

THE NEW AGE

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

It is commonly enough said that this is a national war; but it appears not yet to be realised what a national war implies. Among other things it involves us in a two-fold strategy, that of the military and that of the civil population; and of these two forms, indispensable in a national war, one is just as important as the other. Acting, however, upon the assumption that the war would be short, our military authorities, we know, provided themselves at the outset with only a striking force, leaving to be painfully created subsequently, and only after catastrophic instruction, the larger military force which we now possess. Great has been the abuse showered upon them for their lack of foresight, and especially by the civilian Press. But what is it but a repetition of their error into which the civil Press has itself fallen in failing to foresee the need of civil organisation and in failing to provide it? Exactly as the military authorities assumed that the dispatch of the Expeditionary Force would settle our business with Germany, and that thereafter we should have no need for further military exertions, so the civil authorities, Governmental and Press, have assumed that a few hasty improvisations of civil organisation would suffice for civil strategy and that thereafter society could be left to take care of itself. What is worse, the civil authorities are slower to learn than ever the military authorities have been. The consequences are to be seen at this moment. While, on the one side, we have a military organisation almost as complete as thought and effort can make it, we have, on the other side, a civil organisation which differs from the organisation of peace only by being more chaotic and confused. Nobody, in fact, can compare the two indispensable strategies of a national war without coming to the conclusion that as effective as we are in the military province we are ineffective in the social province. But there is no doubt that this weakness will tell in the long run against us.

The longer the war lasts the more certainly, indeed, will our social defects betray us; for it is of the essence of a national war that it is a war of social organisms in which the superior social organisation wins. When, therefore, we appeal to the Government and Press to devote some time to the consideration of social reconstruction, now while the war is still being fought, it is not with any special anxiety to grind our axe, but in the conviction which they will one day share with us that the organisation for war of the nation at home is as necessary and must be as complete as the organisation of the Army and Navy.

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That the nation at large is ready to be organised is one of the satisfactory certainties of the situation. Never before in all history, we believe, has there been a nation more ready than our own to make whatever sacrifices may be necessary or advisable for the conduct of a war. The Press writes, it is true, as if it were the nation that does not yet realise the stake of the war; but, in fact, it is not the nation or public opinion that fails in this respect, but the small minority of the Press and the governing classes. To what measure of defence, declared by the Government to be necessary, has the nation objected? The complaint, on the other hand, is that the Government has not yet gone nearly far enough. They have organised us in certain directions, but in other directions, no less glaringly disorganised, they have utterly neglected to turn their attention. Nay, they have even made matters worse in some respects in attempting to improve only a part here and a part there. Yet we shall see, when the day of reckoning comes, that the burden of the blame will be laid upon "democracy." Lord Cromer will remind us that he always said that democracy was on its trial, and that war has now proved the failure of democracy. It will, however, have done nothing of the kind; for we repeat it and we challenge anybody to deny it, that a more willing people than our own at this moment never existed. From one end of

the country to the other, in every class constituting the nation proper, you will find a spirit of unity in respect of the war and of willingness in respect of its civil conduct that cannot possibly be improved. All that is wanting is the direction that should come from the classes who have taken good care to maintain authority exclusively in their own hands. Let it not, therefore, to whatever other cause our failure (if we should fail) may be attributed, be ascribed to democracy or to the nation at large that in the day of trial the nation failed its rulers. Rather let it be said that the rulers are failing the nation; for not only will this be true, but wise. For we cannot by any chance change the nation, but we may change its rulers.

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As an example of the miserable inadequacy of our governing classes' realisation of the meaning of a national war, we cannot do better than read the interview with Sir John Jackson which was published in the "Daily Mail" of last Monday. Sir John Jackson turns out to have been the contractor referred to in our notes of last week, and it was upon the references in the Press to his doings that the interview took place. Well, what had Sir John Jackson to say for himself? Only that far from exercising his power to extract the highest profits for his firm's services to the State, he contented himself with exactly half his usual rate of profits. With this disclosure he apparently expects us to be satisfied; but, on the contrary, this defence of his profiteering makes us more uneasy than ever: for it reveals a view of the duty of the capitalist classes in time of war which might, perhaps, be tenable during a police-raid, but which is profoundly inapplicable to a national war such as the present. Sir John Jackson, moreover, is not one of the worst of his kind. Far be it from us to charge him with an exceptionally low view either of his duty or of the need of the State. He assures us, indeed (and we believe him) that from the moment of his commission he thought of nothing else but to perform his work with the utmost dispatch and efficiency. What, however, we have to observe is that such a man should still require that his duty should be paid for in profits over and above the cost of its discharge—as if, in fact, the war were nothing more to him than a hobby of the Government which he would indulge to the extent of half his usual profits, but no further. *The comparison, you will see, in Sir John Jackson's mind, was between the less and the more urgent, the less and the more normal. The war, he was prepared to assume, was something out of the normal, and therefore worthy of a concession of profits equally, in his opinion, out of the normal. But what it was not, in his opinion, was something unique, unparalleled and beyond all comparison with anything merely normal. This, however, is exactly what this war is; and if our governing classes have not yet realised it, we must make them realise it. To compare the present war with anything hitherto known, either in peace or in war, is to be blind to the distinction of this war over every event that has ever occurred in our history. It is a catastrophe, it is a day of judgment, it is the final reckoning, it is everything that expresses a unique and final decision. To treat it as if it were of half the national concern of any ordinary State affair—as Sir John Jackson treats it—is utterly to mistake its character; and the very fact that such a man does it is one of the most disquieting symptoms we have seen.*

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We have said that Sir John Jackson is not the worst of the profiteers. Our case, in fact, is that he is probably one of the best. What may be expected of the worst when they have his example to follow may be seen in the reports that are now being published of the dividends of various companies. Take, for example, the colliery companies. It is the "Times" that informs us that "the prosperity [note the irony!] of colliery proprietors and coal merchants is increasing by leaps and

bounds." And the "Times," surely in the same spirit of irony, adds that "since the Limitation of Prices Act was passed, both profits and dividends have been increasing rapidly." With the "prosperity" of the ship-owners we are familiar enough; and of the "prosperity" of almost every other company doing business with the State the financial columns of the Press are witness. The "Financial News" is even horrified by the profit our business men are making; and calculates that of the four millions a day we are spending on the war, about a million is private profit! What, in heaven's name, is to be the end of it? And what, before that question is answered, is the possible defence of it? There is to our mind only one excuse our profiteers can plead and that is that they do not take the war seriously. But that, again, is to excuse criminality by imbecility; for not to take the present war seriously is to be incapable of taking anything seriously; it is to be less than human! The association of private profits with a war of this character gives rise, moreover, to a series of spectacles more appalling to contemplate than the horrors of war itself. We actually see men making themselves rich out of the sale of their brothers' lives, rifling the pockets of their dead friends, and taxing a bloody war for their private advantage. The monsters of Mr. Dyson's imagination are angels by the side of the men who are making war-profits; and the most sanguinary battle is a pastoral in comparison with the fiendish sport of our profiteers. Anybody with a spark of humanity must admit that this is so; and, in fact, we do not see any eagerness on the part of profiteers to make their names known. For the most part they skulk behind titles and company-names while stabbing the public in the dark. What, however, they cannot conceal is the fact of their presence among us. It smells to heaven. The nation, we know, is growing poorer; it cannot but be so. We are growing poorer by four millions a day. At the same time, some few thousand amongst us are growing richer, richer as the nation grows poorer. Only to think of that strange paradox is to realise how far we are from even the beginning of a commonwealth. And when we reflect that profiteers can still live in peace in our midst, and go in no danger of being hung upon lamp-posts, we may learn how far we are also from even feeling like a commonwealth.

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That, sooner or later, a peremptory halt will be called to making profit out of the war we do not, however, doubt for one moment. It is not in human nature to allow a scandal of this kind to continue for the whole length of a national war for existence. The Conscription of Wealth, ridiculed a few months ago, but now almost everywhere suppressed with alarm, is as certain to appear again as a hidden fire will burn its way to light. Nor will the mere taxation of current income, to whatever extent it is carried, satisfy the demands that will one day be made. What will be insisted upon is that, as the war will certainly leave the nation poorer in actual capital, capitalists themselves shall be made also poorer; for it is monstrous to allow that the capital of a country can be destroyed and capitalists be as well off as before. Once more we say, therefore, that the Conscription of Capital is coming. We do not, of course, profess to know by what means or in what form it will come: but the choice most certainly is between a quasi-voluntary surrender and an out and out compulsory forfeiture. Our capitalist classes may, if they choose, after examining the auguries, conclude of their own free motion to strip themselves of every penny of profit they have made and furthermore to cancel their loans to the nation by, say, a half or three-quarters of the nominal amount. Or they may wait until events create a demand for the repudiation of the war-debt in which they stand a chance of losing their all. One or other of these courses is probable, it appears to us, unless our wealthy classes are prepared for a third course which would be even worse for them, namely, surrender to

Germany and the conscription of their wealth for the repayment of Germany's, instead of England's, war-loan.

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The problem of Money, however, may be left for the moment. There is a more immediate problem with which we must deal: it is the problem of food. Replying to Mr. Churchill, Mr. Pretyman on behalf of the Government made a confession upon this subject which we can only say should have been followed by his instant dismissal from office. The problem, he said, was so difficult that he could see no way of solving it. Then what on earth is he in office for? Suppose it had been said by the Army or Navy that *their* problem, that of overcoming Germany, was too difficult for them—we fancy that public opinion would have some comment to make. Is the problem of feeding the nation more difficult than the problem of defending the nation? The utmost sympathy, however, seems to be felt for the Government by some of the very journals who would kick the Government out if it confessed to being unable to solve the military problem. The "Times," for instance—and we know what a fire-eater the "Times" is—asks in piteous tones for mercy upon Mr. Pretyman on the plea that nobody knows whether and by what means prices can be reduced. There are, it says, "plenty of unscrupulous rogues who would shear their fellow-countrymen to the skin if they saw the way to do it"; and these, the "Times" says, should be hung as high as Haman. But, after all, it asks: "Are there any such people actually doing it?" That there are such people, and that they are taking advantage of the Law of Supply and Demand to shear their fellow-countrymen to the skin, is as certain as that none of them will be hung. The "Times" must know it even better than we can guess it. Food prices do not go up of their own accord. The laws of economics are, at bottom, every one of them personal; and behind all the movements of prices are the movements of the minds of men. Who are the dealers in food that are now making excessive profits? Great or small, they are also the people who are shearing us to the skin. Let us not beat about the bushes for scoundrels, or blame America for what is the fault of our own fellow-citizens. Every trader now making a penny of profit in excess of his pre-war profit is responsible for his share of the trouble the whole problem is causing us. Let him offer what excuse he pleases, our verdict upon him is the same: he is an enemy of the nation and we should not protest if every one of his kind were treated as the "Times" suggests. One or two pour encourager les autres would, however, be all that was necessary. Supply and Demand would hang by the first rope; and we should hear no more during the war of *that* Law.

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To confess, however, that the food problem is insoluble is something more than an isolated admission: it involves the admission that our war with Germany must end in a compromise. For, as we have said, this present war differs from all preceding wars in being even more an economic than a military war. It follows, therefore, that the maintenance in efficiency (including, of course, the moral of the nation) of the civil population is as indispensable to the satisfactory conclusion of the war as the maintenance of the Army in efficiency. But how is this to be effected if the food-problem is left unsolved? We do not expect an Army that marches upon its belly to fight upon starvation rations. It is our pride, in fact—and one of the improvements upon historic precedent on which the Government is to be congratulated—that never was military Army better fed than our own during the present war. But if, as we maintain, the civilian population comes equally into the purview of the national strategy, and is no less condemned to march upon its belly, its stinting of supplies in the matter of food is precisely a return to the worst traditions of the War

Office, only in respect of the civil instead of the military arm. Moreover, there is no conceivable excuse for it. Excuses of a kind, no doubt, there have always been even for the failure of the War Office in the past to feed its troops; and excuses of exactly the same cogency could be pleaded to-day. But the fact is that they are not now made, and we should not listen to them. Why, then, should we listen to the excuses that are being made for the failure of the Government to feed the *civilian* troops? Feed us or resign is the order that should be given the Government by the nation. Feed us or stop the war is next door to it.

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We do not pretend to have a complete scheme for feeding the civilian population. But we are certain that one can easily be devised and easily carried out. As easily, we mean, as any other great Act of social re-organisation has been devised and carried out. Who would not have paled at the thought of equipping and supplying an Army of five million men scattered throughout all parts of the world? Yet it is done. Who would not have shrunk from the organisation implied even in the Military Service Acts? Yet they have been carried out. We have only to imagine ourselves as an island under siege to realise the circumstances in which the equitable feeding of the whole population would be carried out under necessity and upon demand—for we are by no means of the opinion that the blockade of England would mean the surrender of England. And we are far enough from that condition yet. On the contrary the markets of the world are open to us as they are closed to Germany. Our problem is therefore the infinitely simpler problem of organising our resources, home and foreign, and of distributing them where they are needed—the Law of Supply and Demand being openly abandoned. We suggest the immediate creation of a Civil Commissariat Committee of the Cabinet and its division into two sub-committees, each with power to co-opt upon its membership the best available practical men: one committee to be responsible for the purchase and importation from abroad of the foreign supplies we most need (all luxuries excluded); and the other Committee to superintend the collection of our home supplies. This is the first step. The next would be to set up in every county, county-borough, district and parish, voluntary but representative committees charged under the Cabinet Committee with the duties of requisitioning the home supplies of their neighbourhood, distributing them equitably, receiving and distributing their share of the foreign supplies, and transferring all surpluses to the committee next above them. A uniform price over the whole country should be charged, and for this purpose all railway and other carriage should be free of cost. The inhabitants of Orkney or of Cornwall should be as free to buy food as they now buy stamps and at the price they would pay if they were in any other part of the country. And do not say, if you please, that this is impossible. Once more we have the Army for an example. If it is possible to feed the Army uniformly it is much easier to feed the self-contained nation uniformly. And let us not take Mr. Pretyman's word for it, or the "Times'" word for it, that it is impossible. Left to such people to decide, nothing worth while will ever be done, for it is notorious that the "Times" in particular has always opposed every national work on the plea that it is impossible. And even to-day it is only with the military aspect of the war that the "Times" is concerned, and that because the military aspect brings grist to its mill of sensation. The fact remains that such a scheme of food-distribution is well within the scope of the nation; and, moreover, if the war continues, that it will be imperative if we are not to be defeated. It is only to-day that Mr. Pretyman dare tell us that it is impossible and still remain a member of the Government. To-morrow or next year a member of the Government who should say so would be hailed as Rip Van Winkle—or something much worse.

Foreign Affairs.

By S. Verdad.

THE participation of Italy in the Balkan campaign rendered a declaration of war on Germany inevitable. It was bound to come, Balkan campaign or not, and the delay, which to many people seemed puzzling, was largely due to financial reasons. The economic dependence of Italy upon Germany has been more than hinted at in these columns from time to time; but with the recent Conference in Paris, and the visit of Mr. Runciman to Italy a few weeks ago, it became possible to complete the negotiations and the plans for making Italy financially independent of Germany and transferring the economic basis of her financial and industrial activities to other lands. Nor is it right to suggest, as I have seen it suggested in some quarters already, that this formal declaration of war leaves the military situation unchanged. There are vital parts of the German Empire which lie nearer to the Italian line than any parts of Austria; and even if the Germans do not fear a regular invasion they must detail large bodies of men to guard the frontier from (roughly) the Lake of Constance to the Danube where it enters Bavaria. This means a considerable extension of a line which the enemy is already hard put to to defend.

Nor is this the only likely sequel to the Italian declaration of war. It is not to be supposed that other moves have not been arranged to harmonise with it. We know that the Russian troops, adequately provided with munitions, have now reached the Carpathian Passes, and have contented themselves during the last few days with taking possession of heights of strategic value; that they have overrun the Bukovina, and that they are ready to make themselves masters of Galicia. But it would be of some aid to them if they could send a few divisions through Roumanian territory, and recent comments in the German and Austro-Hungarian papers lead one to suppose that the enemy is not indifferent to the presence of large bodies of Russian troops in close proximity to the Roumanian border. A declaration of war by Roumania and offers of aid by Bucharest to Petrograd—these, let us hope, are events of the very near future. No matter what the Roumanians may do, the fate of Bulgaria is clear. The Russian and Italian reinforcements which have arrived in the Balkans have not been sent there for nothing; and General Sarrail is now in charge of a large army which can operate with perfect ease on several sectors at once.

For the last three or four months the inspired section of the German Press has openly expressed the view that Roumania is not to be counted upon; and no "arrangements" with regard to the purchase of cereals have caused that view to be altered. The "Frankfurter Zeitung" of August 21 is typical of what the German papers have been permitted, or not impossibly instructed, to publish in order to prepare the public for the unwelcome announcement that yet another enemy has to be faced. In an article dealing with the general military situation the "Frankfurter" says:—

There can be no more doubt about it—Roumania can be held back only by a check to the Russian successes on the eastern front. It is well known that this is the only difference of opinion between the Entente and the Roumanian Government: Bratiano, the Roumanian Prime Minister, wishes to behold the deeds of others before joining, while Russia would be glad to have the co-operation of the Roumanian army in securing a decision. The plans of the Entente are pretty clear. Greece, under Venizelos, and Roumania will join hands with General Sarrail and the Russians in conquering the Balkans; Serbia will be restored, and Turkey will have the choice of making peace or being exterminated. Then, according to the calculations of the Entente, two essential war aims would have been attained, and the moment would have come to treat with Germany.

The writer adds that these plans must not be neglected; and, what is even more surprising (in view of the strict censorship, I mean) is the fact that he considers how they can be countered. His only hope rests upon the factor of time, and what Hindenburg may be able to do before the plans of the Entente can be carried out. The Greek army, he suggests, will not be induced to march before the elections take place, and the date provisionally fixed is October 8. On the other hand, he believes, Roumania will not care to take action without the assurance of Greek support as well as the support of the Allied armies in the Balkans; and Hindenburg, in consequence, has six weeks or so "to destroy or alter the basis on which the Allied agitation in Roumania and Greece really rests." This confession is all the more curious when it is recollected that Hindenburg has up to the present been unable to secure the reserves he obviously desires in order to be able to hold his own line; and it is certain that Bothmer would never have been allowed to retire if Hindenburg could have taken steps to supply him with reinforcements.

It is not without interest to note these references to Greece. The Germans have never professed to have much confidence in the Balkan peoples; and they realise quite well that Greece, having been bullied and cajoled into betraying Serbia and the Entente Powers, may be induced by similar measures to leave Germany in the lurch. It is useless for the Kaiser to repeat his warning telegram, threatening "frightfulness," to his brother-in-law on the Greek throne; for the Allied armies and the Bulgarians are the only forces at present operating on Greek soil. The former can easily prevent German soldiers from arriving to administer "frightfulness"; and outrages by the latter are only likely to provoke an insurrection against the present Greek Cabinet. On the whole, the Balkan prospects are at last excellent, so far as we are concerned.

The diplomatists have done their work well at this stage, and we may leave the results to speak for themselves. In these circumstances it is to be hoped that Mr. Lloyd George may form the advantageous habit of thinking twice before he speaks once, and especially of consulting his own more recent utterances before committing himself in the House of Commons. In one of his first speeches after taking over the War Office—a matter of a few weeks ago—he gave it to be understood that "we have plenty of men," a fact, he added, which it was well for the enemy to know. Everybody understood this to mean that there were plenty of men available under the present Military Service Acts; and it was therefore disconcerting to hear this optimist saying in the House of Commons only last week that he could not pledge himself not to raise the age for military service to forty-five—we wanted, it seemed, more men, money and munitions. This is the sort of contradiction which makes both friends and enemies shrug their shoulders; and everybody knows that the raising of the age would provoke much resentment. The extra allowances for the middle-class recruits, or, rather, conscripts, are not being given; pensions and sickness allowances are being harshly and carelessly administered; the unfit are being enlisted by the hundred and discharged without compensation or recognition. These are factors which had not to be faced when the Military Service Acts were under discussion in the early part of the year, and it is idle to say that they do not count. A little more officialdom, a little more harshness, will lead to a demand for the cessation of the war—and that in the very moment of victory. These conditions are known to the War Office. It is not too much to imagine a Northcliffe campaign in favour of stopping the war because of the pension and allowance muddles—a campaign based on information provided from an authoritative source. Have not stranger things happened; and is not our Welsh politician more treacherous than a Greek?

War and its Makers.

VII.—TOWARDS COMMON SENSE.

FOR the success of any project it is absolutely necessary that its advocates should clearly distinguish between attainable and visionary aims. A thorough regeneration of the world is a mere chimera. There is no agency that can bring it about. But while to abolish all national rivalries may not be practicable, perhaps not desirable, it is not beyond human power to prevent rivalry from degenerating into savagery. I shall not, I trust, be accused of Utopianism; but I must remark that, even greed does not seem to me to constitute an insuperable obstacle to the establishment between States of those laws of conduct which govern the relations between individuals. On the contrary, once men are convinced that national aggrandisement is not a synonym with national enrichment, the very motives of self-interest which now make for strife will automatically be enlisted on the side of peace.

Common opinion to the contrary notwithstanding, there is nothing to show that fighting and killing for their own sakes are—so far as the bulk of living things is concerned—among the natural activities of men or animals. Even a tiger does not fight for fun: it fights for food or for sexual gratification. It would vastly prefer to satisfy its appetites without fighting. Even with regard to persons who devote their lives to hunting from pure love of it, you will find upon analysis that what they enjoy is not slaughter, but the excitement of the chase, the skill, the peril, the endurance, the sense of success. Any other occupation which fulfils these conditions—which affords an outlet for superabundant energy—is equally welcome. The instinct of competition, on the other hand, is a natural instinct, both among men and animals; but it can be, and often is, gratified without bloodshed.

And no less natural than the instinct of competition is the instinct of co-operation. The average human being is a gregarious creature. Few men voluntarily choose the desert for a home. Few are able to be alone. The vast majority are driven by an irresistible, though maybe unacknowledged, sense of their own incompleteness to join themselves on to their fellows. Hence the family, the clan, the nation. Hence also the trade-guild and the social club. Naturally, the co-operation is most spontaneous where the similarity is closest. But instances are not wanting to show that the recognition of a common interest is amply sufficient to overcome the separatist force of dissimilarity. A white man will associate himself with a black or yellow man for purposes of commerce. A Christian will enter into partnership with a Jew or a Mohammedan. Men of different creeds, complexions, and languages will be found manning a ship, working a mill, tilling a farm, side by side, provided there be no artificial restrictions to forbid contact. Men and even women of different classes will sit on the same committee to transact some business in which they are all interested, though they may cut each other in the street. And likewise with more far-reaching associations.

We have seen the minute political atoms into which Europe was once divided gradually coalescing into larger masses; so that a small number of Powers now occupies the place formerly held by hundreds of petty principalities. In some cases, no doubt, this development was brought about by Imperialist ambition; in others by the centripetal force of Nationalist idealism. But in not a few the consolidation was the result of sheer common sense. The evolution of Germany offers an example of a successful combination of these three principles. Prussian policy and racial affinity—or what passes for such—obviously facilitated the unification of the Empire. But the way for the political federation was prepared by a fiscal fusion: without the Zoll-Verein, the dreams of the National-Verein might have remained empty dreams.

Switzerland affords a good illustration of common sense triumphing, not only without any assistance from Imperialist schemings and Nationalist dreamings, but, as it were, in defiance thereof. That State is inhabited by three populations differing from each other in race and language; yet these differences do not make for dispersion, if they are not worked upon by propagandas directed to that end. Equally instructive lessons are to be found nearer home. The Scottish and English nations, after centuries of reciprocal hostility, agreed that it was to their reciprocal advantage to come together; and now, save for a handful of doctrinaires intoxicated by the gospel of Celtic and Saxon Nationalism, you will not find on either side of the border any inclination to fall apart. The loyalty of French Canadians to the British Empire and the union of Dutch and British Afrianders under one flag point the same moral. Conversely, a quarrel about taxes sufficed to sunder all the ties of blood, speech, and tradition which bound the British Colonies of North America to the Mother Country.

An international agreement would be only an extension of this process: it would be simply doing in a larger area what has already been done in a smaller. There is nothing intrinsically impossible about it—provided the agreement is based upon a recognition of a common interest. The principle admitted, the practical shape in which it may body itself forth becomes a matter of secondary consideration. Where there is a will there is a way. The suggestion of a "United States of Europe," on the model of the United States of America, put forward some years ago, holds an ideal to be devoutly wished for and striven after. But many things will have to happen before it can materialise. Other programmes elaborated more recently may possess similar drawbacks.

The need of the moment, it seems to me, is to create among the various nations and their rulers a volume of opinion that they have a common interest in the abolition of the organised murder called War—a volume strong enough to secure the adoption of a pacific policy in lieu of the pugnacious and predatory attitude hallowed by traditional barbarism, but utterly incongruous with the spirit of modern civilisation. This movement must run parallel with the movement for educational reform. The aim of the latter would be to work by the negative method of exposing the fallacies of national and racial prejudice; that of the former to convince people of the positive advantages of inter-nationalism; and both movements would converge in the advocacy of peace between States on the same legal and ethical principles on which peace has already been established between individual citizens of each State. There is nothing Utopian or visionary about such a project. If private war—once regarded as a legitimate institution—has been abolished by the common sense of mankind, it is not unreasonable to expect a like recognition of the absurdity of all war.

Needless to say, the reasonableness of a proposal is no guarantee for its speedy acceptance. Like every other effort at innovation, this also will have to overcome, one by one, all the thousand and one obstacles with which tradition, custom, and vested interests never fail to strew the path of change. It will have to overcome, not only the scepticism and the stupidity of individuals, but the far more formidable opposition of organised institutions—the Church as a body, the Press as a body, the scholastic profession as a body, the financial world, the big armament ring, the ship-builders—all the purveyors of military and naval accoutrements—the Army and Navy themselves, the kings, diplomatists, and statesmen in every country, will be found banded together in a solid phalanx. But, on the other hand, there is in every country the mass of people who, having no particular axe to grind, may be relied upon to weigh the arguments in favour of peace impartially.

It has been contended that lawless lust of territory is the one great point upon which despotisms and demo-

cracies agree; and a superficial reading of History would seem to bear out the contention. Republics have to answer for as many bloody chapters as monarchies. But a more careful perusal of the records of the past reveals the all-significant fact that, whereas the world has known many genuine despotisms, it has yet to witness a real democracy. To make a true Republic it is not enough that the sovereignty of the State should be vested in the people: the people must be capable of exercising its sovereign rights. Now, I defy anyone to name a single State, ancient, mediæval, or modern, in which the popular vote upon a matter of foreign policy has ever been obtained in the way in which it should—after a free inquiry into the merits of the question and a serious consideration of all the arguments for or against war. Vehement declamation is one thing and judicial deliberation is another; and while monarchical and oligarchical councils have always arrived at their decisions by the latter process, the former has hitherto been the only method accessible to popular assemblies.

Take the present war as an example. The newspapers have not hesitated to describe it again and again as "a war of peoples, not of governments." Is it? When were the peoples consulted about it or about the policy which led up to it? Englishmen have for generations deluded themselves into the belief that they are free masters of their own destinies; and yet they are content to leave the conduct of foreign affairs—the matter which more directly than any other affects their very existence as a nation—entirely in the hands of a few men in whose omniscience and prudence they place implicit faith, without demanding any proof that their faith is not misplaced.

The foreign policy of the country is never discussed at general elections, it is rarely discussed in the House of Commons; and upon those rare occasions it is the endeavour of Ministers to disguise from inquisitive Members and the people whom they represent, rather than to disclose to them, the true motives and aims of their various experiments in the dangerous field of international relations. It is only when the fruit of their wisdom, secretly tended for years, has reached the point of ripeness—nay, of rottenness—that it is offered for popular consumption, under such a label as they choose to attach to it. A superannuated potato may thus be put on the market under the name of a succulent peach. The majority, unable to tell the difference, purchase it as such. A small minority may have their doubts; but if they dare express them they are treated as traitors to their country. Perhaps in time, when the fruit devoured in good faith manifests its true nature in ill health, the majority may come to find out their mistake. But meanwhile they are kept in their error by the combined efforts of all those who live by pandering to national prejudices or playing on national ignorance. Democracy, as the world has known it so far, means nothing more than a transition from the frying-pan of the despot into the fire of the demagogue.

The working classes, however, though amazingly short-sighted, are not altogether blind. Those patient multitudes of Europe that toil day and night over land and sea, and deep down in the pits beneath the ground, have always known that it is their sweat which provides the sinews of war—that it is their flesh and blood which pays for every square foot of territory added to the Empires of the world. And now they are beginning to realise how little they profit from each addition. They begin to see that after every war, be it as glorious as it may, the rich grow richer, and the poor become relatively poorer. Millions of hard-earned gold are blown away in smoke. The wealth accumulated in the course of many years is squandered in as many weeks. Sums far exceeding those which are ever devoted to the amelioration of life are voted for its destruction. Verily, in the words of a shrewd Highlander who returned from the stricken fields of France to moralise in a hospital, "It is silly wark killing folk." KOSMOPOLITES.

(To be concluded.)

Germany: Her Strength and Weakness.

Lectures delivered to members of the Workers' Educational Association, at Bangor, August, 1915.

By Professor Edward V. Arnold.

I.—TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING GERMANY.

WAR results from the clashing of ideas, peace from their reconciliation.

A peace on English ideas could only be made after an English conquest of Germany. That we now see to be unlikely, even more unlikely than a German conquest of England. Therefore we must be prepared to live with Germany, to accustom ourselves to her as a neighbour, a rival, possibly as a master and a tax-collector. Is it not wise then to try to understand her?

Yet the process is humbling. We none of us like to be worsted in argument, yet by defeat we learn. It has been the motto of the W.E.A. always to be ready to accept the truth, even when it comes from an unpopular statesman or a suspected class. To learn from a hated nation is the hardest task of all.

But all the great thinkers proclaim it necessary. "It is right to learn even from an enemy," said the Latin poet. "Hatred does not cease by hatred at any time; hatred ceases by love; this is an old rule. Let a man overcome anger by love, let him overcome evil by good: let him overcome the greedy by liberality, the liar by truth," said Gautama the enlightened. Six hundred years later the Teacher of Nazareth repeated the lesson "Love your enemies." Without sympathy there is no understanding. Therefore let us here pay first a tribute to an enemy, the King of Bavaria, who has recently prohibited the use of the "Hymn of Hate" throughout the schools of his kingdom. "It is not fitting," says this monarch, bitterly hostile to us but still an enlightened man, "that German children should be brought up to speak of their enemies with contempt or hatred."

There is room for such a spirit to spread in our country, and especially amongst its civilian population. It would help us to fight better now, and it would help us at the right moment to make peace. Our popular Press, with its cheap hatred and contempt, is hampering us in both: it is an unclean spirit to be cast out.

But you and I feel the difficulties. How, we say, can we feel anything but detestation for a nation which has brought untold miseries on the world, which began the war by an act of incredible treachery, which has carried it on in defiance of Christian sentiment and of international law, and whose victory will let loose Hell over the whole world? Therefore, as I am not a preacher, I will say no more about love for the moment, but go back to understanding. To the question let us reply by another: how is it that a nation standing high in civilisation, in science, in social and personal morality, to which for a hundred years past all other nations have resorted as their schoolmaster, appears suddenly to have changed its character and to stand forth as the scourge of the world?

To answer such a question would be to understand the war. We cannot fully answer it. We cannot know all the facts: we cannot fathom the motives of individuals, least of all those of the German Emperor, on whom all our national bitterness is concentrated. We do not understand the great natural forces which work in multitudes of men, and which no individuals can ever restrain. But we can go some way in all these directions.

I venture, therefore, to suggest some historical principles, which are of general application, but may at any rate be at work in this particular case.

(i) Nations and men do not change their character in an instant. *Nemo repente fuit turpissimus.*¹ The

¹ A Latin proverb, meaning "no one ever turned villain in a moment."

Germany of the 19th century was never so innocent as its admirers imagined it. The Germany of the 20th century, whatever its crimes may be, still cherishes the virtues which those admirers rightly discerned.

(ii) With nations and men the desire of victory is an overpowering motive. Even in our class-struggles in this country we often hear the excuse for some doubtful action—"we could not win in any other way." Ethical theory lays it down that victory cannot rightly be won by breach of faith or violence. To win in this way is therefore wrong: but it is not unnatural. To offer a fish food and then put a hook through his mouth is not very honourable; to kill a wasp which has never harmed you because he may perhaps do so is not very considerate. In politics this is called "preventive war," and we deem it an invention of the devil. But these things are done every day by men who are not bad men, and who are even rather proud of their achievements.

(iii) Cruelty is a wide-spread human passion, and it is often inflamed by fear. Red Indians torture their captured enemies: the Romans gloated over their sufferings in the gladiatorial shows. The orthodox of the Middle Ages waged war with the heretics with all the horrors depicted in Foxe's "Book of Martyrs": the French revolutionists sacrificed millions of lives to their cause. I have myself listened to a miner describing the pleasures of a hunt of blacklegs with a glee that no moralist could quite approve. The Germans, too, with their doctrine of frightfulness, have shown themselves cruel enemies: for all that they are men, not monsters.

(iv) There is no greater solvent to moral restraint than a general idea, embodied in a proverb. No proverbs are wholly true or wholly false: the short phrase is inadequate to the complexity of human life. But the power of such a phrase, once assimilated by great bodies of men, is almost unlimited. "All's fair in war and love" is an English proverb: it is frankly immoral, but we cannot say that it makes no appeal to our nature. In the German form, "In war the morality of every act is judged by its success," the meaning is the same, but the practical application is to us revolting.

Such considerations as these do not go one inch to justify such an act as the invasion of Belgium: but they do help us to understand how it came about. To apply them to this particular case:—

(i) The Germans are, and have been for a century past, a warlike and conquering people. Their very virtues are warlike virtues.

(ii) To win victories it is necessary to find an enemy. The weak and the innocent are the most convenient enemies: in the language of the invader, this weakness and innocence constitute an "intolerable provocation."

(iii) The aggressive attitude has the natural result of uniting all those who are endangered by it. Hence Germany has been "ringed round" by nations all fearing its attacks, and more or less prepared to unite to repel them. This ring of nations has in turn frightened Germany, and fear has stirred up cruelty.

(iv) In war some tricks and much violence are permitted by universal custom: the Germans hold it logical to permit to themselves all tricks and all violence. If, they argue, a ship may hoist a false flag, why may not a nation make and break a treaty? If an army may be destroyed, why should not women and children, the sources of the armies of the future, be destroyed also, just as we hunt out wasps' nests?

To these causes, which are more or less common to the Germans with all the conquering nations of history, we have, I think, to add one more precise cause, which lies in the traditions of the Hohenzollern family.

Prince Bismarck in his memoirs recounts a speech made by him in council to the then King of Prussia, afterwards the Emperor William the First. The King was opposed to a war for the acquisition of Schleswig-Holstein at the cost of Denmark. Bismarck says:—

"I reminded the King that every one of his ancestors, not even excepting his brother, had won an increment of territory for the (Prussian) State. Frederick William IV had acquired Hohenzollern and the Jahre district; Frederick William III the Rhine province; Frederick William II, Poland; Frederick II, Silesia; Frederick William I, old Hither Pomerania; the Great Elector, further Pomerania and Magdeburg, Minden, etc.; and I encouraged him to do likewise.

"His Majesty was horrified, and seems to have imagined that I was drunk: he would be glad to hear no more of it. The Crown Prince raised his hands to heaven as if he doubted my sanity: my colleagues remained silent."

Yet this view was adopted and carried into effect: England was sentimentally moved, but never dreamed of acting. Well may we believe that William II also was horrified at the counsellor who first suggested to him in blunt language that he too should win an increment of territory for the State at the cost of Belgium: but the example of his ancestors counts for him, too, more weightily than the vague abstractions of honour and humanity.

When William II recently declared, "I did not will this war," the statement was treated in England as hypocritical. Yet it may well have been quite sincere. National feeling and family tradition are too strong for any sovereign, unless he be of clear intellect and heroic character.

The aggressive and warlike principles of Germany, which can be abundantly proved not only by the modern writings of Bernhardt and Cramb, but from the mouths of all the German leaders of the nineteenth century, and especially of Prince Bismarck, have called out horrified protests, not only from England, but from the whole civilised world. Those protests have not altered the resolutions of Germany one whit.

How are we to regard these principles?

They are the statement of the law of Might. From the biological point of view they are the basis of the "Struggle for Existence." Nature is red in tooth and claw. The hawk devours the dove, and the wolf the lamb. Man, regardless of honour and of compassion, devours the ox and the lamb: he destroys or starves out of existence the lion, the tiger, and the rabbit; and wages incessant war against the flea and the microbe. The strong nations devour the weak: Israel exterminates the Canaanites, Rome wipes out Carthage, the German tribes destroy the Roman Empire. England and the English have dealt likewise with the native inhabitants of America, Africa, and Australia: modern Germany will, if it can, do the same with England.

Might is not Right: but to say that it is so is a bold paradox, which contains at least a germ of truth. Might exists, and will always exist on this earth: it is a part of that which we variously term natural necessity, the law of nature, or the divine ordinance. Without Might no individual, no nation, can survive.

The law of Might in the public opinion of Germany justifies the outbreak of the present war, the invasion of Belgium, the frightfulness practised on the conquered populations, and the introduction of new horrors into warfare. In the public opinion of England, and still more in that of the United States of America, it justifies none of these things.

Yet the law of Might is a fact. To us as a nation an unwelcome fact: but let us be sincere in our repudiation of it. As a nation we hate this fact largely because we have nothing to gain by it: we do not wish to extend our Empire. As individuals and in other associations we are not so greatly averse. In whatever directions we have strong desires, we are not unwilling to use force. The Irishman desiring the reconstitution of Ireland, the suffragette demanding the vote, the Trade Union eager for the advancement of the working-classes, have always countenanced, and will continue to countenance, violence for the attainment of their ends. They will not bind themselves by treaties they may have signed in past generations: they will

not be hindered because their victory means suffering and perhaps death to individuals amongst their opponents.

If England as a State is to survive, it must reconcile itself to the law of Might. It must be strong to preserve its unity, to face the aggressor from without, and the forces of disintegration from within. If it shrinks from this effort, if it has too many scruples to use the necessary means, it will be swept out of existence. And because Germany is its most threatening enemy, it must fight Germany.

Therefore we reach in theory the startling conclusion that the first lesson England has to learn from Germany is to fight Germany. It has done so, and has evoked from Germany the "hymn of hate." If it had not done so, it would have evoked the "hymn of contempt": or, we may rather say, before the war Germany, confident that England had not the pluck to fight her, regarded her only with contempt.

This change from contempt to hatred is the first step for the better in the relations of the two countries. In the hatred of Germany there is the first dawn of a feeling of respect. The hatred was largely artificial, and intended to disguise the respect: and in proportion as England shows herself able to maintain her military position, that respect will increase, and with it the possibility of peace and even friendship in the future.

If Germany can destroy England, she will. No sentimental appeals to humanity, no theories as to an age of universal peace, no Buddhist version of the Christian gospel, will stay her hand. If England can destroy Germany, she will. Even those in this country who would protest most eagerly against such a policy must recognise that it would carry with it the enthusiastic approval of all the dominant elements in our society. But if neither can destroy the other, there results a Balance of Might: and in the Balance of Might there is room for Right, even according to the German theory.

The Balance of Power is an English theory, too, at any rate in its history, and in spite of the attacks made on it by John Bright and other enthusiasts who enjoyed its protection without acknowledging its benefits. It is indeed not a policy or a theory so much as a statement of a natural fact. In every society Power is in the hands either of One or of Many. If in the hands of One it constitutes Despotism, whether that one be an individual man or a State organism. From the present war one of two things must result: either Germany will be master of the world, or there will be a Balance of Power. If the former, life may still be endurable for citizens of the subject nations, and civilisation may flourish according to German ideals. But for us to contemplate or discuss such a result would, in my opinion, be a criminal folly. We must therefore again seek to establish a Balance of Power, and that is in fact the aim of our national policy.

It would be an error to suppose that the German people are resolved on a World-Despotism. I shall endeavour to show that their theories, although expressed always in German form, are quite consistent with a Balance of Powers, a Concert of Europe, and the maintenance of International Law. But the first condition for such a constitution of the civilised world is that the Powers contributing to it shall be in fact able to maintain their position by force.

Incidentally we have arrived at the German interpretation of the phrase "a scrap of paper." A scrap of paper is the attempt of an organism devoid of power to maintain its existence by relying on a bargain which is out of date. Such an attempt is foredoomed to failure. This is not right, but it results from Might.

And to German thought the British Empire itself is specifically a "scrap of paper," a meaningless tinting of the map of the world. In Treitschke's phrase quoted by Professor Cramb: "A thing that is wholly a sham cannot in this universe of ours endure for ever. It may endure for a day, but its doom is certain: there is no room for it in a world governed by valour, by the

Will to Power." And it was, says the Professor, of England that he spoke.

To Germany the whole British Empire, its traditions, its government, and its military forces are alike paper machinery. Our first duty is to convince her that behind all these things lies also a real "Will to Power" which will show itself on the battlefield. No other argument will convince.

To sum up:

Might is the Law of the Universe, or at any rate one of its laws. We must learn to respect it, if not to admire it.

The strong swallow up the weak. Germany will swallow up England, if she can. Argument is no protection.

When Might meets Might, there results the Balance of Power. From the Balance of Power springs Right. Even if Right be also a Law of the Universe, even if it be its highest law, it must be founded on Might.

When Might meets Might, war is the inevitable consequence. Hence war will always exist in the world, and will always end in the destruction of the weak. War is the parent of cruelty, treachery, and hatred. The defeated complain in vain of these things.

But when war results in the Balance of Power, two Might begins to dream of Peace. Peace is a bargain between Might, and will continue as long as Might are evenly balanced.

With the thought of Peace the gentler virtues arise: Pity, Reasonableness, and the sense of Honour. But above all are needed mutual respect and a common idea.

Whatever may be the end of this war, we must look forward to the time when we shall respect and understand our opponent. The time has come to lay the foundations for that respect.

The mind of Germany is not all bad. It is expressed openly in countless books, memoirs and tracts. It is not disloyalty to our own country to try and understand it.

The beginning of wisdom is to recognise that our enemies are men, with human instincts and not those of beasts; and that we too are men, and not angels or heroes.

Let us then try first to understand the German conception of the State: then to see why and how this conception has brought Germany into collision with her neighbours: and finally, by comparing our results with the conceptions prevalent in our own country, to draw some practical lessons for our own conduct in waging war or winning peace.

Deutschland Ueber Alles?

MOST people who speak German are aware of the peculiar distortion which this phrase has undergone in the current mistranslation: "Germany above all." It is popularly supposed that this sentiment embodies the determination of Germany to impose herself upon the world, or upon as great a part of it as possible. Yet, as we ought to know, its implications are infinitely more modest, being simply the expression of a natural and healthy patriotism. In short, the sentence merely proclaims the pre-eminence of Germany in the affection of her people, who love "Germany above all" other countries. Only those prepared to risk the odium or contempt of their compatriots would refuse to subscribe to a sentiment so eminently respectable. Substitute the name of any other country, and the words will summarise the principles upon which all loyalty reposes.

Strange to say, this general misconstruction of the words is not the only dubious point suggested by an analysis of the sentence. What if the idea which has been read into them should also be a fallacy? What if the plan to Germanise the world should be another great illusion? With the tomes of Treitschke and Bernhardt before us, and the voices of the minor propagandists of Pan-Germanism in our ears, it may be a little difficult to believe that such is the case. The

prophets of Kultur have left no room, it would seem, for doubts of this kind, and the events of the war have furnished all too concrete facts in support of their theories. Yet, whenever it is possible to recede sufficiently from the actualities of warfare, and to free the mind of journalistic formulæ, scepticism asserts itself.

Nobody will say, of course, that Germany is innocent of the intention to expand and dominate wherever and whenever possible. Not even the most innocent of patriots would care to deny Germany those ambitions which we have come to accept as inevitable in a nation of her size and standing. But there is a vast difference between the economic development of a young nation and the cultural aggression contemplated by the Pan-German leaders. It would be foolish to assume a divorce between the economics and culture of Germany, but, for the present, it is desirable to concentrate attention upon the latter in its relation to the programme of Pan-Germanism. After all, the rivalry of England and Germany in the commercial field, however it may have swayed the capitalist class, has played a very small part in the thoughts of the general public. To the vast majority of disinterested patriots in the Allied countries the war is a struggle between two cultures, not merely the rivalry of profiteers. Moreover, the essential doctrine of the Pan-Germans is a proof of the soundness of the popular instinct in this matter. They emphasise the superiority of German culture, and strenuously preach the sacred obligation of imposing its blessings on the Latin and Anglo-Saxon world.

Much has been said and written in criticism of Kultur, and in varying terms of hatred and contempt the pretensions of German civilisation are exposed and demolished. Unfortunately, most of these critics have been unfamiliar with the subject of Germanism. They have, in the main, displayed an unpardonable ignorance of Germany, while those acquainted with the native culture are not possessed of any data outside Germany itself. The former are obliged to take the Pan-German gospel at its face value, the latter, throwing aside experience as liable to conflict with sentiment, have reconciled what they saw with what indignant clamour would have them see. The consequence is that the mythological creation of the Pan-Germanists, the super-German of culture, is now an accepted fact, and the world is filled with tales of his atrocious intentions. A new Frankenstein, compounded of Nietzsche, Treitschke and Houston Chamberlain, has been foisted upon us, and we are in danger of taking the monster as seriously as do his creators.

The only escape from this obsession is to be found in a dispassionate study of the factors upon which it relies for success. We must look about us for some evidence of the capacity of this bogey to materialise. Clearly, if German culture is to dominate the world, the individual German must aid in its transmission. In vain will Mr. Chamberlain assure us of the Teuton's superiority, if the latter does not impose himself, if he fails to realise the importance of his racial destiny. Now, as everybody who has observed the Germans abroad will admit, they are the last people to be conscious of their national identity. The readiness of the German to adopt the language and customs of the place where he finds himself is notorious. Before the war the most difficult person to find in London, New York or Paris was a German who would speak his own language. In fact, a great deal of cheap humour was derived from the fact that even in his own country he insisted on conversing, however imperfectly, in the language of his foreign visitor. At this moment, in spite of a hyper-sensitive and deliberately cultivated sense of nationality, due to hyphenated neutrality, the German-Americans cannot slough their anglicisation. It is amusing to hear a recently arrived German denouncing the colonialism of the United States to a compatriot who answers the German of the newcomer in English.

If ever the transplanted German had an excuse for

retaining his own language and customs, for keeping intact the pure flame of Germanism, it is in America, where the native culture is particularly obnoxious and incomprehensible to the Teutonic mind. While it is true that he refuses at the present time to subscribe to the true faith of "Americanism," he is still a very weak pillar upon which to rest so elaborate a fabric as Pan-Germanism. It is significant that every important study of America written by a German in the last twenty-five years has bemoaned the decline of Germanism in the United States. The schools, the book-shops, the theatres, and even the beer-gardens, have gradually disappeared, leaving a generation unfamiliar with any signs, however rudimentary, of non-Anglo-Saxon customs. In the city of Baltimore, with a population of more than half a million Germans, only a few churches now testify to the former vitality of the German national spirit. The chief lending-library had to exhume from the cellar its stock of German books, at the request of an Irish visitor!

It would be unfair, of course, to pretend that the German-American should lessen his chances of gaining a livelihood by refusing to learn English in the United States. That is not the point, however. He is quite right in doing so, and his willingness and ability in this respect have been to his advantage. But when, at the same time, he utterly abandons his own tongue, ceases to read his own books, brings up his children in ignorance of their parents' language, and takes no interest whatever in German culture as such—then we may well ask what have the Pan-Germanists to say? They must know that all their dreams of empire, intellectual and otherwise, depend upon the power of Germanism to impose itself. England has succeeded in giving her imprint to a large portion of the globe by the simple process of assimilating rather than being assimilated. The anonymous German is no more familiar a figure than the Englishman who carries England with him everywhere he goes. France similarly impressed her civilisation upon the outside world by the same means, refusing to adapt herself, and forcing others to adopt her tongue. The result is that long after her material dominion has passed away the cultural sway of France is felt, once it has been established. In Canada the French-Canadians are even now threatening revolution if their claim to equal linguistic rights is not conceded.

The power which the Pan-Germanists covet, and the qualities with which they have endowed the race, are precisely those that are lacking. So vociferously have they assured us of their ruthless ambitions that we have come to credit them with the virtues or vices they assume. Intellectual conquest is a fundamental necessity to the realisation of their programme. For want of that, they profess to be immensely flattered by the victories of the military party. At bottom they must know that such conquerors as Germany has so far produced are useless for the purposes of the larger imperialism. Force is the most obvious factor in empire-building, and Germany has seized upon it, carrying the theory to its extreme limit. There is, however, a spiritual, an intangible factor, without which imperialism is doomed to failure.

Imported patriots like Houston Chamberlain, theorists like Gobineau, and subservient pundits with an eye to scholastic promotion, may proclaim the mission of Germanism, but they cannot create the instruments for its achievement. That enthusiastic Englishman, for example, extols the beauties of the German language, points out its superiority to his native tongue, demonstrates, even, that its use is more widespread, but no German abroad will believe him. German-Americans frankly admit a preference for English on the ground of its greater practical value. It is permissible to suspect that a great deal of the Pan-German programme awakens equally little response in the mass of the people to whom its execution must be entrusted. As regards the greater part of their ideas

we may accuse the Pan-Germanists of making the wish father to the thought.

By an irony of fate, the strength of Germany resides precisely in that inability of the people to live up to the professions and theories of the doctrinaire world-conquerors. While the latter would have him absorbed in beatific contemplation of his own inherent virtues and greatness, the average German calmly goes about his business, which leads him into very different paths. Essentially docile and adaptable, he insinuates himself into the most varied communities, applies his intelligence to the discovery of what is wanted, and proceeds to supply that want if possible. He has no interest in colonies as such, and if he settles in an already developed country he at once sinks his identity, approximating as nearly as possible to the standards of his new environment. Personally the most tractable and amiable of men, he rarely disturbs, or attempts to control, the established hierarchy. In America the incapacity of the Germans for political intrigue, their aloofness from the mad whirl of pseudo-democratic vote-catching, has long been familiar. The visitors from Germany who tried to organise German-America for purposes of politics were unanimous in their disgust at this absence of political sense. They themselves, however, bungled their business in a manner which drove the Pro-German Americans to despair!

All the circumstances of German life tend to render the people peculiarly unfitted to dominate. They are unaccustomed to and actually contemptuous of that political liberty and self-assertion which distinguish the Anglo-Saxon. They want to be led, not to lead, and inasmuch as German expansion instinctively looks to already settled communities for its exercise, the establishment of a colonial *Deutschtum* must remain a dream. Neither politically nor intellectually has Germanism the means of imposing itself. Not only does the German abroad neglect the material of his national culture, but he encourages foreigners in their indifference to it. How little the world interests itself in the literature of Germany compared with that of France and England. Yet there are German novelists and poets to-day no less important, to say the least, than their French contemporaries, whose names are familiar to the reading public in England and America.

There is a possibility that this war may produce Germans of the type demanded by the Pan-German programme. German-America has been galvanised into a certain attitude of intellectual homogeneity and opposition, but the evidence seems to be that this is a passing phase, which will not last much longer than the duration of the war. With the best will in the world the German-Americans have failed to respond to the promptings of the propagandists. The latter may inspire a little factionism, or engineer a few outrages, but they cannot, and in fact do not, flatter themselves that they have accomplished anything more permanent.

In fine, the German menace is commercial rather than spiritual. The theories which supply the journalists with nightmares are academic idealisations of economic truths. What the Allies have to fear is not the spread of German culture, but the growth of German trade. The latter, so far from implying imperial expansion in the English sense, owes its development precisely to qualities antagonistic to the establishment of a world empire. While the Englishman has succeeded by suiting his environment to himself, the German prefers to suit himself to his environment. The one has ensured the diffusion of English civilisation, the other has fostered the aggrandisement of German commerce. It is for England to demonstrate whether, having established her sway as a coloniser, she can similarly confirm her economic superiority. Given the fundamental difference between the tendencies of the two nations, Germany's strength will prove England's weakness, should imitation be substituted for constructive action.

E. A. B.

The Promoted Advocate Must Go.

By W. Durran.

"I have for between forty and fifty years been connected with the administration of justice in this country, where, by almost universal consent, justice is better administered than in any other land."—"Civis," "Times," August 19, 1916.

"From 1869 until to-day over 300,000 English citizens have been actually imprisoned who have not been guilty of any crime whatsoever."—"The Law and the Poor," by Judge Parry (1914).

JUDGE PARRY explains that these enormous numbers of innocent people have been imprisoned mainly for poverty; while those who have compassed their confinement, "the tally-men, the money-lenders, the flash jewellery touts, the sellers of costly Bibles in series, of gramophones, are the knaves the State caters for."

"Laws grind the poor and rich men rule the Law," wrote Goldsmith a century and a half ago. In Judge Parry's opinion those conditions obtain to-day. The words just cited figure on the title-page of "The Law and the Poor." Moreover, the book is dedicated to "the man in the street in the hope that he will take up his job and do it"—that is, insist on legal reforms to which "lawyers as a profession will always offer a strong opposition."

Observe that instead of enumerating a list of glaring defects, we prefer to appraise the quality of our legal outfit according to its treatment of the poor, that is, the section of the community who stand most in need of the protection of law. But the mere suggestion that our law protects the poor is the exact opposite of the truth on Judge Parry's evidence. The law grinds the poor and caters for their despoilers. This is confirmation of an assertion for which Mr. Snowden, M.P., is on record that "the poor in this country would be better without the protection of law."

At first glance it might seem that the authority first cited is in flagrant contradiction with Judge Parry, whose experience he will not venture to question. Those of us who have some acquaintance with the legal domain will not so readily assume that our two authorities are at loggerheads in the respective rôles of optimist and pessimist. The contradiction is more apparent than real, as thus: our laws leave much to be desired, no doubt, but they are better than those of any other country.

This attitude of insularity finds favour in the highest legal circles. The present Chief Justice, then Sir Rufus Isaacs, threw out a challenge to the civilised world at Reading a couple of years ago. "In no other country," he declared, "are accused persons treated with such chivalry." Well, we know that weeks wear to months while accused persons, many of whom are afterwards acquitted, pine in confinement owing to the exigencies of the circuit system. The inference is that there are still worse abuses abroad. Nor can there be any doubt on the subject in the minds of those who have heard the loud timbrel sounded at our great banquets, and have seen members of Bench and Bar fall (metaphorically) on each others' necks in an ecstasy of mutual admiration. We are perfectly safe in assuming that ours is the best of all possible legal systems for them.

These are mere tricks of the trade: the superlative excellence of our special brand of justice never receives a word of commendation from the consumer, so it has all the more need of being trumpeted by the purveyors. But when they are confronted with such a book as "The Law and the Poor" are they not staggered, ashamed, silenced? Not at all. The expectation of such an effect shows little appreciation of the resources of the special pleader. He is equal to the occasion. The make-up is changed. The note of triumphant supe-

riority is modified. There is a suggestion of sadness in the tone as who would say: after all, our superiority is only relative. It has been written that human laws everywhere are some of the greatest disappointments in this vale of tears. Alas, that it should be so!

This is no mere supposition of the line which pressure will compel the special pleader to adopt. It is sober fact. A legal writer, in his review of "The Law and the Poor," adopts the late Oscar Wilde's eloquent lament on the pathetic failure of all law-making whatsoever:

For well I know that every Law
That men have made for man,
But straws the wheat and saves the chaff
With a most evil fan.

The acute distress of a disordered mind goes far to explain this outburst. *Sunt lacrimæ rerum*: this is not the place for reproach or argument. But when we find this transparent falsehood flaunted at second hand as a cynical apology for our legal outfit we are moved to pity the abject condition of an ancient institution which is constrained to advance such a plea.

Noteworthy here is the fact that only from the layman's point of view are all legal systems, including our own, stricken with the paralysis of hopeless and irremediable failure. But we have just seen that the ministrants in the Temple of Legalism manifest no depression on this score when incense-fumes rise and libations are poured. On the contrary, an atmosphere of ineffable content pervades the scene. Thus our legalists are convicted out of their own mouths. They oppose urgent improvements in a system which is admittedly unsatisfactory, but which they exploit to their own advantage. It is poor consolation for the laity to be told that all other systems are still more unsatisfactory.

It is time to examine this allegation. If ours is the best legal system in the world—as we are assured by the highest ornaments of our mandarin—ask in bewilderment what can the worst one be like? It is hardly within the bounds of possibility that any imaginable system lays itself open to a heavier indictment than Judge Parry draws up against ours in regard to the treatment of the poor.

If we turn to our Eastern dependency, which we would prefer to address as a Sister State, has not our legal system touched the lowest depth of discredit when such a dispassionate observer as the Hon. George Peel (in "The Future of England") is driven to describe it in these terms: "Our judicial conceptions and procedure in the civil field have helped litigation to grow into a speculation, a mania and a curse."

But it is futile to pass other systems in review in order to find a worse one than ours. Judge Parry points to two that are demonstrably better. Those of France and Germany are quite admirable in their treatment of the poor. There is no imprisonment for debt for the poor in the former country. Thus the boast of the optimist and the wail of the cynic are found to be equally fictitious. They are instances of that special pleading which we have tolerated for seven centuries: whose effulgence when masquerading as statesmanship brought the Empire to the edge of the abyss.

It is grossly untrue that our neighbours and Allies are equally discontented with their legal system as we are with ours. They have a Code which is a valued possession of the laity in the words of Sir Henry Maine: we have a trackless waste of common law which is the chief asset of the Bar. They have an occasional scandal when beauty in distress carries susceptible jurors off their feet, demands an outrageous verdict of acquittal and obtains it. Then our legalists give tongue and the superiority of our methods is proclaimed from the housetops. But of the accessibility, promptitude, certainty and cheapness of civil justice in France, Belgium, Holland and Germany never a word! Never a word of the Family Council which in all those countries, and even farther afield, settles a multitude of cases at the cost of a few francs! On such points there is a conspiracy of silence.

We men in the street must resolve to defeat this conspiracy. For the first time in history a book has been dedicated to us. If we are to take up our jobs and do it, the first step is to decide what point of the legal entrenchments we are to attack. That point is clearly indicated. All progressive systems preserve a clear distinction between the forensic and the judicial habit of mind; they are acutely opposed to each other. An obscurantist and mediæval system, such as ours, while ignoring that line of demarcation, strongly favours the forensic habit in recruiting the Bench from among successful members of the Bar.

The Bar-habit, confirmed by the practice of half a life-time, is held in this country to be an indispensable qualification for the Bench. Other communities have ordained, by the most strenuous legislative enactments, that the practice of advocacy is an absolute disqualification for the exercise of judicial duties.

Our position is illogical to the last degree. Mr. H. G. Wells pronounces it irrational and demoralising. But this is not the place for academic disquisitions. Let us look briefly at the practical outcome of our boasted system.

The advocate naturally opposes codification, the acknowledged cheapener of legal processes. The advocate of to-day is the judge of to-morrow. Upright and honourable, he is not learned like his congeners on the continent of Europe who have been trained in a progressive system which mistrusts the forensic habit, and is unwearied in its endeavours to develop the judicial faculty. A progressive system evolves upwards from empiricisms to wide generalisations which render codification possible. Our advocates, from interested motives, are hidebound in empiricism. Their success, in so far as it is not purely histrionic, depends chiefly on the possession of a retentive memory for cases. Evolution upwards being barred, the history of our system for centuries was an evolution downwards until the spirit of the law was prostrate, and the letter triumphant. In the "strict constructionism" of America, the maniacal litigation of India, and the scandals at home, gibbeted by Judge Parry, we perceive the inevitable outcome of the degeneracy of law into letter-worship. Nor is it conceivable that we can emerge from this humiliating condition while we continue to sacrifice the judicial to the forensic habit.

The beginning of wisdom is to establish that Imperial School of Law which the Law Society urges and the Bar Council opposes. Once we give law students an opportunity of entire detachment from the atmosphere of the Bar we shall not find that the countrymen of Newton and Darwin are incapable of grasping large generalisations in law. Already the garnered experience of our neighbours is immense: they have lifted the latch and pointed the way. But all experience is wasted upon us if the Chinese wall—erected by our advocates and treated with reverence by our judges—is preserved, and we continue to hug our mediævalism with the boastfulness of ignorance.

A most valuable indication, strongly confirmatory of the expediency of choosing the barrister-Bench as the point of attack, is the fact that the Bar with one accord extols the present recruitment of the Bench as an unapproachable excellence of our system. The simple truth is that the ascendancy of the Bar is due to its safe shelter, generous nurture and abundant sunshine behind a rampart of promoted advocates.

If the interest of the laity is to be subserved in the epoch that is opening before us, that controlling condition must be reversed. The State must train the judges and organise a continuous career instead of accepting tired and elderly advocates on trust with no guarantee that they possess a trace of the judicial faculty, but with a strong presumption that whatsoever portion of it fell to their share by gift of nature has been smothered and extinguished by the forensic habit.

The promoted advocate has outstayed his welcome on the Bench. If we are to come into line with our neighbours he must go.

Letters from France.

IV.—THE RISE AND DECLINE OF REGIONALISM.

A VERY instructive and entertaining chapter, or even book, might be written on the rise and decline of regionalism. As I have indicated, regionalism is not new. It is, in fact, as old as the Garden of Eden. When Adam delved and Eve span they were the first regionalists getting all that was necessary out of their little kingdom. And the devil was the first profiteer. The unknown discoverer of Cyprus was a regionalist. So was Columbus. So was Jack, he of the beanstalk. Robinson Crusoe and his man Friday were regionalists. So were the members of the Swiss Family Robinson. In Robinson Crusoe and the Robinson Family we have classical examples of true economists, and in the story of their adventures the finest application of real natural economy. It provides the most convincing proof of the rule that any fool can govern a large kingdom, but it takes a very wise man indeed to get all the subsistence he needs, that is, all the natural wealth, out of a small one. Perhaps it is not wisdom, but imagination, or better still, brilliant common sense that should be brought to the task.

At the same time, it must be said that Crusoe and the Robinson Family were governed rather by considerations of individual utility, thoughts of self-survival, than by ideals of self-surrender. They were actuated by the first law of subsistence according to which men exist upon the natural resources of their little kingless kingdom, and not upon each other. They were not actuated by the highest principles of conduct springing out of this law, as the Greeks were. Of course, the Greeks did not initiate nature culture. The first man did that. What they did was to raise this culture out of a vegetative groove of continuance—a groove into which modern society and its occupations have become entombed. One of their first cares was to place labour and its ideals upon a godlike foundation. Another was to guide those who labour into the paths of strict simplicity, intensity and unity. A third was to direct labour to the fullness of life and away from empty wage-earning drudgery. A fourth was to conduct the thoughts of the labourer towards the rights of labourership—a sharing of privileges, away from those of absolute rulership and mendacious monopoly. Added to these were the attractions of whatever is most wonderful and beautiful in Nature. Indeed, never before or since has Nature attired herself so seductively that men might woo her smallest favour with greatest pride. No wonder that from the cultivation of the pale-green olive came Athena and wisdom, from that of the golden corn, Demeter and festival, from that of the dark spreading vine, Dionysus and the dramatic ecstasy of life. How could a people touched by such rare felicity fail to flame into a golden age—the age of Pericles, or should it be Homer? For according to some accounts—Amiel's, for instance—"The Greeks were sophists by the time of Pericles, cunning, rhetorical and versed in all the arts of the courtier." But though he notes this change of character in the Greeks Amiel does not lose sight of their immortal part. He observes that we have much to learn from them, that they solved their problem better than we solved ours. "Their ideal man is not ours—but they understood infinitely better than we how to reverence, cultivate and ennoble the man whom they knew. In a thousand respects we are still barbarians besides them—in education, in eloquence, in public life, in poetry, in matters of art, etc. We must have millions of men in order to produce a few elect spirits: a thousand was enough

in Greece. If the measure of a civilisation is to be the number of perfected men that it produces, we are still far from this model people. The slaves are no longer below us, but they are among us. Barbarism is no longer at our frontiers; it lives side by side with us. We carry with us much greater things than they, but we ourselves are smaller." Pygmies.

To come to my suggestion for an historical study of regionalism. Greece provides a definite start. The history of Greece is in fact the history of a race flourishing on a godlike conception of nature, labour and life, of place, work and people. It is the history of Greek culture and the Hellenic ideal vitally expressed in a vision of the representative gods of the Mediterranean. The contribution of the Greek people to civilisation was then the strengthening of a proper relation of man to nature, man to man and man to people. In the early days of Rome and while it was yet a Republic, the people stood in a similar relation to natural privileges as the Greeks did. Then came Cæsar. With his ruler-hand he closed the door on the Republic and opened that on Imperialism with its far-reaching evils. With Cæsar began Roman world-policy as we know it—a policy designed to reconvert mankind into beasts of prey, pledged to theft, rapine and slaughter. With Cæsarism appeared the emperor-like ambition of treading the people underfoot. Cæsar in fact laid the sub-soil of "Les Misérables" and gave birth to Gibbon. We know that other rulers have appeared from time to time with the same fish to fry as Cæsar and accompanied by God whom they have appointed their accomplice. Napoleon was almost a full-length portrait of Cæsar, perhaps not so brutally disposed towards the people. William II is a skim-milk edition, mischievous and a menace to advanced civilisation. So what Roman culture did was to put the relation of man to man and man to people on a level of man to animal. In this way regionalism disappeared for a time in the right of a world-conquest invented by the strongest to protect their contemptible application of the laws of suppression, repression and injustice.

A recovery of the right of man over animal took place in the Middle Ages when the people reappeared upholding a natural conception of place and occupation. At this period they were to be seen emerging from servility, relinquishing the work of tyranny and labouring once more for the glory of themselves and their age. Their aims and achievements, like those of the Greeks, were characterised by simplicity, intensity, unity and joy. If unlike the Greeks they did not express themselves in a vision of divinities, they summed themselves up in amazing representative personalities like that culminating type, Hans Sachs. With the Renaissance and its devilish degradation a different kind of animal, the pedant, appears, and the true interests of the people in their idealisation of Nature and Work disappear once more. This time it is beneath a false conception of learning of which Molière was designed by Heaven to be the critic and Oxford, by the other place, to be the vegetative continuance. Following the Renaissance came definite stage of decline of the spirit of regionalism. First there was an age of Imperialism during which the ideal of Cæsarism and world-expansion forbade Life-expression to rise above a debased military level, and gave birth to the Socialist critic. Succeeding this came the Industrial age with its ideal of world-trade and its representative three-headed God, Machinery, Capital and Finance, evoking the bitter opposition of the anarchist and radical in man. Next came the Political Age with its ideal of a world-policy, the struggle inevitable upon this and the culminating world-war. Surely this is the closing scene of human degradation. Anyhow it justifies the reappearance of the regional ideal "under new proprietorship" as it were, with Geddes as head of the firm. The next stage will be the recovery of the great ideals of place, work and people in terms of brilliant common sense—let us hope.

HUNTLY CARTER.

Readers and Writers.

How often have I had to remark upon the difficulty of making virtue attractive. Vice, on the other hand, anybody can write acceptably about. This simple antithesis is really at the root of all the discussions about Art and Morality. In my view, just because virtue or morality requires the greatest art for its presentation, only the greatest moralists are artists and only the greatest artists are moralists. Lesser people, on the whole, would be well advised to let morality alone; for by a dull presentation of it they infect their readers with the utterly false notion that morality itself is dull. Thus they really defeat their own good intentions. These remarks are prompted by the appearance of a new series of pamphlets upon "Marriage and Morality." Published by the respectable firm of Longmans, obviously written by excellent people, and designed to popularise virtue, their effect in my estimation will nevertheless be the very contrary of their intention. The first four deal respectively with "Marriage, Successful and Unsuccessful"; "Marriage, a Harmony of Body and Soul"; "Purity"; and "In Praise of Virginity." Bold enough subjects, you will see; and I can conceive how they should be written about in order to be made to appear as admirable as the ideas of them are. But turn over the pages of these pamphlets and from a preliminary distaste for hearing *anybody* discuss such subjects seriously you will, I think, find yourself moving towards their opposite. For not only cannot the writers of them really write—which is the first great offence against the morality of moral literature—but, almost without exception, they confine themselves to authorities that I can only regard as artistically tainted—I refer, in particular, to the Bible. Will people ever understand how difficult it is for laymen to quote scripture except for the devil's purpose? Scripture does not become us laymen; it is too highly charged with a special tradition to be susceptible of secular use. The writers, too, have none of them what I will call a world-view of morality. Their view is middle-class English—the narrowest if also the most practical in the world. It contains no lightness, no beauty, no charm. Oh, charm! How charming is divine morality! But this has none. The writers, moreover, are very naive. My wicked mind palter in a double sense with many of their passages, and I am constrained to laugh when it was intended that the reader should be grave.

* * *

There has just appeared an excellent essay on "Browning," by Professor A. R. Skemp, in the six-penny series of "The People's Books." Browning, I feel, has been neglected more than he deserves to have been. It is true that he is not easy to read and that his poetry is to his complete works as a needle to a bottle of hay. But who will admit that difficult reading should never be undertaken or that poetry is the only object of verse? If Browning did not write much poetry, what he did write was almost as good. Professor Skemp ranks Browning as "second to Shakespeare" among English poets; but this, in my judgment, is to do him a double injustice; for as a poet he cannot compare with Shakespeare, and as a thinker Shakespeare cannot compare with him. The comparison is all the more superfluous from the emphasis Professor Skemp properly lays upon Browning's uniqueness. If he is unique he ought not to be compared. Our author, however, is beyond my criticism when he is summarising the spiritual doctrines of Browning. Here he is himself a master of exposition. What, for example, could be better than the following sentence, apologetic of Browning's optimistic view of tragedy: "There is a glory so bright that we know it cannot last in this world, and its plunge into eclipse pains less than would its dimming to the commonplace." The man who can appreciate this sentence can appreciate Browning.

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Talking of Browning's poetry reminds me of a line

or two of real poetry that I once discovered in the voluminous verse of a writer with whose name none of my readers is familiar—Will Foster. You never heard of him? No, I thought not. Well, you can spare yourself the trouble of reading his half-dozen volumes of verse—for the ideas are few and the only poetry they contain are these three lines descriptive of the passing of Autumn:

But his end comes peacefully
In an orchard, taking his rest,
Peering up at the blue sky.

That, I venture to say, is poetry.

* * *

In the current "Fortnightly Review" there is what purports to be an interview with Mr. George Moore, who is always in mourning over something, on the Death of Art. Of the writer, Mr. Balderston, I have never heard and I rather fancy him to be a piece of Mr. Moore's fiction; but of Mr. Moore's thesis that Art is dead we have heard a good deal since the Flood. Mr. Moore, however, insists upon having an original view of the cause; and I hope he may keep it, for it is balderdash. Art, he professes to think, lived by geographical segregation, and locomotion has brought it to a full stop. It was born in parochialism, and cosmopolitanism has killed it. Ergo, until the bows and arrows come again, Art is extinct. I would not quote Mr. Moore against his theory, for however it might convince himself it would convince nobody else. But is he not a cosmopolitan by profession, born in Ireland, having his spiritual home in Paris, and living in London? And would he claim that his art has become extinct? Never. The truth, however, that is obscured by his fanciful epigrams is not that cosmopolitanism is the death of art, but that having nothing to say is the death of art. We attribute to mere consequences the value of causes; and excuse on the plea of the hurry and bustle of modern life the real defect of impulse and will in ourselves. Art will revive right enough when there are people with a fiery message in their bones to deliver. But without the message the labour of art is degrading drudgery; and gadding about is a good excuse for avoiding it.

* * *

Green's "Short History of the English People" has had itself a remarkable history. First published in 1874, it immediately became popular and has now run into thirty editions. The last and the best has just appeared (Macmillan, 5s. net), with an Epilogue by Mrs. Green bringing the story up to date. Mrs. Green's continuation of her husband's work is an extraordinary achievement, for it bears no sign of differing in any discernible quality from the text. Green himself, in fact, might well have written it. The style, of course, is familiar to my readers if, that is, they have been brought up, as I was, upon Green. And it only remains to say that we cannot think so highly of it today as we once could. The monotony is intense, and the generalisations are well-nigh soporific. Listen to this, for example: "At Cromwell's death the success of his policy was complete. The Monarchy had reached the height of its power. The old liberties of England lay prostrate at the feet of the King. The Lords were cowed and spiritless, the House of Commons was filled with the creatures of the Court and degraded into an engine of tyranny. Royal proclamations were taking the place of parliamentary legislation; benevolences were encroaching more and more on the right of parliamentary taxation. Justice was prostituted . . ." and so on. No doubt it is all true, for Green was an accurate writer; and equally, it is evident from the vocabulary, Green felt the drama of the situation—but neither actuality nor movement is conveyed in it. The story, for all it is made to concern us, might be of the Aztecs. That is the defect of Green; he was not, like Macaulay, a man with a living cause to advocate; he was not even a party polemist. Would I then have them intend their history to affect life and not merely satisfy curiosity.

R. H. C.

A Modern Document.

Edited by Herbert Lawrence.

X—(CONTINUED).—From *Acton Reed*.

THE storm-clouds have paled to white; and the sea has smoothed out its wrinkles and looks quite young again. Now that Sir Isaac Newton no longer demands my whole attention I will turn the rest to religion which is one of the two subjects I mentioned. The difficulties of the subject are, of course, sand for multitude. Some of the faculties of us human mysteries can be described fairly easily. Patriotism, for instance, we can express and convey in a word: it is love of country—a particular love, that is, of a particularised and finite object. The faculty of religion, however, implies something more; it is love of the infinite. When, therefore, we attempt to describe religion we are met with the problem of translating what is infinite into finite terms. For this reason, it seems to me, it is impossible to pin religion down by a single definition. On the other hand, you do not get over difficulties by neglecting them. Yet neglect, it seems to me, is the treatment religion usually receives at the hands of our pastors and masters. So little is taught of religion that most of what is taught about and about it is practically useless. What is the use of teachers whistling to us from their perch amid the branches to bid us admire the foliage when they have not tried first to tell us what the tree is, and where it has its root? I am not suggesting that religion can be taught: what I would have taught is *why it cannot be taught*. We might then have, at any rate, a glimpse of the beginnings of religion. But teachers really seem to think they have only to explain away a few epigrams of St. Paul, make allowances for Job's grumbling and St. Peter's little tarradiddles, and that then England will have no further excuse for not going to church twice every Sunday. At school, I remember, no attempt was ever made to explain to us the meaning of the word religion. Religion was reduced to the stature of an ordinary lesson which they called Scripture. And remote enough it was from all I have since come to regard as religion. It may be objected, of course, that a scripture lesson is not intended to be a lesson on religion. Perhaps not; but to attempt to *make scripture significant without the simultaneous teaching of religion* is about as fruitless as trying to learn a language from a dictionary without a grammar. There was, however, another respect in which the scripture lesson differed from secular lessons. You could ask no intelligent questions in it. Ask no questions and you'll hear no lies; or, rather, you will cause no embarrassment. Not, of course, that questions were explicitly forbidden; but the atmosphere was distinctly discouraging. It was made somehow to seem unfair to raise a query about any of the strange things in scripture. It was not only irreverent, it was unkind to your teacher. Really, in fact, I should no more have thought of questioning the scripture mistress than of cross-examining a gramophone. The key was not with her, nor was it kept at school. Parents, we were to presume, had it as a matter of course. But they, most unfortunately, appeared to think that the school had it. Seeing scripture on the time-table they concluded all was well with religion, and thus one fell into ignorance between two stools.

One conclusion I came early to, however, was that the Bible is not a necessity to religion. Bible, church, prayers, are all associations of religion and have points of contact with it. They are the superficials; some of the effects of the root. But no amount of Bible reading, no number of church attendances, ever provided for me answers to the questions I asked. What is God? What is religion; and with what power of our mind does it come into existence? How I finally arrived at a notion of these was by reasoning something like this: God must be a Person: but He is also infinite. Hence,

when I say I love God, I must mean that I love the infinite as if it were a person. This was a happy stroke, I think. For while it allowed me to regard God as indefinable because He stands for the infinite (and were it possible to define Him it would follow that He is not infinite but finite), I could also regard Him as definable in that He is the Infinite Person. Thus He is at once above and yet not without reason. Coming now to religion, I define it to myself as a particular power or affection of the soul. It has some of the characteristics of love and other elements in our nature. In some of us the sense or power of religion, like love, has been awakened; in others it lies dormant. Some people perhaps lack the power altogether to "fall" religious, as some seem to lack the power to fall in love. I am not sure. To those in whom love has been awakened its reality is certain: others simply hear of it and are sceptical. It is the same with religion. The symptoms of awakened religion are, in my experience, a conviction of the reality of the soul, of God, and of the other or spiritual world. Please do not think, by the way, that I wish to lay down the law for anyone else in religion. I am only giving you my notions of it. Neither am I attempting to tell you what this conviction means in its entirety to me. What primarily it has done is to give me an assurance that I am here in this world for some purpose. I think the logic is clear; for in the first place this power of religion with its accompanying belief in the other world would surely not have existence in us at all if this world were the be-all and end-all of life; and to believe that the other world exists as surely implies a belief in our purpose in this world. Now the belief that I am here for some purpose I have found a very present help in time of trouble. It has saved me from a myriad follies, not the least of which is suicide. How otherwise I should have kept hands off myself I really do not know! It took a belief in my purpose here to restrain them; for without a purpose in living why not suicide any rainy day? Certainly fear of the consequences would be a thing needing to be got over, and particularly by me who believes them to be a repetition of the circumstances leading up to the suicide. I could see myself after suicide condemned like a school-boy to repeat my error until I had mastered it—a horrible imposition, and yet logical as well as traditionally authorised. At the same time, I know it is not *mainly fear of punishment* that has kept me from suicide: it is at least equally the fear of defeating or postponing the purpose for which I am here. The punishment, after all, is extraneous and negative; but the forfeiture is essential and positive. Over and above the punishment was, therefore, the sense of failure that would have been involved in suicide. Not only should I have deserted my post here, and thus have offended God, but I should also have defeated my own purpose, and thus have offended myself. (Whether suicide is never justifiable is a problem I cannot settle. Suppose, for instance, that by killing oneself one could lay down one's life for another? What do you think?)

By what alchemy I do not know, but the notion of purpose is accompanied in my mind by the conviction that in one way or another things are as we make them. I cannot conceive, indeed, that the two ideas may be separable. Given a purpose you must assume a world in which you can carry it out; and to be possessed of the means is to be responsible for achieving the end. I—to be particular—am, therefore, responsible for my own imperfections which obscure that end. *Moi, je suis mon état!* In fact, were I to be asked to sum up my religion, I think I should do so in the words of the New Testament: *Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap*—if not in one life then in another. You will see that I have come to believe in re-incarnation. I have. And really I think that numbers of people believe in it, though they fight shy of saying so; and numbers, again, would find they believed in it if they gave themselves the chance. Look how immensely popular is every public reference to friends meeting in

another life. This aspect of re-incarnation is quietly cherished by millions I am sure; it is their unspoken comfort in the loss of those they love. My belief in it goes further however, for, right or wrong, with its aid I find I can construct a fair working hypothesis. It is that the soul under the direction of God re-incarnates in different forms until it has worked its way through all the stages of development—animal, human, humane, divine—that is, until it has mastered the lessons to be learned here and is fit for Paradise to be opened unto it. And the lessons, I think, can be generalised into two: to be content in whatsoever state we are (to be in hell and not to mind it!)—and to learn to be happy in Paradise. May I say something about each of these? And of the first first, since it must come as a surprise to you after these letters of mine that I aim at being content. What a renegade of my own religion I must be, you will think! But to be unhappy is not necessarily to be discontented, is it? And, again, it is surely something to feel that discontent is wrong. To know one's fault and to will to amend it is better than not to know it or to refuse to admit it. I shall not always complain, I hope. Who knows, indeed, that these letters are not the swan-song of my discontent?

But better even than content is happiness. And to learn when we are happy is the second lesson of my religion. I fancy to myself that we are born upon earth because we do not know when we are well-off in heaven. Birth, says one of the traditional scriptures, is due to ignorance. At first sight it would seem that anybody would know himself to be happy in Paradise. But even if the story of Adam and Eve did not warn us of it, our own experience would tell us that, as a matter of fact, we cannot stand happiness very long. We say, no doubt, that we can. Of certain rare experiences we murmur—Oh, if only this could go on for ever! How happy we should be! This would be Paradise, indeed! But would it, I wonder! There is a devil that lurks in every paradise to tempt us out of it into certain and foreseeable wretchedness. I know it. But just as I hope one day to be able to be contented on earth, so I aspire to be able one day to be happy in Paradise. And no more earth for me thereafter! But it's a far cry to either goal. Meanwhile, however, Life is a schoolmaster, and I am learning with many stripes.

I thought we were due at Gibraltar to-night. Now the Captain says to-morrow. I need not have hurried this letter after all. However, let the excuse cover its sins. I want to write something about love, and then I shall have done. This time, really.

Yours sincerely,

ACTON REED.

More Short Cuts to Literary Success.*

BELLES-LETTRES. (PART I.)

In the previous sections of this work, the beginner was guided into the Great Mansion of Art through the two grand entrances of fiction and poetry. It may be, however, that he feels within him no aptitude for either of these activities. Yet even so, he need not despair. In the tangled and variegated forest of literature there is no narrow compulsion to pursue any particular path or to be confined to a single route. If the wayfarer so choose, he can leave the main road and seek his ease in the shadowy bowers and leafy nooks which adorn the fringes of this royal domain. These sequestered haunts may be classed together under the general heading of "belles-lettres."

Before proceeding to a closer examination of this aspect of our subject, we will now dispose of an objection which some reader may possibly (and reasonably)

raise. "What of drama?" it may be asked. "Surely that should first come under notice." This suggestion is all the more allowable, since we ourselves had originally intended to deal with drama as a part of our didactic programme. At first sight, it might certainly appear that such distinguished names as Plautus, Aristophanes, Shakespeare, Robertson, Shaw, Sims, and Pinero, fully justify the inclusion of drama within the category of literature. Without, however, entering into a detailed discussion which would pass beyond the scope of this Guide, it may briefly be said that this argument in respect of drama, valid though it be as far as the names in question are concerned, loses sight of the fact that the whole nature of drama has, for some years, been undergoing a complete transformation—a transformation which is still eminently in progress. As a result of this development, drama is becoming, and has in part already become, the Autolycus of the Arts, as it were. Music, painting, architecture and even millinery claim, for instance, as great a share in it as actual writing. This tendency is becoming more and more marked, and for this reason we can hardly with justice discuss drama as a product of literature proper in a Guide destined for those who are to enrich the literature of the future. Such a course would lead only to confusion and disappointment.

It need hardly be remarked that, in coming to this conclusion, we do not wish to imply that the quality of drama is declining; quite the reverse, in fact. It is merely changing, and that in a manner of which we ourselves and, indeed, most authorities, thoroughly approve. With these brief observations, we may now resume the thread of our discourse, and proceed to an examination of

BELLES-LETTRES.

The words "belles-lettres" are French, and mean literally, "beautiful letters." Since there is no English equivalent which quite covers the same ground, it has been agreed to adopt this charming designation to embrace various types of miscellaneous literature, such as memoirs, biography, volumes of travel, aphorisms, critical essays, etc.

To the aspirant of maturer years, the writing of memoirs will appeal most strongly. Roughly speaking, memoirs fall into two classes, the serious and the jocular. The choice must naturally be left to the inclination of the writer himself, and each variety has its own particular advantages. We will now consider these in turn.

Memoirs of the graver type should be so planned as to convey useful lessons of sobriety, thrift and industry to the young. They should therefore be interspersed with anecdotes of an edifying nature to emphasise and inculcate these qualities. It may be here remarked that such anecdotes need not necessarily be quite authentic in the strictest sense of the word. The writer of memoirs, acting in the interest of public virtues, will find that the fire of inspiration will fuse the material in his crucible into new and unexpected forms. Seemingly trivial incidents in his life become fraught with a hitherto unrealised significance. Indeed, at the touch of the stimulus of artistic ardour, blurred or forgotten events rise up and take shape out of the misty veil of years, in a manner which must inevitably afford intense gratification both to the writer and the reader. This involuntary co-operation is one of the most beautiful and touching sides of memoir-writing. Let no one, therefore, be deterred from this sphere of literary activity because of an apparent paucity of incident in his career. It may safely be asserted that for retired dry-salters, tea-tasters, haberdashers, cashiers, etc., no worthier occupation could be found than that of inditing the course of their past lives for the benefit of coming generations.

Works of this type can only gain by the addition of a portrait. In this case, there should be a frontispiece, representing the author as he appears at the present day. Considerable importance attaches to such a por-

* The first of this series appeared in THE NEW AGE of December 30, 1915.

trait, which conveys to the reader the first and most striking impression that the author's personality is to make on him. Care should, therefore, be taken to render this portrait as effective as possible. The following will be found useful settings:—

- (1) Sitting at a writing-table in the act of using a quill pen.
- (2) Sitting at a window and looking into a volume of Carlyle's essays (or some similar work).
- (3) Sitting in an arm-chair and stroking a pet dog (which should then figure prominently in the narrative).
- (4) Gathering roses (or some similar flowers) in a garden (or green-house).

Other ideas will doubtless suggest themselves to meet individual cases. If circumstances permit, it may be found advisable to include other portraits in the body of the work to illustrate the letter-press. These may profitably represent the author:—

- (1) In long clothes and holding a wooden spade (or a rattle).
- (2) (a) In knickerbockers with a toy boat; or
(b) In a sailor-suit with a cap bearing the words H.M.S. "Victory" (or H.M.S. "Monarch"; H.M.S. "Lion" would also look well); or
(c) (perhaps best of all) As a choir-boy with a mortar-board and surplice.
- (3) Wearing his first long trousers with a bowler hat.

If it is practicable, the series may be extended to include other important junctures in the author's life, such as:—At the age of twenty-one. In wedding-dress (if any). On appointment to assistant cashier (or some other position of trust). Holding first child (if any). Silver wedding (if any). And so on.

In accordance with the scheme of this Guide we will now proceed to give some model extracts from a work of the nature under discussion. It is entitled: "Fifty Years in Mincing Lane. Being Scattered Leaves from the Life of Thomas Pickerell Bantling, late Head Cashier to Messrs. Pack, Pack, and Pack, Sugar Brokers." This is a beautiful octavo volume of over 200 pages with gilt top. It is printed on stout paper in bold type, and is bound in cloth covers adorned with a refined art design in mauve and sepia. It contains eight tasteful illustrations on the lines indicated above.

FROM CHAPTER III.

My uncle Ned was confidential clerk to Messrs. Wimple and Pippleberry, the well-known firm of soap boilers. He was very fond of stewed parsnips with tripe, and as this was a dish served up on our table every Thursday evening, uncle Ned never missed an opportunity of dining with us on that day. We children, and our elders, too, I have no doubt, always looked forward to these visits, for our uncle was a remarkably witty and amusing man. I remember once (I think it was in the autumn of '57, or it may have been '59) he asked, with a studied air of great concern: "When is a door not a door?" Of course, we were totally unable to answer. He evoked great admiration and merriment from all the company (including old Mr. Stubbleton, a well-known poultry-breeder from Mitcham, who happened to be there at the time) by the neat reply: "Why, when it's ajar, of course." On another occasion he puzzled us all very much by the conundrum: "Why did the fly fly?" I can see him now looking round with a chuckle at our perplexed countenances as, after we had spent nearly half an hour in making all kinds of wild guesses, he answered, with a broad grin of enjoyment: "Because the spider spider." Mrs. Brabber, an old friend of our family, laughed so heartily at this that she had to be taken home to Lavender Hill in a cab. I can remember this quite well, because my uncle rewarded me with the sum of three-halfpence for fetching the cab. It was far too much for me to spend, and my father took charge of it for me. When I see children of to-day being given twopences, threepences, and even sixpences, which apparently they spend without any control on the part of their parents, I cannot help thinking how much better it would be if people brought up their children as we were, instead of fostering spendthrift and extravagant habits with their attendant evils by their

failure to exercise due restraint over the unruly leanings of the young.

Uncle Ned retired from business in his 82nd year, but lived on hale and hearty to the ripe old age of 94. He was active to the last, and used to water his garden in the Brixton Road punctually every morning at 8, wet or fine. . . .

FROM CHAPTER VII.

I entered the employment of Mr. Nathaniel Pack, the original founder of the present firm, in February, 1859. Mr. Pack was held in very high esteem by everybody, being the son of Mr. Amos Pack, of Little Chippingly, Buckinghamshire, and later a prominent member of the Worshipful Company of Tallow Melters. His mother was the daughter of Sir Randolph and Lady Mitten, of Mitten Manor, an old county family, one of whose ancestors, Sir Anthony Mitten, fought gallantly against the Roundheads at Marston Moor. Mr. Pack was married to Miss Cornelia Marl, the eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Marl, of Plumstead (who, by the way, were very remotely connected with the Marls of Hackney Wick, a remoter branch of the same family).

Mr. Pack had a dignity of bearing which I cannot hope to do justice to, and which the flash and noisy manner of the average business man of to-day compares most unfavourably with. He would reach his counting-house every morning on the stroke of 8.30, and he always made the journey from his villa in Walworth to Mincing Lane on foot. He attached great importance—and rightly so—to punctuality. "Punctuality," he used to say, with a grave twirl of the pendant on his watch-chain (a little nervous trick he had), "is the politeness of Kings." At the time I was too young to appreciate the full purport of Mr. Pack's clever saying, but since then I have often had opportunities of meditating on its truth and of seeing how many promising commercial careers have been blighted through neglect of it. . . .

Such is the model memoir of the serious type. It now behoves us to consider that type of memoir which aims at being jocular, sprightly and even, within certain limits, frivolous. It is needless to say that the two kinds of memoirs appeal to entirely different sections of the reading public. While, as we have mentioned and exemplified, serious memoirs aim at edifying by virtuous example, instructing by moral precept, and, in a lesser degree, amusing by judiciously chosen anecdote, the type of memoirs with which we are about to deal has amusement as its main and almost sole object. Sometimes, as will be seen, the element of pathos may with advantage be introduced, but, as a rule, good hearty fun is looked for, with anecdote of a ripper and more exhilarating description. Sometimes even, the writer may venture to put into practice the useful adage that indiscretion is the better part of swagger.

Writers who intend to engage in memoirs of this type should be well versed in theatrical and sporting events of the last forty years or so. They should also provide themselves with interesting items of information—parentage, salaries, marriages, divorces, nicknames, subsequent careers, etc.—regarding the various characters who were prominently involved in these matters. Knowledge of them at first hand is, naturally, a great advantage, but it is not entirely essential. What has been remarked of the serious memoir holds equally good of this variety—namely, that anecdotes need not necessarily be quite authentic in the strictest sense of the word. Care, however, should be taken not to advance claims that might readily be repudiated, and where the writer is not altogether sure of his ground in this respect, he can safeguard himself in two ways:—

- (1) By introducing only deceased persons into the narrative; in this case, the element of pathos will be found a desirable adjunct.
- (2) By writing under a pseudonym.

For other reasons, too, the second method has much to recommend it, unless, of course, the writer is a peer of the realm. In the first place, it gives the writer more latitude in his narrative, and enables him to indulge in a degree of candour which might prove embarrassing were he to sign his own name. Secondly, a piquant pseudonym will always arouse interest with

the reading public, and promote speculation as to the authorship. From a practical point of view—and the publisher is worthy of his buyer—this is an eminently desirable asset. If the prospective author decides to employ a pseudonym, he will find that the range is wide; but he will do well to model himself on such types as these, bearing in mind when making his choice that he should adapt himself to the precise nature of his narrative, thus:—

- (1) Petronius, Junior (for seasoned reminiscences of high life, with particular regard to expensive meals, gambling dens, aristocratic scandals, and continental experiences).
- (2) An Old Fogey (for urbane club gossip which is concerned largely with persons of title, but refrains from recording anything that may not safely become general knowledge).
- (3) Lothario Lovelace (for incidents that centre round the West End, dealing largely with London night life and the personalities appertaining thereto).
- (4) Scene Shifter (for a description of theatrical affairs from behind the scenes. It is often advisable to show the reading public that stage life is thoroughly decorous, as the clergy may then draw attention to the book from the pulpit. But it must be added that the opposite tendency will sometimes produce exactly the same result. The writer must use—but not misuse—his discretion in deciding on his choice of treatment).

These by no means exhaust all possible varieties; others may be devised on similar lines.

As in the case of the serious memoir, portraits are frequently a valuable addition to a volume of this nature, even though it may appear under a pseudonym. The following suggestions may be utilised with profit:—

- (1) (Frontispiece.) The author at the age of 21 as Charley's Aunt in an amateur dramatic performance at Cambridge.
- (2) Miss Tootsey Oogle (whom the author met at Brighton) dressed in tights.
- (3) Mr. Larry Hanks (whom the author knew at school) in his famous impersonation of Julius Cæsar.
- (4) Lord Stammers (whom the author met on a cross-Channel steamer) in private life.
- (5) The exterior of the Stumpminster Empire (a music hall from which the author was ejected at the age of 23 on Guy Fawkes Day), marking the door through which he passed.
- (6) The smoking-room at the Ennui Club with the author in the foreground.
- (7) Facsimile of the autographs of all the members of the Ennui Club, presented on parchment to the author on his 57th birthday.
- (8) Group taken during Lady Dillwater's eccentric ball (author marked with a cross).

These hints will doubtless afford the author an opportunity of making the best uses of the material at his disposal, but it is not intended that they, or any previous suggestions, should be slavishly adhered to. As a final word of advice, we should add that the writer will do well to introduce as many names as he conveniently can. This impresses the reader and, if tactfully done, will cause much gratification to the persons mentioned. As far as the publisher is concerned, this is a distinct recommendation.

The subjoined extract should now be carefully studied, both for its matter and manner. It is taken from "My Wild Oats, and How I Sowed Them," by "Random Roderick." It may be remembered that this volume created a furore last publishing season, and on account of certain passages led to a long controversy in the Press in which the author, the publisher, the British Federation of Publishers, the United Organisation of Booksellers, the National Circulating Libraries Committee, the United Kingdom Authors' League, the Society for the Elimination of Lubricity, the Union for

the Promotion of Unconventional Literature and the Bishop of Maidenhead took a prominent part.

FROM CHAPTER VIII.

When I was a young man, all the fine fleur of Bohemian society could be found every night at the Hesperides Club, the premises of which were located at No. 66b, Dean Street, Soho. The other day I happened to be lunching in the neighbourhood with the Duchess of Euchre, and we tried to find the old building, but, alas, it had been entirely replaced by a horrible red-brick affair used, apparently, as a pickle-warehouse. "Still hot stuff," remarked Her Grace, with that unfailing wit of which she is a past master (or past mistress, perhaps I ought to say).

The Hesperides Club was founded by my friend Archie Jakes, the smartest poker player in the kingdom, and known to his intimates as "Puggy." Poor "Puggy"! He went to Canada some years ago for the benefit of his health, and I am sorry to say that my friend Lord Stumer ran across him as a tram-conductor in Toronto, some little while back. His Lordship was, of course, greatly shocked and grieved, and spared "Puggy" the pain of finding himself recognised.

When the club was founded, it was decided to set an age-limit of 21 for membership. This was rough on me, as I had not yet attained my majority. The difficulty was got over on the opening night by admitting me as a guest. Of course, I was made a full member immediately on reaching my majority, and high jinks we had in celebrating the occasion! But that is another story.

On the first night I remember that I entered with jolly Madge Daydow, whose special confidence I happened to be enjoying at the time, and we two were the very first to sign our names in the visitors' book. I wonder what has become of that book—it ought to make interesting reading to-day. Madge, by the way, who for some reason, which never came out, was better known as "Suds," afterwards went to New Zealand, where, I believe, she became a Maori princess.

The Hesperides would begin to get lively about 11.30, and the keenest of us generally kept it up till 5 or 6 the following morning. Some of its most enthusiastic devotees were "Smut" Stigger, who was noted for his prowess as a raconteur, Marmie Dovetail, who used to cut his own hair, and was otherwise amusingly eccentric; Clarice Tripper, whose fancy dancing was much in demand, and who was said to possess the choicest vocabulary in Long Acre, and young Lord Tubman (now, alas, young no longer) who always lit his cigarettes with fivers. Then there was "Puss" Seymour, whose daintily appointed flat in Guildford Street was a favourite haunt of us young bloods. It was a code of honour amongst us never to attempt entry when the blinds were drawn. Owing to some private family disagreements, "Puss" afterwards went to New York, where she soon won golden opinions on all sides.

But undoubtedly the most amusing habitué of the Hesperides was Jasper Stoot, who rejoiced in the nickname of "Slops" (the manner in which he won it is not for these chaste pages). Jasper was responsible for all the anecdotes on the front page of "Sporting Slips." This journal, by the way, was known amongst us as the "Show Cause," as it was supposed to be printed on paper of the same colour as the documents which bear that time-honoured formula. Jasper wrote all his anecdotes at the Hesperides, and as a composer of limericks he was unrivalled. His chef d'œuvre in this direction was a series dealing with all the chief watering-places of England. I was one of the few privileged ones who were permitted to peruse this collection in manuscript, written, as I well remember, in an old rent-book, a thing for which "Slops" certainly had no use.

When he became animated, "Slops" would improvise verse by the yard, and very good verse it was, too, some of it. He would roar it out at the top of his voice, banging on the table with a whiskey-bottle in each hand. There was one particular ditty, which by frequent repetition had become, so to speak, the official chorus of the Hesperides. It ran thus:—

"I kiss, thou kissest, he kisses,
We ogle, you simper, they pine:
O bubbling beaker that brimmeth with blisses,
As we wantonly warble of woman and wine.
We caper with Eros and Venus,
We frisk with Silenus and Pan:
No bonds are betwixt and between us—
We will! We may!! We can!!!"

The spectacle of "Slops" with a lady on each knee and

a bottle in each hand yelling out these stirring lines to the accompaniment of stamping, whistling and bumping of all kinds, was one not easily to be forgotten. I believe that a complaint was made about it by some peevish person whose slumbers were disturbed thereby, but we knew how to get on the right side of the powers that be, and "Slops" never modified his programme. Alas! his buoyant vivacity and cheery good temper were not to endure for long. Some years ago I saw him being wheeled along in a bath-chair at one of the very places he had celebrated in his sprightly limericks. He was greatly changed in appearance, and did not recognise me. Poor old "Slops"—he was a good pal if ever there was one.

Tales of To-day.

By C. E. Bechhofer.

XVIII.—WITH NOBLE NORTHCLIFFE IN THE TRENTINO.

PROLOGUE.

THE Umbrian sky is streaked with Hope. The waters of the sluggish Adriatic sparkle with renewed anticipations of Glory. The Victor approacheth. Birds, screaming, wheel about the rigging, firmly the steersman presses the straining Tiller, the Bubbles foam in the good ship's Wake, and the Lonely Voyager paces the slanting Deck. He is the Avenger, bound for the field of honour, bearing Triumph in his train. Blazon his Fame, ye triple-tongued Heralds; sound his Praises, ye Trumpets; run away and play, ye Hautboys! Raise Cheer on Cheer! He cometh; he cometh! Ecco, el Conqueristo! Behold, the Conqueror! . . .

A PURPLE PATCH IN ITALY'S HISTORY.

A vessel passes along the lagoon which separates Venice from the sea, and comes at last to anchor opposite the Doge's Palace. The usual swarm of gondolas put out from the quays and squabble for places round the gangway. At the foot of this stands a gendarme who scans the passports and makes out the papers of each passenger as he lands. A grim, fleshy man descends. Instantly from the official a challenge: "Signor, your name?"

"I am the Conqueror!"—a severe, menacing retort. The gendarme hangs his head. Then: "Has his Excellency no other name?" A swift glance towards him of those piercing eyes, a gasp of offended surprise, a swift putting on of great horn spectacles, a laying of a hand upon a heart:—"Gaze! Behold! Before thee, wretch, stands thy master, thy disposer, thy God! I am he who is called the great and the good, hero of a thousand peaceful battles no less glorious than war: but know me in war to be the Victor of Verdun, your very bumptious servant—Northcliffe the Noble!" So speaking, the great commander looks about him. The gendarme, the gondoliers, the towers and palaces of Venice, the ship which has borne him so well from the distant north—he sees them no more. The scene fades before his eyes and he beholds that last crowning hour at Verdun. His eyes fill with tears, his heart beats rapidly: the hero enjoys a second triumph, the world again lies conquered at his feet.

The dull voice of the gendarme: "Is the excellentissimo signor of allied nationality, of English, French or Russian nationality?"

Another eagle glance, another imperial gesture, another noble flourish of the head. "No, no! no! Not an ally, a neutral, a doubtful neutral. I am of the 'Times.'"

"The purpose, signor, of your visit?"

A mist of emotion obscures the hero's eyes. It passes, and the massy head shakes defiance at the skies. His voice is firm and hard as tempered steel. "I come to lead your arms to victory, to purge the field of your ancient foe. Battle! Haha, I sniff it! Battle!

Onslaught! Conflict!"—The voice rises to a shout of triumph—"Victory! Glory! Success! And exclusive reports to the 'Daily Mail'!"

The official writes hastily, "War Correspondent." Then he asks, "Your permanent occupation, signor?"

"Profi—I mean, patriot," answers Lord Northcliffe.

"How long do you intend to stay in Italy?"

Something seems to clot and burst in our hero's brain. The horn spectacles grow smudged with tears. One hand rises to his heart, the other points towards the heavens. In a voice that is a sob he says, "Till victory!" The vision of triumph stands before his eyes. He sees the cheering troops lining the road, and the guard of honour with their glittering swords and prancing steeds; he sees the bullet-riddled standards waving in the breeze, and on a bloodstained hillock stand the Italian generals, expectant of his approach. He sees them stretch forth their arms to embrace him; the rapturous cheers of the onlookers still more loudly acclaim him. Ah!

The voice of the gendarme breaks in upon the vision. "And when was the signor last vaccinated?"

His Lordship answers. Soon he steps into a gondola and is wafted off to a hotel. Not a soul celebrates the arrival upon Italian soil of the Avenger! Only, high in the heavens, the sun shines with an intensive glare and a solitary lark (perhaps from Verdun) trills. O men, men!—Ingrates! Even our hero sheds a tear as the door closes and he is left alone.

But not for long; no, not for long does our hero go unrecognised. Soon the leaders of a nation will lay their destinies in his hands and he will free Italy. Ah, the irony of fate; in the moment of victory his star will fail him! . . .

EPILOGUE.

The Angels at Mons, St. Denis at Nancy, Lord Northcliffe at Verdun and Gorizia: ever the gods fight on our side. Daily the wavering Austrians are losing heart; their doubts turn to despair, their fears to terror. Who, they ask each other, is the supernatural being aiding the Italians? Far, far behind the danger-zone he moves, pen in hand, clad in his antique armour and airman's goggles, all majesty and telegrams. The Austrians fear him mightily.

The Italians, crafty children of the Florentine, fall back in a feigned retreat. The foe, foolishly overconfident, follows them closely. Well baited is the trap, and the prey bites! Through the gap stream the jubilant Austrians. An order is given, signals pass, whistles sound; the ambushed Italians re-form their line. Aha, ye triumphant Austrians, your hopes are dashed now! Trapped, trapped like mice! There are brave men among them. They hurl themselves upon the grim Italians in a desperate attempt to break their way back to their own trenches. Few, very few succeed. The exultant Italians count their captives.

But where is our hero? Alas, the soul grieves and the heart misgives. We have left him, safe, as we thought, behind the Italian lines. Where is he now? No one will ever tell, unless perchance there comes word from beyond the void. Have the Austrians, lured to their downfall by the stratagem of the broken line, overthrown the Victor of Verdun in their unchecked course? Have they bound him in cords and carried him back to their trenches? Or, as some say, has he, thinking himself abandoned by his friends, shaken off their dust from his feet, and, defiantly tossing his noble head, passed over into the councils of the enemy? Who shall say?

On the spot where he has vanished in the full flush of his triumph, the grateful Italians erect a monument. Thereon this simple legend:—

HERE

THRICE-GREAT NOBLE NORTHCLIFFE

DISAPPEARED.

HEAVEN BE PRAISED!

Views and Reviews.

THE PROGRESS OF MAN.

It is impossible to review this book*; one can only read it and be grateful. Professor Wundt's purpose in this work is to make a synthetic survey of the whole range of development, to study the phenomena synchronously, to exhibit their common conditions and their reciprocal relations. This volume is therefore complementary to his five volumes on "Völkerpsychologie," and reduces to an orderly progression the development of the human mind. It is in no sense a substitute for a philosophy of history; philosophy is, in the last analysis, an interpretation in the terms of teleology of the whole historical process; but it is an indispensable preliminary to such a philosophy. Philosophers like Croce who turn away from the facts and ignore the empirical classifications of psychology may present us with a delightful dialectical exercise, but they do not interpret reality; or, if they do interpret it, do so in the terms of their individual consciousness. "Every philosophy is primarily an autobiography," said Nietzsche, and perhaps autobiography is the hidden purpose of the universe. But individual consciousness, however clear, can never tell us the history of its own development; "consciousness," said Ribot, "cannot be itself and its own antecedents"; it cannot discover its own origin, and without a knowledge of the origin it is extremely doubtful whether any satisfactory teleology is possible. Individual psychology is conditioned by folk (or group) psychology, and Professor Wundt insists that folk psychology is an important supplement to individual psychology, and furnishes principles for the interpretation of the complicated processes of the individual consciousness. Folk psychology is, in a very real sense of the phrase, genetic psychology; and it corrects some of the more ludicrous creations of the individual mind.

There has recently been made, even in the columns of THE NEW AGE, an attempt to revive the doctrine of original sin; and if there is any truth in the doctrine, primitive man ought to be the original sinner. But when we turn to the facts, as stated by Professor Wundt, we find that primitive man was no more the original sinner of the philosophers than he was the noble child of Nature beloved of Rousseau. Primitive man had something better to do than to exemplify the theories of poets and philosophers; he was not a sinner, because there were no sins to commit. He could not be a thief, for example, because there was no property; and how could he lie when there was no one to lie to? The most noticeable characteristic of primitive man is what Lassalle called "accursed wantlessness," he had no incentives to such action as we should call immoral; indeed, it is characteristic of primitive culture that it has failed to advance since primitive times. But in one most important respect, primitive man exemplifies modern philosophy; his ethics, such as they were, were quite objective. "His morality" says Professor Wundt, "is dependent upon the environment in which he lives. Where he lives his life of freedom, one might almost call his state ideal, there being few motives to immoral conduct in our sense of the word. On the other hand, wherever primitive man is hunted down and hard pressed, he possesses no moral principles whatever." Man, we see, is naturally good, but the world is against him.

The four great periods which are here treated are "Primitive Man," "The Totemic Age," "The Age of Heroes and Gods," and "The Development to Humanity." If the age of primitive man was distin-

guished by his objective ethics (indeed, everything was objective to primitive man), the totemic age exemplified the chief doctrine of Señor de Maetz, the primacy of the thing. The thing was usually an animal; to it, man ascribed all might, honour, power, dominion, and glory, he even derived his ancestry from it, and varied the organisation of society, of the tribe, of the family, according to his conceptions of what the totem required. But if man could make a god of an animal, he could make a god of a man; rulership appeared even in the totemic age, and the ruler developed into the hero and the god. "The totemic age possesses only fabulous narratives; these are credited myths dealing, not infrequently, with animal ancestors who have introduced fire, taught the preparation of food, etc. The hero who is exalted as a leader in war belongs to a different world, a world faithfully mirrored in the heroic song or epic. As regards their station in life, the heroes of Homer are still essentially tribal chieftains, but the enlarged field of struggle, together with the magnified characteristics which it develops, exalt the leader into a hero. With the development of poetry, the forms of language also change, and become enriched. The epic is followed by formative and dramatic art. All this is at the same time closely bound up with the origin of the State, which now displaces the more primitive tribal institutions of the preceding period. When this occurs different cults and customs emerge. With national heroes and with States, national religions come into being; and since these religions no longer direct the attention merely to the immediate environment, to the animal and plant world, but focus it primarily on the heavens, there is developed the idea of a higher and more perfect world. As the hero is the ideal man, so the god becomes the ideal hero, and the celestial world the ideally magnified terrestrial world."

But the human mind could not be checked by any self-imposed limits, and it moved naturally to the discovery of man. A national State and a national religion do not represent the permanent limits of human striving. The claim to dominion of the world, the attempt to conquer it, served to broaden the national idea into the humanistic; world-religions followed the same course, and contained the same propositions concerning human nature. Christianity, for example, looks forward to the time when there will be one shepherd and one flock upon earth. Concomitantly with this development of the world-idea, proceeds the intensification of the consciousness of the individual. "The emphasis shifts, on the one hand, from the State to a culture which is universally human, and thus independent of State boundaries; it passes, on the other hand, from political interests, in part, to the individual personality and, in part, to universal spiritual development. Thus world-culture is at once cosmopolitan and individualistic." But it would be wrong to infer, therefore, that a world-State can arise which can give the greatest possible scope to the development of the individual. "As a legacy from the primitive era, man has permanently retained not only the general needs of individual life, but also the most restricted forms of family and tribal organisation. It will be impossible for an age of humanity ever to dispense with the more limited articulations of State and society that have arisen in the course of cultural development." None the less, the idea of humanity is the last creation of the human mind, and its development is the task of modern culture. "How immense is the chasm between the secret barter of primitive man, who steals out of the primeval forest by night and lays down his captured game to exchange it, unseen by his neighbours, for implements and objects of adornment, and the commerce of an age when fleets traverse the seas, and eventually ships course through the air, uniting all the peoples of all parts of the world into one great commercial community!" It is an astonishing record of progress, during which man has discovered himself to be worthy of understanding, trust, and hope.

* "Elements of Folk Psychology." By Professor W. Wundt. Translated by Edward Leroy Schaub, Ph.D. (Allen and Unwin. 15s. net.)

Fabian Finance.

THE Fabian Research Department has offered to the Chancellor of the Exchequer what it is audacious enough to call "ideas" on liquidating the expenses of the war. The volume in which these "ideas" are contained is not, we are told, the work of individual contributors, but of a committee, the names mentioned as co-operators being those of Messrs. R. P. Arnot, James Bacon, G. P. Blizard, Emil Davies, W. Gillies, J. W. Nixon, and Sidney Webb—the latter last, on a line by itself, like the name of a "star" on a theatre bill after the names of the smaller fry. The names of those who co-operated in making this book ("How to Pay for the War," Allen and Unwin and The Fabian Bookshop, 6s. net) are immaterial. It bears on every line the impress of Mr. Sidney Webb, bureaucrat; and every one of its recommendations tends, proximately and ultimately, to increase the power of the bureaucracy in a super-bureaucratic State at the expense of the working community, professional, trading, manufacturing, or labouring.

Fortunately for the moral and spiritual development of the English race, the "ideas" of the Fabian Research Department (nothing human even in the name of the thing) can never be wholly, and hardly even partly, applied in practice; and an ironical enough comment on this book is that the practical suggestions in it, where they were not actually carried out by the Government before its publication, are by no means new and have already been written about to the point of satiety. The Department, in its Introduction, makes its object in writing clear enough. The war will demand huge taxes for the repayment of loans and the interest on them; it is useless to consider "fancy" taxes, such as taxes on cats or advertisements: "they might conceivably be useful to meet a deficit of a million or two. They are practically worthless when what is in question is how to find hundreds of millions." The same remark applies to tariffs: "We might, by a so-called scientific tariff, get ten millions of additional revenue; we might possibly get twenty millions; at great cost and loss of business we might conceivably get fifty millions. But not even the most ardent advocate of additional Customs duties can show us how to produce, by a tariff, some hundreds of millions." The implication is that the Department does. But it does not; and, on the basis of its own bewildering figures, there is no reason why a tariff, scientific or not, should not produce as good results with no more hardship. The Fabian Research Department lays down other principles, remarkable enough. It says explicitly that producers and consumers are already overtaxed on what they consume and produce: "We need, on the contrary, rather to reduce these charges." Here is an essential passage indicative of the Fabian Research Department's "ideas":

We shall not increase our power of bearing the new burdens by taxing either the food of our working people or the materials and incidental components required by our producers. We suggest, in fact, that the only effective way of meeting the new burdens is not by increasing imposts, but by making the nation as a whole more productive. The nation can no more pay the cost of the war by a manipulation of taxes than Mr. Micawber could discharge a debt by writing an I.O.U. The only real way to pay for the war is to replace, by new construction, the material wealth that has been destroyed. The only way to do this without lessening the amount that we annually consume is actually to increase the amount of commodities and services that we annually produce. . . . We seek to show how this can be done without confiscation, without expense to the State, and actually with financial advantage to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

In effect, these glowing promises are not carried out. The Department—and this indicates its essential bureaucratic bent—concerns itself not with increasing production, but with transferring certain "services" to the State from the hands of private companies. The whole innate fallacy of the Fabian Research Depart-

ment (as of every Fabian under heaven or in hell) is that a "service" is a commodity (i.e., some material which is "produced") and that "production" has been "increased" when a "service" has been transferred to the State, or, alternatively, when a "service" has been enlarged under bureaucratic control. It is by no mere coincidence that the first and most detailed section of the book deals with the Post Office and its development. It is true enough that our Post Office could greatly develop its activities; but the British Post Office has been in the hands of bureaucrats for decade after decade. The Fabian bureaucrats might develop it, not because they are anxious to suit the requirements of the public, but because they want more jobs for more Fabians. All the criticisms made by the Department regarding our Post Office and its lack of initiative have been made before; the nationalisation of railways and of coal has been fully dealt with; we have State insurance already, and the Government, on its own initiative, extended the system after the first Zeppelin raids. As for the income tax, dozens of financiers and Chancellors of the Exchequer have dealt with it much more scientifically than the Department—and with that we reach the end of the "ideas." We shall return to this stupid book again; but we shall now try to find the Department's "hundreds of millions." The reorganised Post Office will require some "immediate capital outlay"—not much, according to the "ideas"; but we reckon not less than a hundred millions. A loan of £940,000,000 is required for taking over the railways and canals; £400,000,000 for coal mines and distribution; and (we gather) no less than a thousand millions for the insurance companies. In other words, the Fabian schemes require an immediate capital outlay of some twenty-five hundred millions sterling. Ah, but the profits! Well, 12 millions a year from the Post Office, 54 millions from railways and canals, 7 millions from coal, 3 millions from insurance, and from the revised income tax, poll-tax, and capital tax perhaps three or four hundred millions—according to the Department's estimate. Note that the "hundreds of millions" so glibly mentioned in the Introduction come, after all, from an old-established tax—a tax with which the Treasury has dealt and continues to deal more scientifically and with surer knowledge than the Fabian Research Department. But we affirm that the proposals in the Department's income tax chapter are moonshine if taken (as they are intended to be) in conjunction with the preceding chapters. We could say as much as anybody in favour of an income tax of ten shillings in the pound, but not when we are confronted with a gigantic series of loans which demand the other ten shillings.

We shall return, as we have said, to this volume; in the meantime, we have indicated its most glaring defects. Production and services are totally different things; the Department cannot obtain "hundreds of millions" from transferred services; it cannot carry out both its income tax proposals and its "services" proposals, and either without the other would be inadequate. A curious specimen of finance may be instanced. The railways are to yield 54 millions. Of this, 4 millions is "surplus" (capital expenditure, etc.) for the railways proper, and 50 millions is to be handed over annually to the Government as revenue. But 47 millions is required for interest payments (5 per cent. on the purchase price of 940 millions) and one million is wanted to "secure" the other 49 millions. The balance of two millions, it seems, "could be treated as a sinking fund earning always 5 per cent. for eighty-four years. Such a sinking fund would, by the year 2000, redeem not only all the 940 millions of Government railway debt, but also an additional 1,500 millions of the Great War Debt." Well, it wouldn't. The Department, which has but a vague "idea" of a sinking fund, had better make its peace with the "Economist" (July 15), as well as with us when we return to the subject.

Pastiche.

THE CANAL.

BY J.-N. MAS-F.-E.-D.

A drab canal through London slowly runs,
Where barges float, by stalwart horses drawn.
I have seen splendour there of setting suns,
And once, but only once, the lurid dawn.
Unto its banks no gently sloping lawn,
Or meadow bends, but stack on hideous stack,
Drear slums and drearer wharves loom up like monsters
black.

Yet with the sunsets and the dawns and those
White mists of autumn (which are seldom white)
Regent's Canal a debt of beauty owes
To Nature, visible to all men's sight,
And when the moon upon the stairs of Night
Goes footing circumspectly, then the waters
Shine like the glistening locks of Persia's lovely
daughters.

Not till the long canal its freedom finds
In the green lands of Hertford and of Bucks
Do flowers, blooms of many lovely kinds,
Delight its banks. Till then the dank weed sucks
A barren sustenance from various mucks
That in the pools along the horse-track shine. . . .
And the dark waters filmy are with ooze of turpentine.

Over the sturdy bridges 'bus and tram
And stranger vehicles uncaring pass:
Donkey-cart, taxi, motor, pram,
And mankind mouching in the mass;
Workman and matron, lad and lass;
And all glance idly at the sluggish stream
As the long barge ropes flick it and the waters gleam.

There is a slum which totters to its brink
At Haggerston. There live and die and sin
(As germs within a long uncleansed sink)
Scores of pale folk who find their joy in gin.
Their children, armed with cotton, stick, and pin,
With jar where jam late rested, lying flat,
Hunt with a fearsome glee the nimble sticklebat.

Or "tiddler," for their parlance has no place
For "sticklebat," a name precise and cold,
That hides the satisfaction of the chase.
Could they for "sticklebats" their lies have told
To teachers on occasions manifold
When truant joys allured them? Could they say,
"Please, sir, for sticklebat we angled yesterday"?

No; but when anger and the flexuous cane
Had wrought a spell upon their hinder-parts,
Before the insistent questions and the pain
They opened wide their frank and boyish hearts:
"Don't 'it so 'ard, sir! Please, sir, please, it smarts!"
"Then tell me where you were." Again the swishing.
"Please, sir, I went with Johnnie Bates a-tiddler fishing."

There Tommy Muggins, with a truant's joy,
And Dickie Higgins wandered down one day,
With Johnnie Bates (a certain gallows boy),
To lure the sticklebats the olden way.
Alas! the danger of forbidden play!
For Johnnie Bates, unbalanced and intent,
Into the sluggish waters all untimely went.

Loud rang the fateful shriek, the piercing cry,
The peal of horror, the entreating yell.
"Johnnie's fell in! Come quick, or he will die!"
"My gawd-a-mercy!" quavered Mrs. Bell.
"If that young Johnnie Bates ain't been an' fell
Into the water! 'Elp! 'Elp!" echoed Mrs. Brown,
And with a clothes-prop each they clattered down.

Too late, too late! Sing, Muse, a sadder song.
The infant vial is shattered, and the lamp
Untimely quenched! So lissom and so strong!
They called him angel who had been a scamp,
Waiting long hours of sorrow in the damp.
At last he was recovered, dead and white,
And bitter were the hours his parents spent that night.

Where the gaunt wood-stack, resinous and stark,
Frowns in Great Cambridge Street, a spectral sight,
Most visible at twilight (ere the dark)
Will fascinate the gazer. Vapours white
Curl on the still canal with movements light;
As Dante once, by Virgil's subtle spell,
Saw awful mists exuding from the bursting floors of Hell.

Fronting the wood-stack on the other side,
Below the bridge's level, is a row
Of dreary houses—some fair owner's pride!—
Where scores of England's sons and daughters grow.
Dark little tenements of want and woe.
They fetch their fourteen bob a week, and—well,
It's worth it easily for such a sight of Dante's Hell.

At Number Seven a goodly family lived,
The Woodins, father, mother, daughters four.
(There had been others, but they had not thrived,
And in their infancy had "gone before"),
Two sons (old Woodin often wished for more,
When work was scarce and times and things were bad),
And six rooms held them and the property they had.

At Number Nine lived all the brood of Bell,
"A peal of bells," as once the curate said
In mood facetious. Nature had wrought well
And dowered them with many a curly head—
John, Tom and Susan, Lizzie, Kate and Ned,
Victoria and Harold. These, ingrained with grime,
Took with scant thanks their hours from Father Time.

In the drab living room of Number Seven
(Both sitting-room and kitchen) sat one night
(It was a Saturday, the hour eleven)
Old Woodin and his wife. His pipe alight,
He sat and puffed and talked, a kind of fright
Showing itself in husky, quavering tones:
"It's truth I'm tellin' yer—I heard the boy's long moans."

"When I got up ter sling me 'ook ter-day—
Wot time was it?—yus, 'alf-past five, and dark,
Passing 'is room, I'll swear I 'eard 'im say,
In sleep like, 'Don't, Liz, chuck us fer-that spark.'
And then 'e moaned; it made me ill to 'ark.
Wonder the others didn't 'ear 'im . . . but
If that's wot she's a-doin', she's a dirty slut."

"Our boy—no son of mine—ain't goin' ter be
Treated like dirt in front of all the street
Because Bell's girl's a bloomin' typist, see!"
Said Mrs. Woodin. "I can't make 'im eat
Nohow, and 'is face is like a sheet,
And all because a bloomin' City marm
Flirts with another man and swears there ain't no 'arm."

"I saw Jim Bell down at the Bull ter-night.
'Hallo, old cock!' 'e said, but I could see
'E didn't think things altergither right.
'E on'y drunk a single glasss with me,
Then turns and looks about and ses, ses 'e,
'I'll 'ave ter shift from 'ere. So long, old cock!'
But I could plainly see 'is mind was all arock."

So they sat talking till the midnight came,
Then, leaving Richard's supper on the board,
They turned the gas down to a tiny flame
And sought their bed. The other children snored,
Peaceful with dreams from Sleep's grey vessel poured.
But Richard by the bridge was standing, sighing,
And wishing that the friendless night had found him dying.

One struck. The policeman thumped along his beat:
"Come, move along there; don't go dreamin' dreams.
You're only thinkin'? Come on, move yer feet:
I know the sort that gazes long at streams."
A light of rage in Richard's bosom gleams:
"All right, you needn't push," he says, and goes,
And into Number Seven lets himself and all his woes.

He pecked his supper as a pigeon pecks
The scattered crumbs that ladies kind let fall,
Turned out the light and went as one who recks
Of nought save sorrow in the world at all,
Up to his room. The moonlight on the wall
Gleamed with a spectral greyness and a dart
Of love remembered trembled in his anguished heart.

Dreaming, his brother slept; the double bed
Dwarfed his dark curls upon the pillow's white.
Richard stood long and watched the peaceful head,
Sighed with a bursting envy at the sight.
"Wait till you've grown, my dear, and known the blight
That fickle women on your heart can place
With their soft silken beauty and their hellish grace."

He tiptoed to the window and looked long
And sadly at the silent, dark canal.
Far off the echoes of a drunkard's song
Smote the night's stillness with its fal-de-dal.
"I've always been to her a decent pal,
I've always been . . ." his thought thinned out and died.
"Oh, God, I could have borne it if she had not lied!"

Half-dazed he sat and peeled his coat and vest
From his broad, trembling shoulders, then he took
His braces off. The pulses in his breast
Thumped heavily. He wrote within a book
His brother used for school-work; this forsook
When darkly trailed a cloud across the moon.
"Soon it will all be mended, soon," he murmured, "soon!"

His brother stirred and woke at half-past seven,
Then missed the accustomed form of brother Dick.
Dawn stirred his sleepy soul like sudden leaven:
Could he have risen early? Fast and quick
Such questions came: his eyes were heavy and thick:
Sudden he turned and saw: the dreadful sight
Curdled his soul: he shrieked with all his might.

There, hanging starkly on a tightened brace
Upon the bedroom door, was brother Dick.
Livid with horror went the boy's round face.
"O mother, come! O father, please come quick!"
They cut him down; they eyed each other, sick
With terror; all the girls were weeping loud.
"We'll 'ave ter keep it quiet, or there'll be a crowd."

Gauntly old Woodin knocked at Number Nine,
A rage with sorrow mixed was in his heart.
No sign. He knocked again, and still no sign.
Again. The upper window creaked apart,
And Bell called, "'Ere, wot's all the row abart?"
"Open the door—I'll tell you," Woodin said.
"Oh, right you are, old cock!" returned the vanished head.

Slowly the tale was told of this great woe.
Old Bell was silent, then he gravely said,
"You'll 'ave a lot ter bear in this 'ere blow:
I 'oped that they was both on 'em ter wed.
My girl, ter drive a feller off 'is 'ead!
It's 'orrible; I don't know wot ter say.
I'll tell the missis: it'll make 'er 'air turn grey."

He left the room, and soon his wife was down,
Wrapped in a shawl and skirt, with stockinged feet.
She quavered grief; her tears fell softly down
As the drear tale old Woodin did repeat.
"Liz. She will 'ave ter know." With her retreat
The men fell sighing: soon she came with dread.
"She rose and went out early, little Vicky said."

Terror in these two households reigned; in one
Where neighbours clustered by the silent door,
They mourned the tragic losing of a son.
The mystery of Lizzie deepened more.
She had eloped, 'twas whispered o'er and o'er.
But still the parents waited for a sign,
And from their windows watched the sullen waters shine.

The police were notified, and ere the night
A person grave stood at the Bells' shut door.
It opened, and he entered from the sight
Of those who made of tragedies a store.
He told the parents how, at half-past four,
A mile away their Lizzie had been found
Wedged in the lock-gates, by her own act drowned.

Sing, muse—O modern muse! The tragic theme
Of ill-starred love and crime was made for thee.
Not thine the lyric of the wing agleam,
The echo of the thrush's minstrelsy.
Thine is the story in a minor key.
The tale of horror and the chant of woe.
Sing, that the drear canal of pain may ever flow.

W. K. SEYMOUR.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

THE WAR.

Sir,—Your correspondent André B. thinks there is a change in the national outlook, and that our Press has now become infamous as its chief indulgence is "reviling the Hun." I venture to suggest that there is not much change, but that André B. has just discovered what has been going on for two years. This is the first great war to experience the full effect of the modern Press, the result being probably the greatest orgy of lies ever known throughout the belligerent nations. Perhaps André B., having made one discovery, may be led to more quiet thinking and study, especially of fundamentals. Perhaps he will find that other details bearing upon this war and the diplomacy of preceding years are not quite as he thought or as represented by the Press. In spite of Mr. André B.'s rebuke, I see signs of our really being in agreement; but, please, may I ask him not to continue the war to save my valuable head (his estimate)? As he refers to his services at the front, I am compelled to admit that I have been invalided out of the Army after eighteen months' service. We therefore both know that hatred is almost non-existent in the Army, but that its development among the civilian population makes peace so difficult to obtain. In conclusion, may I quote from Dr. Johnson ("The Idler," November 11, 1758)?

"In a time of war the nation is always of one mind—eager to hear something good of themselves and ill of the enemy. At this time the task of news writers is easy; they have nothing to do but to tell that a battle is expected, and afterwards that a battle has been fought, in which we and our friends, whether conquering or conquered, did all, and our enemies did nothing. Scarcely anything awakens attention like a tale of cruelty. The writer of news never fails in the intermission of action to tell how the enemies murdered children and ravished virgins, and, if the scene of action be somewhat distant, scalps half the inhabitants of a province."

* * *

"THE NEW AGE."

Sir,—As one who has been a student of social questions and a Socialist for over thirty years, and a subscriber to THE NEW AGE from its first number, and a National Guildsman and an unofficial member of the National Guilds' League, I would like, without committing myself to the view expressed by Mr. Hare in your issue of August 10, that "you have appeared to me for years to be consistently throwing the apple of discord in the Labour and Socialist camp," to join with him in what I take to be an appeal for a change, not in the propaganda of National Guildism, but in your attitude of aloofness from the National Guilds' League and silence regarding its independent propaganda of your constructive proposals, and in your "irritating phrases and aggressive manners" towards the Trade Unionists, Fabians, the I.L.P., etc.

In the last letter (XCVI) of "Fors," Ruskin made confession regarding the reasons for the failure of his twenty years' efforts, and then added the appeal for united effort on the part of all men of good will: "But surely the time is come when all these faithful armies should lift up the standard of their Lord—not by might, nor by power, but by His spirit, bringing forth judgment unto victory. That they should no more be hidden, nor overcome evil, but overcome evil with good. If the enemy cometh in like a flood, how much more may the rivers of Paradise? Are there not fountains of the great deep that open to bless, not destroy? And the beginning of blessing, if you will think of it, is in that promise, 'Great shall be the peace of thy children.' All the world is but as one orphanage, so long as its children know not God their Father; and all wisdom and knowledge is only more bewildered darkness, so long as you have not taught them the fear of the Lord. Not to be taken out of the world in monastic sorrow, but to be kept from its evil in shepherd peace;—ought not this to be done for all the children held at the founts beside which we vow, in their name, to renounce the world? Renounce! Nay, ought we not, at last, to redeem?" Socialists, worthy of the name, are out, not to renounce or reform, but to redeem society.

THE NEW AGE, throughout its career, and more especially since you became Editor, has consistently held that,

"whatever else it may mean, it is certain that emancipation involves a new epoch, new not only in social and economic structure, but new spiritually; a new birth in which men are not only born again, but, as Mrs. Poyser remarked, 'born different'" ("National Guilds," p. 2). It is not the dead, but what Prof. J. S. Nicholson called "the living capital," that needs to be, and can alone be, "born different." In the chapter that opens the second and constructive part of the book, "National Guilds," entitled "The Moral Foundations of Existing Society," but meaning really the immoral foundation as found in "the rack wage system," the admission is made that "it is not to be denied that the realisation of the immorality of one class of men reducing another class to, and maintaining them in, a condition of propertylessness in order to exploit their wage labour for private profit has been slow in coming. Even at this moment the realisation is confined to a comparatively few minds" (*op. cit.*, p. 110). But "against wage slavery, as against chattel slavery, an increasing minority has always been in active revolt, and the mass of men have always been in passive revolt. For the active revolt it is only necessary to look at the history of Socialism and of Utopianism, both of which alike make the abolition of the wage system their goal. But in regard to the passive revolt the evidence is not less conclusive" (*ib.*, p. 111).

If these things are so, if this large measure of agreement as to the goal is a reality, as who can doubt that there is, why should not those who agree as to the goal agree to march towards it unitedly even if it be by different roads, instead of wasting time skirmishing with one another in the presence of a united foe that is only too pleased to see division in the ranks of their supposed foes? But the truth of the matter is that, just as there is no real division of principle between Liberals and Conservatives in the political camps, but only a certain mutual distrust of one another as "the ins" and "the outs," so there is no real division of principle between capitalists and labourers any more than there is between officers and men in the trenches or when they are exploiting the foe. The real opposition is between dead capital in the hands of those who have even a little of it (the petty trader, e.g., who is an individualist first and last) and the living capital embodied in the hand or wage worker, the salariat, both hand and brain worker, and the active capitalist, the brain worker purely as such, the captain and director of industry as things are. There is, of course, also the inactive or sleeping or dead capitalist—shareholder, bondholder, etc.—who is difficult to classify as either "fish, flesh, or good red herring," but who can only survive in the future (as he or she does by being of some little value to society at present) in so far as such a one is or becomes part of the living capital (perhaps at present as a so-called honorary or unpaid worker, though really paid, perhaps handsomely, by the dividends drawn as "unearned income," like a Ruskin, for example).

What is needed for the immediate future, it seems to me, is for all men and women, especially young people, no matter to what organisation, Socialist, Trade Union, political or semi-political, they may belong, to say openly and to one another, through the medium of the organs of their respective organisations: We are agreed that the foundations of society, as at present constituted, are immoral, wavery being the root of the evil, and we must now find out how to abolish it and replace it by such an order as will give to each his true status as a portion of the living capital of the State, as a bona fide worker for the good of the commonwealth, as a partner in the control of the industry in which he does his share of the common work of the specialised industry of which the State, representing the industrial democracy, has given him and his co-workers the responsible control. Is THE NEW AGE prepared to extend the right hand of fellowship and to invite co-operation from members of organisations, Socialist, Trade Unionist, etc.? I believe it is, and that a beginning has been made by publishing the lectures of Prof. Arnold to the W.E.A.

* * * WILLIAM MARWICK.

HUMOUR.

Sir,—The extract below is taken from the "Daily Sketch" for August 25. It would seem impossible for the bad taste of even the flatulent Mr. Gossip to sink beyond this. Yet I expect the creature will manage it somehow:

"Do you know what 'Homard a la 'Kamarad' is? In some Paris restaurants lobsters are served or sit ready to be eaten, propped up on their tails with claws stretched

up above their 'heads.' The attitude of surrender and appeal is perfect, and the effect is indescribably ludicrous. Try it."

I wonder, by the way, how many of the dolts who absorb this kind of disgusting balderdash actually did "try it." There is still a lingering hope that its odious purveyor, for once at least, over-rated the imbecility and caddishness of his dupes. Surely it can only be a very small minority to whom this loathsome foolery appeals. L. M.

CURRENT CULTURE.

Sir,—To our officers of the reformatory and industrial schools there has come an official pamphlet on school libraries from H.M. Chief Inspector, Mr. C. E. B. Russell, who writes the "foreword." With the "suggestions" contained therein I am not at present involved. That which has amused me chiefly is the following completely unintentional but surprisingly exact estimation of—er—modern culture. I feel I am beginning to understand (at last) what some folks mean by that which they have oh so crudely called "the psychology of the unconscious." However, here is the extract:

"I would not restrict the choice entirely to books that are good literature and in every paragraph unexceptionable in tendency. There are many children who may be guided through an interest in publications of a very crude type, known to them as 'penny bloods,' to appreciation of the great masters of romance, such as Scott, or Dumas, or Stevenson, just as not a few persons who now read Parliamentary debates from end to end and leading articles with avidity, if they told the truth, would confess that their love of the 'Times' or the 'Manchester Guardian' has grown out of the perusal of the police news and murder trials."

Parliamentary debates and police news! Leading articles and murder trials! The "Times" and Dumas! The "Manchester Guardian" and Scott, not forgetting little Stevie! Alas, would it all were IRONY! But, dear Sir, it 'tain't! Gorbline me, if 'twas!

G. O. KAYE.

FIVE RUSSIAN PLAYS.

Sir,—I am sorry that my translations bored your reviewer; I can at least explain one of the causes of his disappointment. I did not publish the translation of Chékhov's two sketches in order to show that I can write better English than Mr. Julius West; I knew that long ago. Unfortunately, when my "competing translations" were sent to press Mr. West's had not yet appeared, nor did I suspect their existence. I think no excuses necessary for translating Evreinov's two plays. Regarding the "Beautiful Despot," your reviewer says, "Life in the year 1808 may have had its charms, but the men of that period did not waste their time in argument to prove that theirs was a better life than it would be possible to live in 1904." I do not suppose they did; I even think it very unlikely. If they had, there might have been a purpose in their so doing, just as in the "Beautiful Despot" there is a dramatic value in the wilful old-fashionedness of the man of 1904. As for the "Merry Death," when the English stage again produces such an excellent little play I shall begin to have hopes of a dramatic revival here.

C. E. BECHHOFFER.

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Press Cuttings.

The fundamental basis of the Christian case against capitalism is not that it makes the few rich and the many poor—though this is true; not that it creates social conditions which are a disgrace and a cause for amazement in a civilised community—though this is true also; not that it brutalises the rich by luxury, stifles beauty, and frustrates the hope of craftsmanship for the worker—though, indeed, it does all these things; but that it denies and degrades the God-like character of man by the operation of a wage system which makes the worker of no more account than a machine to be exploited or a tool to be bought and sold. Man's body, which is the temple of the Holy Ghost, is hired at a price in a "labour market," he is "taken on" as a "hand," and once he has sold his labour-power he has forfeited all claim to decide the conditions under which he will work, the medium in which he will work, and the tools he will employ, who shall direct his labour in the workshop, and by what means, and all claim to a share in the finished product. Such a status is justly described as wage-slavery, and its only logical development is the Servile State. This final surrender might bring the worker material advantages, but it would be at the cost of his manhood. A benevolent capitalism might make the relation between "profiteer" and "wage-slave" humane: it can never make it human. How much less, then, can it make it divine!—M. B. RECKITT.

Quite generally speaking, it may be said that participation in task setting, in a country where participation of the workers in wage setting is already so far established—at least in principle—as it is in England, must be the next great constructive task of trade unionism. The reconstructive era after the war will not, at first, find Labour prepared for this new task. Except, perhaps, in the textile industries, management is still essentially looked upon as the business of capital which "hires" labour; and this idea has been taken over, without much change, into the sphere of public employment.

As for the State, it is probable that in the field of social and labour legislation it will make far-reaching concessions. There is every probability, for instance, of a considerable extension of minimum wage legislation, an essential condition of national security, and exceedingly desirable, so far as it goes, from the workers' point of view. Unemployment insurance also will probably be extended and made more effective. Health insurance will be so amended as to eliminate the most potent causes of dissatisfaction and friction.

But will the great employing departments of State and municipalities, not only confronted, as we have seen, by vastly larger and more complex labour problems than those they have had to deal with in the past, but also the pace setters in labour management for private capitalistic enterprise—will these departments let go all the old prejudices and false theories which they have taken over from private industry and substitute for them a new, more rational, and more democratic theory of labour management?

It is difficult to be optimistic in this respect, basing judgment on the happenings of the last few years. There has not been even a beginning in any of the great employing departments of treatment of labour other than as a commodity that could be hired, utilised, and returned—as horses and automobile trucks are hired. We are forced to the belief that the lessons will have to be learned from bitter experience. That means there will be an honest endeavour to enforce certain minimum conditions of work and wages, so as to avoid the worst spirit of resentment among the workers; there will be more consultation of trade union leaders, perhaps, than heretofore, to avoid causes of possible disputes; but, beyond this, it is not likely that there will be a real recognition of the fact that in modern democratic industry the labour factor should have at least as much "say" in the conduct of operations as the capital factor, that is, in the case of public employment, the elected representatives of taxpayers.

Thus, by strengthening monopoly control without fundamentally changing the labour policy of monopoly enterprises, the creation of great public enterprises is

likely, at first, to drive labour into the formation of vaster units of organisation, of giving to every dispute for its background the threat of an effective "general strike," of increasing "class consciousness," and of decreasing patriotism.

It would be going too far, however, to predict such a development as inevitable. At present, it is impossible to discern more than tendencies. For a time a serious clash may be postponed by an energetic advance of social legislation and through the added scarcity value given by the war to adult male labour. Let it be hoped that this interval may be long enough to permit a sufficient clearing of the atmosphere and enlightenment of the leaders in the labour movement and in labour management so that the grave conflict here forecast may not actually come to pass, but be averted by a timely deviation of policy from the customary paths to those which alone can lead to a real and lasting social peace.—BRUNO LASKER, in the "New York Times."

As regards the objection that any sort of State subsidy, bonus, or tariff will merely go into the pockets of the landlord, it is a difficulty, of course, but it is not a paralysing one. If the land is really made more productive, it need not trouble us too much that the profits go to the wrong people—if landlords must be so regarded. Would it be an objection to building a new railway through a suburb that the value of certain property would be increased, though the owners had done nothing to deserve it? Certainly not. The one point that matters is to build a railway to meet the needs of traffic and to improve the distribution of goods. If landlords would profit by State help for agriculture, at all events, as a class, they pay much of their profits back to the State in Income Tax, and Super Tax, and Death Duties. Of course, there are bogies in our path, but, if we are going to be frightened by bogies, the terrors of which are greatly exaggerated, we shall turn aside and do nothing. Agricultural experts tell us that if Britain were properly farmed we could be nearly self-supporting. Imagine what this would mean in war: (i) The problem of freights would be enormously simplified; (ii) our sources of supply would not be in danger of being cut off; and (iii) we should much more easily maintain our credit, since the money spent on the food of the people would not go to foreign countries where the exchange tends to alter to our disadvantage—to the lowering of our credit—at every purchase.—"The Spectator."

If for any reason it is deemed necessary to keep any national industry undiminished in face of the competition of cheaper foreign imports, it is economically better to do it by the method of Bounty, or Government Purchase at a guaranteed price, than by that of Protective Tariff—because (i) prices are not then raised, either to manufacturers or exporters, or to the consumers; (ii) the community as a whole bears the burden assumed for national objects; and (iii) we know precisely what we are paying! But seeing that a Bounty or guaranteed price must, in practice, necessarily be given uniformly for every quarter of wheat or every ton of steel that is produced at home, irrespective of the varying costs of production, even this method is open to the objection that the payment will be made where it is not required, and that a large proportion of it will be a sheer gift to the already successful capitalist or to the landlord. The only way of avoiding this extravagance is for the Government itself either to undertake the whole industry, setting off against the profit of the profitable part the loss on such portion of it as has to be maintained beyond the margin of cultivation, which is how the Co-operative Wholesale Society manages its vast concerns; or, if that is too large an enterprise for our present Administration, for the Government to take over—possibly by the agency of a controlled and subsidised company—any establishments that are deemed indispensable (as in the case of dye-stuffs) and run them frankly at a loss. It is clear that either of these methods would be less costly and far less wasteful of national funds (and, withal, more certain to attain the end of keeping going the home industry) than putting up the price of all our steel by a pound or two per ton, because a few of our steel-smelters cannot compete with America and Germany.—"The New Statesman."