, reports of the working of conscription, applications for advice, help or information, and replies written on behalf of the Council or on behalf of important public men and members of Parliament. In answer to the secretary, the chief detective stated that the documents were not likely to be returned, and volunteered the observation that this would "stop the good work for a time." No inventory was taken of the goods thus seized, and no list offered to the secretary.

The chief practical object of the Council was and is the strictly legal one of contributing to the right administration of an Act of Parliament and of enabling those who have been brought under it to understand and to claim the exemptions for which it provides. Such applicants include the sole owners or conductors of small businesses, widows' sons, people in certified occupations, and "conscientious objectors." Many of these persons have obtained legal relief either through the Council or through representations made through the instrumentality of the Council, in Parliament.

The general political object of the Council is to obtain the repeal of the Military Service Acts—a purpose which the Home Secretary declared to be perfectly legal—and to prevent the policy of military compulsion from becoming, after the war, a permanent feature of our institutions; in other words, to revert at the earliest practical opportunity to the plan of free military service to which a few months ago every political party in this country adhered.

The Council has never acted in secrecy. It has, indeed, courted publicity. None of its publications have ever been condemned. Nevertheless, its work has been forcibly interrupted at a moment when the need for it, owing to the recent passage of the last Military Service Act, was most urgent.

We recommend these facts to the attention of political organisations interested in the preservation of the rights of citizenship.

(Signed) R. APPLEGARTH.	J. W. GRAHAM.
MARGARET ASHTON.	J. RENDEL HARRIS.
HARRISON BARROW.	J. A. HOBSON.
G. STUART BUNNING.	R. F. HORTON.
EDWARD CARPENTER.	H. W. MASSINGHAM.
JOHN CLIFFORD.	W. E. ORCHARD.
M. LLEWELLYN DAVIES.	ROBERT SMILLIE.

BROUGHAM VILLIERS.

(Members of the National Council.)

* * *

TWO SEDITION SENTENCES.

Sir,—A couple of weeks ago, the Press informed us that at Aberdare, in South Wales, James Robert White, D.S.O., formerly a captain in the Gordon Highlanders, and son of Field-Marshal Sir George White, was sentenced to three months' imprisonment in the second division for having spread reports and made statements likely to cause disaffection. One of the statements reads as follows:—"I want to see Germany win the war, as she is a far superior country to ours, and her success would be a gain to the democracy of this country."

Captain White went to South Wales at the beginning of May, with the avowed object of inducing the miners to come out on strike in order to compel the Government to show leniency towards the Irish rebels.

On April 11 and 12 there was another trial for "sedition," this time at Edinburgh, when John McLean, Social Democrat and teacher, was sentenced to three years' penal servitude. The witnesses for the Crown—eighteen in number—were all members of the police force, and the conflict of evidence was so great that the case was from the Bench declared to be "one of extreme difficulty." Further, as reported in the "Glasgow Herald," the judge "pointed out to the jury that a verdict against the Crown would involve a charge of conspiracy against the police." The jury found McLean guilty.

For Captain White it was claimed that he had rendered distinguished service to this country as a soldier in the South African War. John McLean, too, has also rendered distinguished service to his country. For as a Social Democrat he realised that the pitiable ineffectiveness of the British Social Democratic movement is largely owing to the neglect of its "leaders" and "manipulators" to provide for the members' teaching in Social Democratic principles. Therefore, on the Clyde, and in many other parts of Scotland, for many years he devoted his leisure to the task of educating the Scottish workers in those principles. Most of his vacations were devoted to this work. So great was the success attending his efforts that during the past winter a class in economics, in Glasgow, conducted by McLean and his colleague, J. McDougal (now undergoing a term of twelve months' imprisonment for "inciting to strike"), was attended by 481 students. Other classes in outlying districts were also well attended.

During the past winter it was determined to take this interesting Clyde working-class education movement one important step forward by establishing in Glasgow a Scottish Labour College, to be controlled by the working-class organisations *independently* and not in copartnership with Capitalism or its bulwarks, the Church, the Universities, and the high Labour bureaucracy. A conference convened by a representative provisional committee was attended by some 500 delegates representing working-class organisations. McLean's paper outlining the scheme was read by McDougal, as the writer was a few days before the conference arrested under the Defence of the Realm Act. It was resolved that the movement should be supported, and that a second conference should be convened by Mr. Robert Smillie, who is a warm supporter of the movement, which, it is expected, will in the future become a centre of an International Federation of Socialist and Labour Colleges and of an International Working Class Students' Union.

It is hoped that the question of McLean's heavy sentence will be brought before Parliament. Certainly the public have a right to demand an explanation of the great difference between the sentences in the two cases here dealt with.

M. BRIDGES ADAMS.

A STATE MEDICAL SERVICE.

Sir,—The perils of a State Medical Service, as against a Guild Medical Service, do not concern the doctor alone. The public surely has a real interest in the question. I ask you to reconsider your statement that the nature of the organisation is a matter for the doctors to decide.

The argument as to the present bad distribution of doctors is not quite so strong as it looks. You must remember that a large proportion of the working classes, when seriously ill, are treated in hospitals or infirmaries. This is, of course, a great economy in doctoring. The private doctors in the "poverty-stricken and disease-ridden district of Shoreditch" treat, on the whole, minor ailments. In wealthy Hampstead the sick have little or no recourse to hospitals, but are treated in severe and minor illnesses by the private doctor.

Then, in the poorer districts, the semi-State Medical Service does rather more for the inhabitants than in the wealthier districts.

This is not intended as an argument in favour of one system or the other, but I know your whole-hearted contempt for the support of any position by inaccurate statements.

The danger to the people of a State Medical Service is that its acceptance will be a great step towards Mr. Belloc's Servile State. (Perhaps, horrible though it be, it is the best bargain the people will be able to make, but, at all events, let it be made with eyes open.) The State (or say the profiteers) will exact its quid pro quo. If State doctors are to treat the people freely, there will be an insistence on their conforming to regulations framed in the interests of the employers.

The Medical Department of the Board of Education is already subsidising mothers' homes, where pregnant and nursing women are encouraged to take their meals and receive hygienic instruction; crèches are subsidised by the State. Well-meaning but stupid people like Dr. Barbara Tchaykovsky, Mr. Lansbury, and their kind are calling out for more. In a few years the State Medical Service will feed all pregnant and married women in public kitchens at stated hours (no doubt on a most excellent dietary and under most hygienic conditions), and the Service will take care of the babies, both by day and night. This will set the women free for work in the factories, and will yet ensure a plentiful supply of children. I can fancy infantile mortality will decrease.

This may be the most excellent way for a nation, but again I say, let us be clear as to what we want and what we are in for. I will not deal with further difficulties on the nation's side; let me add that the danger of raising a medical priesthood is all nonsense; the dangers are to my mind much more real.

Now, on the medical side, the peril of a State Medical Service is one that besets every profession or craft that is subject to State administration. The organisation is always perfect on paper, but the soul is ever quite destroyed. The scientific needs of the individual worker are always entirely overlooked. He is treated just like the factory-hand, and the result is—the factory-hand. I have experience of two State Medical Services. Of one it is not now the time to speak, but of the other—the School Medical Service—I must say that it is a body without a soul. The school doctor is told off to do routine work as laid down by a head office clerk—e.g., medical inspection is done entirely by schedule, so many minutes being allowed per child. No true work, scientific or artistic, can possibly be done to regulation.

School work, before it was put under a State Department, had done good work in some parts of the country—in London because the chief medical officer understood that doctors must be given a free hand in their work or be dismissed. It was useless to expect anything of value if they had to be surveilled for every minute of their day. The thousands spent to-day in medical inspection is not only largely a waste of money, but is a waste of good men and women.

A National or Guild Medical Service, which should control its own medical affairs and medical education (as to-day), could share out its income among the members, and be responsible under charter to the nation, is a very different matter.

Doubtless a small State Medical Service would be required in a modern nation; nothing better or worse could be required than the present public health administration.

Room must still be allowed for private doctors outside the guild; my own experience of recent years has taught me how powerful is the official boycott of any new departure in medicine or science. The Medical Service would thus consist of a Public Health Service, perhaps Army and Navy Service, Guild Medical Service, and the private practitioner. The guild should have charge of the hospitals, etc.; it should include doctors, nurses, chemists, and should have strong tendencies to decentralisation.

M. D. EDER.

THE EXCESS PROFITS TAX.

Sir,—In your "Notes of the Week" of June 8 you say that, short of adopting the methods of forcible obstruction, many of our merchants stuck at nothing to defeat the imposition of the Excess Profits Tax. It may be interesting to recall the following facts.

When the tax was first debated in Committee in 1915 there were on the order paper no less than 337 amendments to the excess profits clauses and schedules of the Finance Bill. It must be remembered that any amendment which will have the effect of increasing a tax is out of order. For these amendments about 60 members were responsible, and of these, according to "Dod's Parliamentary Companion," 14 were lawyers and 35 were merchants, shipowners, colliery owners, and directors of banks, railways, breweries, ironworks, and other companies, all of which would normally be affected by the tax. If particulars could be obtained of all interested as shareholders, the figures would, no doubt, be still more significant.

JUST PRICE.

AN END OF WAR.

Sir,—I have been the Almighty for ten days, and I have made future war impossible, because I have nationalised the financial resources of all communities threatened by war. Only the Almighty could do it. The first result it had was curious.

You know how little interest used to be taken in the doings of the world's diplomatists, although the consequences to the manhood of the nations were so grave. All that changed as by magic. Lords, landowners, City magnates, capitalists, commercialists, all began to take the most intense interest in the doings of the Foreign Offices of the world. Did one Ambassador engage in conversation with another, the most searching inquiry was everywhere afoot as to what it portended. Capital was in a constant state of jangled nerves. Finally, the tension became too severe to be borne, and a great clamour arose for the abolition of all diplomatists. There ensued

a pretty little struggle, because diplomatists and capitalists were much inter-related. But Capital was in real earnest this time. The possibilities of the situation were too gravely menacing to be trifled with. So happened the universal law that all members of Foreign Offices on whose horizon a war-cloud appears are liable to capital punishment.

Then, at last, Foreign Offices emptied of their occupants in an amazing manner, and much of the blue blood of the world was, for the first time, driven to the hard necessity of earning a living.

Our present system of dealing with the affairs of nations eventuated. As you know, committees representative of all classes of the community meet in open conference and settle all differences in the eyes of the world.

But why all this immense upheaval? With the threat of war, landed property goes, wealth goes, luxury goes, business goes, capital goes. In the old days it was only virile manhood that melted away like snow in sunshine. Now it is gold. Men you can always replace. But gold—

H. H. STOCKDALE ROSS.

MR. BERNARD SHAW.

Sir,—I am very sorry that Mr. H. E. Adstock should consider me a cad, for I have sense enough to value the good opinion of even the meanest of my fellow-creatures; but at a time like this, when horror stalks abroad, and pity seems to have left the earth, the grimaces of Mr. Bernard Shaw are, to me at least, out of place in a journal of the high character of *THE NEW AGE*. There are some of us, Sir, for whom life means tragedy, and we resent the intrusion of the comedian and public entertainer at our table of bitter herbs. "Fun is good, and laughter is good," says Thackeray, "but love is best of all." A writer in *THE NEW AGE* some time ago described Mr. Shaw as "hating nothing, and therefore incapable of loving anything." What help can we look for from a man like that in our present trouble? Mr. Shaw's article on Ireland might have appeared in the "Morning Post"; but a stupid "Morning Post" writer would have probably had this advantage over the brilliant Mr. Shaw—he would have meant what he said, he would have been sincere. But what guidance, comfort, or consolation can we find in the contradictions of "the witty Irishman"? I do not believe Mr. Shaw is an Irishman. I believe he was born in Brixton, and has lived there all his life. Irishmen love strongly and hate fiercely. Sir, one of the many benefits I derived from my friendship with the late Spenser Frederic Gore was an introduction to your paper, and these many years past I have been a humble and diligent student thereof; and you yourself have taught me, Sir, to look for something different in your pages from the stuff that fills the bellies of the Webb-cum-Cocoa lambkins, in whose pastures, I gather from Mr. J. Bulvar Schwartz, Mr. Shaw may from time to time be seen kicking his heels. Mr. Schwartz also tells me that this is partly done for advertisement, lest his faithful followers forget him. I believe it was Zarathustra who, when he descended from the mountain, found his assembly of supermen worshipping an ass. With Mr. Harry Fowler's permission:

"In summer, when the Shaws be shere,
And leaves be large and long,
'Tis merry, I trow, in the greenwood,
To list the bride's song."

Yes, in summer-time; but in this, our day of agony, I am impertinent enough to suggest that the chirrupings of a superannuated old grasshopper like Mr. Shaw have become a burden.

HAROLD B. HARRISON.

PROPHETS.

Sir,—Can any of your readers give me an explanation why your famous literary men, such as Mr. H. G. Wells and Mr. G. B. Shaw, go on prophesying and criticising even after July 31, 1914? Can they produce a line in their previous writings to prove that they foresaw the coming European disaster? Did they ever warn England of the German danger? Did they ever complain of your lack of preparation? I do not remember that they did, but perhaps you and your readers who are better versed in modern literature than I am could enlighten me on the subject. If you cannot do so, and if no warnings of any kind can be detected in the books of these gentlemen published before the war, is not that valid proof that they were out of touch with some of the most important realities of life, with all those forces of the age which really mattered? And ought they not, for decency's sake, to become modest and silent now and stop writing, as if nothing had happened to them or to the world? Surely,

even in Palestine, the false prophets (with whom the multitude sided then as it does to-day) retired from business after the fall of Jerusalem. If not, there were plenty of stones about the Holy City to make them do so. Are there no stones to be found about London? Is money again to be thrown at these false prophets, instead of those weightier and more proper missiles? Or is the collapse of our European civilisation a lesser event than the downfall of Jerusalem?

That very interesting writer, Señor Ramiro de Maeztu, rightly states in your issue of June 15: "The staff of the 'Daily Mail' saw much more clearly that England had to prepare to fight against Germany, and to devote all her energies to the war, than the Fabian Society." May I, in view of this fact, suggest to the aforesaid authors a daily and attentive study of the "Daily Mail"? Not that I consider the "Daily Mail" as a pure fountain-head of wisdom, but the wisdom of these very advanced writers could, no doubt, be advanced by the study of a halfpenny newspaper.

Geneva.

OSCAR LEVY.

"THE NEW AGE" AND THE WAR.

Sir,—Do your readers forget that, years before the war, *THE NEW AGE* actually made a regular feature of Military Notes? It is really extraordinary how so many of your readers (I speak of those I meet) never understand your horses—and never forget the cackle of some of your correspondents.

A. M. BAGNALL.

THE CASE OF RUSSIA.

Sir,—In your issue of June 15, Mr. Bechhofer repeats the old fable that Russia is "landlocked" by the Turkish control of the Dardanelles—that is, that she has no secure passage into the seas. He cannot be referring to the position created by the war, but to the normal or pre-war condition of Russian commerce. Allow me to assure your readers that Russia's Southern-Russian commerce has never suffered any restriction, that the Bosphorus and Dardanelles have been freely open to Russia's trade, both outward and inward, and any Odessa trading firm will corroborate this. It is only warships that Turkey has kept out of the straits, in accordance with the treaty imposed on her by Great Britain in 1840-41.

The extremely ancient rule that no foreign ship of war shall enter these narrow Turkish waters, except by permission of Turkey, has never prevented or obstructed one ton of Russian shipping passing to Western Europe. Turkey has never even exacted compulsory pilotage. The expansion of Russia, widely advertised in all her official publications, has found sufficient outlets up to now through the White Sea, the Baltic, and the perfectly unobstructed Black Sea channels. Why should it now require not only a route to the Mediterranean via Armenia, but Russian occupation of the Bosphorus, Marmora, Dardanelles as well?

As to the possible importance to England of Russia's gaining a military and naval as well as a commercial control of this route, the result of Russia's gaining the supremacy of the Baltic absolutely disappointed a similar hope, and the present hope is equally fallacious. Friendship with Germany is an inestimably superior policy from a commercial point of view than any of these Russian promissory notes.

ARTHUR FIELD.

Sir,—Mr. Ince wants, it seems, to discuss whether England and Turkey should, or not, have gone to war. The initiative in hostilities was Turkey's; she disregarded a guarantee of neutrality offered her by the Allies and joined our enemies. Mr. Ince's inquiries should be addressed to the Porte.

I did not say, as Mr. Ince pretends, that "Constantinople is to be part of the swag awarded to Russia." Neither the proposal nor the vocabulary is mine. What I did say, and what I want Mr. Ince to try to understand, is that, unless, as a result of this war, Russia obtains the secure passage of the Dardanelles, she will be forced by her economic dependence to throw in her future with that of the Central Powers. Does Mr. Ince want this?

Mr. Ince wants to know if "I think that any military success which Russia may now attain can compensate us for the lives sacrificed in Gallipoli and in Mesopotamia?" Artful Mr. Ince! He has confused two separate questions—and I am to be caught either way. Let me disentangle his barbed words. One question is, "Can any military success whatever compensate for the lives sacrificed?" The other is, "Can any Russian military

success compensate for our military losses in Gallipoli and in Mesopotamia?"

Whatever my personal prejudice might be with regard to the first, the answer of the world is clearly "Yes!" With regard to the second question, I may answer that the present Russian successes in Galicia, Asia Minor, and Persia are in a good way to overweigh our mishaps.

When Mr. Luce calls the Mesopotamian campaign a "disastrous defeat," I should like to know by what standards he is judging, and what his authority is for making such judgments. C. E. BECHHOFFER.

* * * "RUSSIA AT THE CROSS-ROADS."

Sir,—There is a pleasantly malicious review of my book in the current "Times" Literary Supplement. For example, the reviewer, having discovered among a host of names two only which are probably wrongly accented, announces gleefully that "in the matter of accents the book is a law unto itself." Again, it is suggested that I referred to Turgenev as a "Chauvinist." Of course, I did nothing of the sort; my point was that his work was, in opposition to the European school of Russian literature, part of the narrowly national ultra-Russian (i.e., Chauvinist) school. Surely the reviewer need not have confused the politics of the man with the style of his writings.

But this confusion is a trifle beside his main objection to my insistence on the landlocked state of Russia as the key to much of what is obscure in its life and thought. He calls this an attempt "to explain national characteristics by geographic influences." It is a piece of irony that in the very book under notice I had a long laugh at this type of attempts. I pointed out that such a vast variety of characteristics could be explained away by the geographical conditions of the vast empire, that not only Russia but all the world might be included. The land-lockedness of Russia seems to me to be significant, not as a geographic but as an economic fact. It is, I think, hardly my fault if the "Times" reviewer was unable to realise this. C. E. BECHHOFFER.

* * * WHAT BEFELL MR. BECHHOFFER.

Sir,—Mr. C. E. Bechhofer sat down weary and oscitant. On the table before him lay a copy of the Dictionary of Natural Biography, and the indexes to the last four volumes of THE NEW AGE. He gazed thoughtfully at a long list of names on a sheet of foolscap, and then with a blue pencil he struck out one after another until very few remained.

"My list is gradually becoming exhausted," he sighed. "Shaw has winced. Wells has writhed. Ramiro de Maeztu has retired before the point of my sharp pen. Norman have I nettled, and one more nail have I added to the coffin of Marmaduke Pickthall. How they would all like to consign me to a certain place!" He smiled, and turned over the pages of the Dictionary of National Biography. "The Devil only knows who is to be my next victim," he muttered.

He was unusually drowsy and sleepy. The fact that soon all the men worth reviling would have been dealt with added to the torpor that seized him. He let his head droop on the table.

Suddenly he felt a touch on the shoulder. He raised his head and looked around. Before him stood a tall foreigner. Waxed moustaches adorned his dark face, and he had eyes which flashed. His chin came almost to a point.

Mr. Bechhofer looked bewildered. He had heard no knocking, nor the opening and shutting of the door, yet two feet away from him stood that demoniacal person.

"Bechhofer," said the owner of the flashy eyes, "I am He."

"He!" whined Mr. Bechhofer. "Who—what?"

"I am the one and only, the Devil. You just remarked that only I knew who was to be your next victim."

"I—I—" stammered poor frightened Mr. Bechhofer. "There are to be no more victims," continued the Devil.

"I have followed your stories week by week in THE NEW AGE, and I congratulate you on the thoroughness with which you have served me."

"I served you?" moaned Mr. Bechhofer.

"Yes. Who are the real leaders of England? The men among whom you have wrought confusion. Who really count in this age of strife and oppression? Why, the leading lights whom you have dimmed in the eyes of the few people who have a little perspicacity. That is how you have served my cause well. Therefore you have found favour in mine eyes."

"Batishka!" burst from the lips of Mr. Bechhofer.

In his excitement he broke into Russian. Beads of perspiration stood on his forehead. The room seemed to grow hot, hotter.

"You will come with me," said the Devil, "to reap your reward."

Mr. Bechhofer jumped to his feet.

"How can I come with you?" he cried. "I have heaps of work to do. I must explain Russia to England. I am the only Englishman who has ever been to Russia!"

"I cannot help that. You must follow me," said the Devil.

"Oh, if I had served Russia with half the zeal I have served the Devil, I should not have been cut off before mine old age," muttered Mr. Bechhofer.

"Come; we must not delay." The Devil was getting impatient.

"It's hot! It's burning hot!" groaned Mr. Bechhofer. "Maeztu, Shaw, Wells, Norman, forgive me. . . . I'm coming! . . . I'm coming! . . ."

With a shriek, Mr. Bechhofer awoke. He picked up the sheet of foolscap which had fallen to the floor and tore it in pieces.

"Enough!" he cried. "Enough! Once more will I write of my beloved Russia." J. BULVAR SCHWARTZ.

* * * THE BIBLE AS GROTESQUE.

Sir,—The Bible must indeed be grotesque. Witness the divine comedy which is now being enacted. On the one hand the Archbishop of Canterbury is saying, "For Christ's sake, don't stop fighting," and, on the other, close upon 1,500 young men have already been arrested for Christ's sake rather than fight. And this is not all. From a question asked in the House of Commons last Thursday, it appears that "The Sermon on the Mount," by the Bishop of Oxford, had been seized by the police at Penarth, in South Wales, and from subsequent remarks it did not seem quite clear as to whether the possession of a New Testament might not constitute an offence under the Defence of the Realm Act, and this in spite of the fact that the Church has said we are fighting for the principles of Christianity.

Comedy, however, is not unmixed with tragedy, and it behoves us therefore to find out how we stand. Hitherto we have been led to believe that the traditions of men were the abominations of God. But, of course, if the Lord Archbishop has submitted his Testament to the powers that be for blue-pencilling and has squared matters, then at least he ought to play the game and tip us the wink! T. C.

* * * "ARABIAN NIGHTS" AS GROTESQUE.

Sir,—I find it a little difficult to follow the æsthetic footsteps of Mr. Huntly Carter. For instance, no sooner had I got into the stride of his intensely interesting article on "The Nights" then there came a leading Spanish paper to alter my direction. This paper, "El Impartial," quotes a long extract taken either from one of Mr. Carter's articles contributed to THE NEW AGE or from one of his subsequent books. It is in the form of a panegyric on the æsthetic interest of the Russian ballet, which hardly accords with what he says about the ballet in the "Arabian Nights" article. I think it was Mr. Carter who first discovered the true merits of the Russian ballet to the English reading public through THE NEW AGE, and I have noticed that his opinion on these merits are always being quoted in this country and abroad, especially in Europe and America. May I ask him what his latest opinion, as stated in the "Nights," denotes? Is it change or inconsistency? I notice two errors in the "Nights" article. They might easily be printer's errors. Of course, Landor did not write the "Heptameron" as a semicolon after "Pentameron" would denote, and "Harund" should be *Harun*. F. W. BRADFORD.

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Press Cuttings.

No comment, as far as we know, has yet been made upon our suggestion of last week that the war loan of a hundred millions should be raised without interest. As a witness of the willingness of the wealthy classes to share the sacrifices of the war, it would, we are certain, redound to their glory; and not only to their glory, but to their security. As for the small investor whom, doubtless, the Government here as in France will desire to attract, the prospect of sharing in such a loan to the nation will be itself bait enough. Hundreds of small savings would, we believe, be placed at the service of the Government, and all the more readily if the wealthy had set the example of patriotism. After all, the crisis now upon us is the greatest England has ever known. If this is not the time to do all we can for the State the time will certainly never come. And, again, the hundred millions, even as a gift, would be a mere percentage of the capital safeguarded to its private owners. Its expenditure is therefore not much more than an insurance premium of a low rather than a high rate. We may be quite certain that if the war goes against us there will be no hoarding possible. Much more than the loan of a hundred millions may yet be necessary: perhaps even the commandeering of it!—THE NEW AGE (August 20, 1914).

The late Mr. J. J. Hill may have been a Railway Magnate, and a Leader of Industry, and One of Whom America Might Well Be Proud; but one detects certain flies in the ointment of which his obituary (as so many others) is composed. For example:—

"A name of detestation to the railway workers, for his methods were as ruthless as Harriman's."

"His creed was to get the rails down as quickly as possible, so as to begin running trains and doing business. As a consequence many of his lines were, for long periods after they were built, extraordinarily frail and crude in construction, even to the point of danger in operation."

"Never was the favour of princes more uncertain than that of Mr. Hill in the conduct of his business; no subordinate, no matter how important the services which he had rendered might be, felt secure in his position even from day to day."

"He combined an apparently reckless frankness of speech with a baffling and often seemingly unnecessary tortuousness."

"In the financial world no one knew when Mr. Hill spoke whether he meant what he said or not."

It fills in a picture; but it is hardly that of the ideal citizen of the ideal Republic.—"Observer."

He calculated that if we continued the war until we achieved a decided victory the National Debt would be increased by at least 5,000 millions. We were raising the money by offering five per cent. interest. In time of war the financier was able virtually to blackmail the State. The Government did not go to the financiers in the City and say: "We are going to take all you have and give you a shilling a day." They did not conscript anything. They said: "On what terms will you permit us to have credit?" Probably, unless some restrictive measure was used, interest would rise higher still. Five per cent., with an additional 1 per cent. for sinking fund, on 5,000 millions amounted to 300 millions. Our normal peace expenditure was 200 millions a year, so that our total revenue requirement would be 500 millions.—MR. R. L. OUTHWAITE at the Land Values League Conference.

A very bitter feeling has grown up amongst the ranks of organised labour owing to the action of the Isle of Man Labour Exchange being used as a medium for supplying blacklegs in connection with the dispute at Fleetwood and Heysham, especially when it is remembered that the seamen and firemen involved offered arbitration prior to the stoppage. The offer was definitely made to the Board of Trade across the floor of the House of Commons. This was refused by the railway companies, and during the past week twenty-four men have been sent by the Isle of Man Labour Exchange to "sign on" on boats involved in the dispute.—"Reynolds's Newspaper."

Taking into consideration the increased cost of living and the more severe conditions of labour, can it be said that the position of the cotton operatives to-day, as com-

pared with that of a generation ago has improved in proportion to the improvement in the size and technical efficiency of their trade union organisation? We know that it cannot. If trade unionism is to be made a live, fighting force it must not only get back the old conception of its function as an industrial organisation, it must take on a new conception of its possibilities. It must cease to be a mere bargaining machine, and must look to and work for a future in which it will be a genuine partner in industry.—"The Cotton Factory Times."

All that has happened and is now happening in this country could not have taken place without the consent of official Labour. Official Labour has opened the door for every reactionary aim. When it joined the Coalition, Labour parted with the last shred of its independence, and must accept a special responsibility for all that is done by the Coalition, and for the repressive policy that is being pursued. That fact is sinking into many minds. Who can doubt that Mr. Arthur Henderson, by reason of his position in the Cabinet and the interests that he is supposed to represent there, could have stopped Conscription? Those thousands of men who are dragged before munitions courts and fined, often for the most trivial offences, the men and lads conscripted from their homes, the workmen arrested at dead of night and deported without trial from their district, the suppression of pamphlets and leaflets whose point of view is not that of the Government, the police raiding of private homes, the savage sentences of imprisonment—what part of all this has drawn one word of protest from official Labour in the Commons? There has not been one word of protest. How could there be, seeing that official Labour is as culpable and deeply committed as anybody else? Indeed, these strange weapons are part of what Mr. Arthur Henderson, quickly learning the new language, calls "the stern enforcement of the law."—"The Labour Leader."

Perhaps one of the most striking features of the war has been the comparatively little inconvenience caused to the general public by the withdrawal of, roughly, one medical practitioner in every three from ordinary medical practice and their transference into the Army.

There must be very few necessary callings in which the withdrawal of a third of their members can have caused such slight inconvenience; medical charges have not increased in the slightest to the public. . . . In the opinion of your medical officer the whole arrangements for general medical practice are on a wrong basis altogether. At the present time every doctor is in competition with his fellows for his daily bread, and this competition is good neither for the medical man nor for his patients. . . . Medical success is not necessarily dependent upon a doctor's skill and knowledge; it depends upon much besides—for example, the size of his house, the luxuriance of his motor-car, the charm and ability of the doctor's wife: all these influence his worldly success. But should he venture to criticise those who employ him! How fares he, for example, should he tell his best-paying patient there is nothing really the matter with her, that she needs work, and that employment would rob her of all her fancied ailments? Should he tell his chief magnate that the death-rate from consumption is due to his germ-breeding cottages, how would he fare?—M.O.H., Isle of Wight.

There are slave-making ants of many degrees. Some keep slaves as aids to their own industry; some let the captives do the dirty work, while the masters go to war for still further riches; but at last we come to an old-established aristocracy so dependent on their slaves that, if they lose them, they die of hunger because they cannot feed themselves. Huber placed thirty of them in a box with larvæ, pupæ, and a supply of honey. More than half of the Amazons died of hunger in less than two days. In pity, he gave them just one of their black domestics.

"This individual, unassisted, established order, formed a chamber in the earth, gathered together the larvæ, extricated several young ants that were ready to quit the condition of pupæ, and preserved the life of the remaining Amazons."

Fight for honour, ye insects, fight when ye must, defend your homes, punish the insolent aggressor, but know that in the long run it is folly and death to fight for profit, for slaves, for vassals, for "indemnities"! The easier and the more complete your victory, the greater the price that will be exacted for it.—"The Nation."