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

No. 1272] New Series. Vol. XX. No. 13. Thursday, Jan. 25, 1917. [Registered at G.P.O. as a Newspaper.] SIXPENCE

CONTENTS.

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

It is as well to have it in black and white that the sacrifice made by the Trade Unions when they suspended their rules and customs was enormous. And the contributor of the important series of articles on "The Trade Union Outlook" to the "Times" during last week is explicit and emphatic upon the point. "It is only just," he concludes his survey, "that the magnitude of the sacrifice made by organised labour should be remembered," and we may add that it is only wise as well. When we remember, moreover, the response that has been made by other classes to appeals for the casting off of their "fly-blown phylacteries" and the abandonment of their "ancient shibboleths"—to use Lord Rosebery's phrases—the contrast between the attitude of Labour and Capital is the more striking, and, at the same time, the more encouraging. For what does this ability to make a clean and sudden break with the past imply but an astonishing flexibility of mind, itself the condition precedent of every prospect of revolutionary change and progress? The fact that an effort of such magnitude as the abandonment in a night of century-old traditions was within the compass of the working classes, is evidence that Labour is in its youth, and is still mouldable by its own resolution. The principle of growth is vigorously present, nor is it under the mortmain of tradition. But if this is the case, may we not also conclude that the future is with it? An economic class, in fact, that has proved itself able to cast off its traditions in response to new circumstances may safely be judged capable of anything. And there is literally no effort, we believe, in the direction of national reconstruction which Labour is not capable of making if the country likes to call for it.

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Consideration must be given to the fact that the indebtedness of the nation to Labour cannot, however, be discharged by the mere restoration, even if that were possible, of the Trade Union conditions that prevailed before the war. The nominal debt, it is true, is clearly recognised, and we are glad once more to find it unequivocally stated in the articles to which we have referred. "The most explicit pledges," says the "Times" writer, "were given, not once, but repeatedly; not to any particular trade union but to the Labour movement as a whole; not by one Minister only but by many, representing all sections of the Coalition Government; and not by the Government alone, but also by the Engineering Employers' Federation, and by innumerable employers individually—that the rules and practices thus laid aside should be restored at the conclusion of the war." The obligation is, therefore, admitted, and the matter is beyond doubt. But is there not something beyond mere restoration that is due to the Trade Unions? Over and above the restoration of the status quo—assuming, for the moment, that restoration is practicable—is not reparation or compensation enjoined by justice? The question is important from several points of view. In the first place, it is desirable that in view of the astonishing transformation of mind involved in the Trade Unions' surrender of their privileges, public gratitude should be expressed in a more generous fashion than by simple restoration—for it is not so ordinary an operation that the nation can accept it in the light of a duty discharged as a matter of course. And, in the second place, there is a considerable danger that in certain quarters mere restoration, or its exact equivalent, will be regarded, not as the repayment of a debt, but as itself a sufficient reward for sacrifice. On both these grounds, therefore, we ought to be on our guard against whittling down either the magnitude of the sacrifice made, or the obligation of gratitude which the nation has incurred. Restoration, we repeat, is not in itself more than the bare legal discharge of a legal obligation. It is in no sense a gift which carries with it any new obligation upon the recipient.

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The subject, however, is complicated by the fact that restoration in the literal sense is impossible. Upon this point, too, we are glad to find the "Times" correspondent in full agreement with The New Age. Our readers may recall that from the first mention of the proposal to suspend the practices of Trade Unionism we declared that if once these practices were suspended they would never, because they could never, be restored. It was all in vain, we said, that pledges

were given and imposed upon the Government that at the end of the war the Trade Unions should be restored in their former rights. The keeping of such a pledge was beyond the power of man. And the "Times" writer, with the experience of the suspension before him, confirms us. "We are face to face," he says, "with the unpleasant fact that the nation has given a solemn pledge to Labour which it cannot possibly fulfil . . . the pre-war conditions cannot be restored." But if it is impossible that the pledge so confidently made and so loyally accepted cannot be redeemed, is it not incumbent upon the nation, in view of the double obligation incurred—that of making the pledge and that of breaking the pledge—to see that, at least, Labour shall not be put at a disadvantage relatively to its pre-war condition, but, on the contrary, that Labour shall receive in lieu of the restoration that is impossible an equivalent of restoration together with something more than restoration? But what can such an equivalent be? And how are we to find in a completely new set of privileges a compensation for the privileges that have been surrendered, and that cannot be restored? The answer is to be found, we think, in a just appreciation of the purpose and intention of the original and now abandoned practices of Trade Unionism, and in the concession, in place of those practices, of the purposes they were intended to serve. After all, it was not in mere wilfulness that the practices to which we refer were adopted during the pre-war period by the Trade Unions. They were not senseless regulations without an object and designed merely in a spirit of whim. On the contrary, examined closely—as, let us say, an economic Darwin might have examined them—they would be revealed as intelligent adaptations of the Labour organism both towards a particular environment and with a particular end in view. The equivalent, therefore, of their restoration must first of all take into account the purpose for which they existed; and it is obvious that unless it succeeds in placing Labour in at least as favourable a position relatively to that purpose, it is no equivalent at all, and still less a reward for sacrifice.

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At this point, unfortunately, the able writer in the "Times" appears to us to be less sympathetic to Labour than elsewhere he has shown himself to be. It is clear that it is possible, in regard to any set of adaptations, to adopt one or other of two points of view. We can view them as particular adaptations to an immediate environment; or we can examine them as adaptations made, it is true, for an immediate purpose, but made also for the more remote purpose of the organism itself. Among the ends of Trade Unionism, and for which the practices that grew up were designed, we ought, in short, to distinguish the immediate from the remote ends, and hence the practices designed for the one purpose from the practices designed for the other. And it is the more important to do so, since the restoration of the equivalent of the first set of practices—those, that is, designed to meet an immediate need—is no guarantee whatever that the equivalent will be restored of the other set of practices which were designed to meet the remoter needs of the Labour movement. Now what were the needs designed to be satisfied by what we may call the temporary practices of the Trade Unions? They were, we agree with the "Times," the need for higher wages, shorter hours, security against unemployment, and better conditions of work. These, it is certain, were among the immediate and the most articulate objects of the practices and privileges that grew up among the Trade Unions. On the other hand, we shall be in error if we assume that these were the only or even the main objects of Trade Unionism; and still more in error if we assume, as the "Times" writer does, that the satisfaction of these particular demands will be an equivalent for the surrender that has been made. For the remoter need of the Labour movement, and the need for which even these immediate practices were only an adaptation of means, was neither wages nor leisure, neither security nor comfort, but, in the most exact sense, the emancipation of the working class from the wage-system. In short, it was economic freedom. But it is, as we say, in just this respect that the "Times" writer—who otherwise is the fairest and best-informed critic we have discovered in the capitalist Press—appears to us to be at fault. For conceiving the aims of Trade Unionism to be only its articulate aims, and ignoring the existence or failing to divine the aim towards which these articulate aims are themselves directed, he is content with enumerating the equivalents of the practices designed to satisfy them without a thought (as yet) of equivalents for the practices designed to accomplish the remoter aim of Labour emancipation. We shall see, however, that this is not enough; for the matter is not simply one of theory. We shall see that when all the immediate aims of Labour are fully satisfied, Labour will remain restless, discontented and revolutionary.

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Mr. Prothero has already had to confess to an error which, if he had been in Mr. Asquith's Government, would have brought down upon him the Northcliffe headlines. Having, in the maturity of his wisdom, announced that the fixed prices of wheat, potatoes, etc., were maximum prices, he has now coolly announced that they are to be minimum. It is only a trifling difference, of course, and Mr. Prothero may still remain a great practical genius in the columns of the "Times." The reversal of policy, however, is not to be wondered at, for, as we have said before, without consequential changes of an equally revolutionary nature, the policy of fixed maximum prices for production is impracticable. Fixed maxima are, in fact, the beginning, and not the end, of re-construction. Without, however, any disposition to see the revolution through; without, indeed, any vision of what a reconstructed agriculture involves, Mr. Prothero had clearly no answer to the complaint of the farmers that he was fixing maximum prices for their product, while leaving their costs exposed to the full blasts of the Law of Supply and Demand. It was eminently unfair, they reasonably argued, to require farmers to sell in a fixed market and to buy in a fluctuating market; for how could they tell that, in the balance, they would not be the losers? That there was another reply, however, than the reply given by Mr. Prothero, which consisted in conceding to farmers the very privilege they complained he had formerly given to the public—we are sure. And the proper reply would be something as follows: the Government recognises the difficulty you point out, and is by no means desirous of imposing risks of ruin upon farmers any more than upon other producers. On the other hand, it is essential to the welfare of the nation and to the prosecution of the war, that food should be produced at a standard cost, excluding, as far as possible, the fluctuations due to profiteering. To this end, the Government proposes to deal with farmers as it deals with its troops. We propose to register every farmer and farm in the country, to enlist them all in the national service, and to guarantee to each of you (a) reasonable fixed personal salary during the period of the war; (b) sufficient labour to carry on your work; and (c) the provision of the materials necessary; in return for which we shall require you, on pain of dismissal, to produce the greatest possible amount of food-stuff to be handed over to the State for distribution at fixed prices to the public. There is no doubt in our minds that this was the right course to pursue. It was, moreover, the practical sequel of the policy of fixed prices to which Mr. Prothero committed himself.

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In a note last week we prophesied, however, that agriculture would eventually come under national con-

trol, as certainly in spite of Mr. Prothero as it might be because of him. And we are confirmed in this by the similar pronouncement that has just been made by Dr. Dernburg concerning the future of agriculture in Germany. "German agriculture," he said, "can never again be left entirely to private enterprise." And our forecast is based, not in the least upon any delusion we may be under that our ideas will prevail by their own force; for, as to that, it is our conviction that every idea necessary to social or individual perfection has long been a commonplace; in short, that what has never been lacking is right ideas, but only the appreciation of them. Our forecast, on the contrary, is based upon an easy and a reasonable calculation, upon the calculation that, as surely as men in general will provide against an impending rain by taking to shelter or overcoats, society in general will provide against an impending shortage of food by a particular concern for its agriculture. Now, what during the last quarter of a century or so, has been the outstanding feature of world-economics? It has been, we venture to say, the relative increase of industry at the cost of the relative decline of agriculture. Taking the world as a whole, we see that industry has encroached upon agriculture, and that it is still encroaching; with the inevitable consequence that as industrial products multiply and become cheaper and more accessible to everybody, agricultural products relatively become dearer and fewer. But to imagine that this tendency of things will long continue without involving us in difficulty is as foolish as to imagine that a nation like ours will allow itself to be indefinitely squeezed between the demands of the foreign producer and the demands of the home-producer. We cannot, it is obvious, control the profiteering of the foreign producer; but, as the war has shown, we must pay him practically what he demands. But our home-producers, who are under the nation's hands, and are themselves (though they often forget it) part of the nation, it is not only possible, but it will be necessary, to control. The war, after all, is only a brilliant epitome of the condition of dependence to which we were slowly being reduced; and as it has been proved desirable (though in Mr. Prothero's feeble hands impracticable) to organise agriculture as a national service during the war, we may be sure that after the war the desirability will remain and the necessity will continue to increase, until at last national control becomes practicable.

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In relation to the Loan Campaign we find ourselves in the position of the military conscriptionists when contemplating the campaign for voluntary service. That is to say, we half-hope, half-fear, and altogether anticipate that the voluntary means of raising money will sooner or later break down. Our fear, we may say, is the consequence of the hope we entertain that by some means or other the war may not be brought to a lamentable end through lack of money, and by the apprehension that if the policy of loans should fail, our financiers, rather than surrender their wealth, will patch up a miserable peace with Prussia. Better even loans, we say, than that; and if it is the case that only by borrowing their money at a scandalous rate of interest, we can procure the assistance of our financiers, we must submit to be bled at home as well as abroad. Our hope, on the other hand, is based upon the feeling that, as the policy of loans is improper, it is also not the only practicable policy; the better way of taxation is also possible; and the nation is too much alive to the significance of the war to allow it to be lost at the discretion of private finance. Is it the fact, we ask, that if the policy of loans were abandoned in favour of taxation (of capital as well as of income) our wealthy classes would bring the war to a compromise? We have a little doubt. What, however, we have no doubt about is our inability to carry on the war *indefinitely* by the present means. For has not the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself declared it? But such an announcement, while undoubtedly true, is at the same time comforting to our enemies, who, in the absence of any declared alternative to the present policy, may very well persuade themselves that we *have* no alternative policy, and hence that it is a matter of time how long our present policy can sustain us. It is just this indefiniteness, however, that we would like to rob them of. If it be true (as it is) that we cannot continue the war indefinitely by means of loans, then, rather than encourage Prussia to continue in hope of our collapse, let us announce that by other means we not only can, but shall if need be, maintain the war indefinitely.

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For ourselves we do not believe that the conscription of wealth or compulsory loans without interest or the nationalisation of private income would, in the present or immediately prospective condition of national psychology, meet with anything like the real opposition apprehended for it. Of apparent opposition—such, for example, as military compulsion had to encounter—there is, of course, a great deal; and we will allow that, as in the former case, an accurate estimate of the forces against it can scarcely be made by reconnaissance. It must be remembered, however, that not only are we at war, and that war in itself reacts upon the psychology of a nation; but the difference in spirit between the civilian and combatant elements of the nation cannot possibly be as great as it often appears to be. After all, we at home are regarding our troops from a distance. We see only the magnitude of the sacrifices they are called upon to make—the spirit with which they make them; while we are unaware of or indifferent to the grumbling and complaining that, of course, attend them. Here at home, on the other hand, we see each others' seamy sides at close quarters. And so impressed are we by the spectacle, that, in general, we refrain from making the demands upon our civilian population which our Generals make upon our soldiers as a matter of course. In short, we do not employ at home the war-spirit of the civilian population; and have in consequence a double grievance against them: we despise them for what they do, and we despise them for what they do not do. If, however, we are anything like right in our diagnosis, the comparison is between troops about to go to the Front for the first time and under implacable orders to start; and a civilian population (we are thinking particularly of our wealthy classes) prepared, in a way, to go to the financial Front, but left free to decide for themselves, and at leisure to invent excuses for delay. What soldier, under the same circumstances, might not be forgiven if he took advantage of the smallest excuse to put off doing his duty? On the other hand, what soldier would not despise himself for ever afterwards, the people who aided and abetted his excuses, and, above all, his superiors who refrained from resolving his fears by a command—if, in consequence of his hesitation, the war were lost or won in his absence? We believe that there is much the same state of affairs in the mind of our wealthy classes to-day. They know that their duty is to provide the State with money without counting the cost to themselves. They wish in their hearts to do their duty as splendidly as the troops are doing theirs. But they cannot make up their minds to volunteer, nor can they refrain from opposing every proposal to compel them. Nevertheless, they despise themselves for their cowardice; and no less do they despise the Government for pandering to it. No more popular or respected Government, in fact, could be created than one which should compel money to do its duty, as men have done theirs. It is in this sense that we interpret the "prolonged cheers" that followed Mr. Bonar Law's hint at Glasgow (Glasgow business men composing his audience) that if the voluntary system of recruiting money should fail, the Government would "adopt other means."

Foreign Affairs.

By S. Verdad.

THE newspapers of January 1 contained the Allies' reply to the German Chancellor's Peace Note, and the papers of the 12th, the reply to President Wilson. In both documents particular emphasis is laid upon the German treatment of Belgium, and, in the former, there is incorporated a special memorandum drafted by the Belgian Government itself. This sets forth that Belgium, by virtue of certain international treaties, enjoyed special guarantees of independence, that she had always scrupulously fulfilled her duties as a neutral, that her neutrality was grossly violated by Germany, as was openly admitted by the Chancellor on August 4, 1914, and that "during two and a half years this injustice has been cruelly aggravated by the proceedings of the occupying forces which have exhausted the resources of the country, ruined its industries, devastated its towns and villages, and have been responsible for innumerable massacres, executions, and imprisonments." In their reply to President Wilson the Allies again lay stress upon the flagrant German violation of neutrality with regard to Belgium, and the horrors which the unfortunate civil population has had to endure at the hands of the German soldiery.

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It is well that these references should remind us of the reasons why we entered the war. Everybody who had become familiar with the international political situation in the years preceding the outbreak of war knew perfectly well that the German challenge to France was a direct challenge to the British Empire; and when the Germans violated the territory they had undertaken to protect, this challenge became as clear as noonday even to those—including the present Prime Minister—who admittedly clung to the very last straws of hope, and urged, both inside and outside the Cabinet, that England might be saved from the horrors of war. The definite announcement that the Germans had begun to march through Belgium bore down all the Liberal and Radical opposition to the war, leaving only a few pacifists detached from the main current of opinion. The German Chancellor himself apologised in the Reichstag for the illegal act which had been committed; and it was certainly an act which cost the Germans dear. This act brought England into the war. The horrors came afterwards, when The Hague conventions were tossed by the invading commanders to the four winds. The violation of neutrality, though a definite challenge of the profoundest significance, was only the first of a long series of illegal actions countenanced, where not actually devised, by the German Government. Within a few days afterwards the German armies, in defiance of all the conventions to which Germany had set her hand and seal, had offended against several Hague agreements. Hostages had been seized; open towns had been bombarded; civilians were used as a screen for the invading troops; wounded soldiers had been "finished off"; dum-dum bullets had been freely employed. Further, places and institutions specially protected by the conventions had been destroyed, as, for instance, the University of Louvain and various establishments at Louvain, Termonde, Liége, etc., devoted to charitable objects. Pillage, outrages on women and children, and incendiarism are to be added to the long tale of atrocities, with special insistence, however, on the point that these latter infractions of the law, which are taken for granted when an invading army gets out of hand, were greatly intensified in Belgium (as afterwards in France, Russia, and Serbia) by the fact that they were encouraged, and in many cases even instigated, by the German officers and non-commissioned officers whose duty it undoubtedly was to try, at least, to check them.

We have since taken so prominent a part in the war ourselves that these earlier events have become overshadowed and neglected. They are, nevertheless, vital factors in the war and in the consideration of the terms of peace. It is only with an effort that England can recollect from time to time that Belgium, with the exception of a tiny strip of country, is entirely in the occupation of the enemy (together with several French Departments), and that among the more recent horrors of war with which the unfortunate country has been visited are the deportations of the civilian population to Germany in large numbers so that they may be used there for manufacturing war material—war material subsequently to be employed by the German armies against the countrymen of the unfortunate deportees. Other civilians, it should be remembered, have been forced from their homes to dig trenches for the enemy—work which, it should hardly be necessary to add, is wholly contrary to international law and custom. However much we may tend to overlook such essential facts as these, the British public may rest assured that they are not forgotten by the Belgians themselves, and are not likely to be.

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As a proof of this statement, let me refer the reader to the resolutions passed at the meeting of the Belgian Labour Party at Brussels, and conveyed to the Belgian Minister for War, M. Vandervelde, at Havre, for his information, at the Allies' Socialist Conference, on December 12 last. These Belgian workmen, forced either to remain in Belgium under German domination, or to work for the enemy in Germany itself, are naturally "adverse to a meeting taking place at the present moment with the Social Democrats of the Central Powers." This resolution continues:—

> Previous to any attempt at reconciliation, they consider that France and Belgium should be evacuated. They further consider that they cannot meet the German Social Democrats unless to demand an explanation of their attitude (i) as regards August 4, 1914, concerning the ultimatum of August 2 and the violation of Belgium's neutrality, and (ii) as regards the atrocities committed in Belgium amongst the unarmed civilian population. They formally reserve their judgment on the general attitude of Germany and Austria-Hungary with regard to the various declarations of war which let loose this catastrophe, as well as the conclusions to be arrived at as to the composition, form, and future activity of the International.

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Having dealt with the International, the Party considered a resolution with regard to peace. The members present unanimously decided that the Imperial Chancellor's declarations were merely a peace manœuvre "favourable to the Central Powers," and they, therefore, repudiated any peace movement at the present time as useless and dangerous. Their own resolution respecting the peace movement went on to say:—

> Should any theoretical and practical conclusions result therefrom, the Belgian Labour Party have no confidence in the manner in which these would be treated by the German Social Democracy, even should part of the German Social Democracy be well intentioned or animated now with better sentiments. The mistrust of the Belgian Labour Party is all the more justified, for at the present moment wholesale deportations of the workmen in Belgium—whether unemployed or not—are taking place, and hundreds of thousands of them are condemned without a trial to forced labour to the enemy's profit, without the majority of the German Labour Party and Syndicates doing more than expressing to the oppressors in whose service they are a few vague and timid words of pity for their "brethren" (?) who are reduced to the most obvious slavery.

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It seems to me that we should be no less interested in the third resolution of the delegates, namely, that relating to future peace. The delegates hope that the Conference will be unanimous in endeavouring "to ob-

tain such measures as will be conducive to the successful prosecution of this defensive war, which cannot and must not end without the defeat of the aggressors."

They consider that, politically, a durable peace cannot be assured in Europe except by the realisation of the legitimate national aspirations of the oppressed and conquered peoples, but they resolutely declare themselves against any annexation which, under this pretext, would be contrary to the will of the populations freely expressed. The Belgian Labour Party gives its entire support to any action which has for its object (a) the establishment of compulsory arbitration, with its necessary sanctions, namely, commercial and financial boycotting, and, if need be, recourse to force; (b) the preparation of general disarmament. The Belgian Labour Party remains true to the principles of the International favouring free trade, the autonomy of the Colonies, and the extension of free trade in new countries. At the same time, in declaring itself adverse to an economic war succeeding the armed conflict, it refuses to be made a dupe of: while demanding, without delay, the lowering of the customs barriers which render the lot of workmen harder by the artificial high cost of living, it believes that it is necessary to take precautions against unfair competition, and not to return to a régime of freer competition until the damaged countries—deprived of their machinery, their raw material, their means of commerce, and their labour—shall have been re-established in their normal state.

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These views seem to me particularly striking when considered in relation to the opinions expressed by the same party before the war. Belgium, I think, has always been rightly regarded by European politicians as the home of the International; and my impression has always been that it would never have been possible for the Belgian Socialists to be so much more "international" in their outlook than the French and the German Socialists if it had not been for the peculiar conditions under which Belgium maintained her political existence. With her neutrality guaranteed by several Great Powers, Belgium had little need to assume a national attitude towards international affairs, nor, indeed, did Belgium do so. She was, perhaps, the least prepared of the countries involved in war in August. The discussions in the Brussels Parliament for years previously had turned on purely internal matters; and when the Belgian Socialists discussed international affairs, they did so as people do who take friendliness and pacifism for granted, and never suspect their neighbours of harbouring evil intentions. Belgian finance was internationally strong, thanks to the thrift and industry of the people. Belgian capital was exported as far as China; it turned up in South America as well as in the Congo. And, they say, it was even to be found in Germany. Here was a country with economic hostages in far-off parts of the world, bordered by a gigantic Empire which meant one day to send its soldiers through it, and taking full advantage of the blessings conferred by peace without responsibility, without (apparently) the remotest suspicion of ill-fortune. One of the last measures taken by the Belgian Parliament, if my memory serves me, was to cut down the military estimates on the ground that the proposed expenditure was not needed.

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All this prosperity, this happy state of being let alone, depended entirely on the sacredness of a treaty, and I said often enough in these columns before the war that the German Government would never hesitate to break a treaty if such a document stood in the way of its interests. This was a point which could never be impressed upon inter-nationalists. By now they have all had their lesson—some by the horrified contemplation of Belgium, some by the direct and bitter teaching of experience. I am indebted to the Belgian Bureau de Documentation (32, Grosvenor Place, S.W.), for the resolutions I have quoted, and to Messrs. Nelson for a book that sums up from photographs and official documents the experiences of the Belgians at the hands of the enemy (Belgium and Germany: Texts and Documents, illustrated with photographs). This contains examples of every kind of German atrocity in Belgium, from the Louvain massacres and the shooting of hostages to the expropriation of industries and the deportation of the civilian population into a state of slavery. Much of this book is based on the Report of the English Committee of Inquiry, but the extracts bear repetition. Take the conclusion with regard to Louvain:—

We are driven to the conclusion that the harrying of the villages in the district, the burning of a large part of Louvain, the massacres there, the marching out of the prisoners, and the transport to Cologne (all done without inquiry as to whether the particular persons seized or killed had committed any wrongful act) were due to a calculated policy carried out scientifically and deliberately, not merely with the sanction, but under the direction of, the higher military authorities, and were not due to any provocation or resistance by the civilian population (p. 78).

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Or, again, to show how the enemy had come prepared to violate international law by wholesale incendiarism:—

On September 19, 1914, a company was directed, at Termonde, to carry out the destruction of the houses. This company kept central reservoirs where each man carrying a pneumatic belt went to replenish himself with an incendiary liquid with which to sprinkle the wood on the outside of the houses; another man wearing a glove especially provided with a preparation of phosphorous passed in front of the houses which had been sprinkled and rubbed his glove on the wood. This set fire to the houses, and permitted a whole street to be burnt all in a quarter of an hour. In order to expedite still further the burning of the houses, the men threw inside inflammable matter.

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I quote these now well-established facts to remind the public of the people with whom we have to deal. During a period of peace when the thoughts of many intellectuals were directed towards forming higher concepts of the social and political world, when European wars on a grand scale were regarded as things of the past, the German Empire was systematically preparing, not merely for a vast war, but for a war waged in entire disregard of agreements solemnly entered into. When a German Governor was appointed to administer Belgium he found his codes ready to hand; when shells failed to gain them ground at Ypres the Germans fell back on asphyxiating gas. In the actual conduct of the war hardly a single detail had been omitted, however brutal and illegal. The German attitude in this regard is admirably expressed in a little book entitled: "Belgium's Case: a Judicial Inquiry," by Ch. de Visscher (Hodder, 3s. 6d. net). Dealing with the German excuse of "Notrecht," or justification by necessity, M. Visscher says:—

As applied to the laws of war, the excuse of necessity leads to the absolute supremacy of strategical or military interest, as formulated in the maxim: "Omnia licere quae necesseria ad finem belli"; it is the "Kriegsräson," that is, a raison d'état transposed into the military domain. The chief characteristic of the German conception is the claim, many times advanced in the course of the deliberations of The Hague Conferences, and brutally set forth in the writings of German military experts, to superimpose on the legitimate and recognised exigencies of war a notion of an absolute and unconditioned character—"transcendental"—which controls the very laws of war and gives authority to abandon their most formal provisions. Let us face the fact: this contention is a defiance of all judicial argument. It takes its stand in an order of ideas foreign to law, and thus escapes its criticism. . . . The general application of Kriegsräson to the laws of war was formally condemned by the two Hague Conferences.

It is for the extermination of "Kriegräson" that the Allies are fighting, and it is, therefore, only just that we should remind ourselves from time to time to what its application in practice has led.

The Present Position and Power of the Press.

By H. Belloc.

XXII.

MUCH more important than this clearly applicable test of vocabulary is the more general and less measurable test of programmes and news. The programme of the National Guild, for instance, is followed everywhere, and is everywhere considered. Men use the idea for all it is worth, and they use it more and more, although it is as much as their place is worth to mention THE NEW AGE in connection with it—as yet. And it is the same, I think, with all the efforts the Free Press has made in the past. The propaganda of Socialism (which, as an idea, was so enormously successful until a few years ago) was, on its journalistic side, almost entirely conducted by Free papers, most of them of small circulation, and all of them boycotted, even as to their names, by the Official Press. The same is true of my own effort and Mr. Chesterton's on the "New Witness." The paper was rigidly boycotted and never quoted. But everyone to-day talks, as I have just said, of the Servile State, of the professional politician, of the secret party funds, of the Aliases under which men hide.

More than this: one gets to hear of astonishingly significant manœuvres, conducted secretly, of course, but showing vividly what the weight and effect of the Free Press can be. One hears of orders given by a politician in his own defence, which prove his concern: of approaches made by this or that Capitalist to obtain control: sometimes of a policy initiated, an official document drawn up, a memorandum filed which proceeded directly from the advice, suggestion, or argument of a Free paper which no one but its own readers is allowed to hear of, and of whose very existence the suburbs would be sceptical.

XXIII.

Next consider this very powerful isolated factor in the whole business. *The truth confirms itself.*

Half a million people read of a professional politician, for instance, that his oratory has an "electric effect," or that he is "full of personal magnetism," or that he "can sway an audience to tears or laughter at will." A Free paper telling the truth about him says that he is a dull speaker, full of commonplaces, elderly, smelling strongly of the Chapel, and giving the impression that he is tired out; flogging up sham enthusiasm with stale phrases which the reporters have already learnt to put into shorthand with one conventional outline years ago.*

Well, the false, the ludicrously false picture designed to put this politician in the limelight (as against favours to be rendered), no doubt, remains the general impression with most of those 500,000 people. The simple and rather tawdry truth may be but doubtfully accepted by a few hundreds only.

But sooner or later a certain small proportion of the 500,000 actually *hear* the politician in question. They hear him speak. They receive a primary and true impression.

If they had not read anything suggesting the truth, it is quite upon the cards that the false suggestion would still have weight with them, in spite of the evidence of their senses. Men are so built that uncontradicted falsehood sufficiently repeated does have that curious power of illusion. A man having heard the speech delivered by the old gentleman, if he has only read the Official Press, may go away saying to himself: "I was not very much impressed, but no doubt that was due to my own weariness. I cannot but believe that the general reputation he bears is well founded. He must be a great orator, for I have always heard him called so."

But a man who has once seen it stated that this politician was *exactly what he was* will vividly remember that description (which at first reading he probably thought false); reality has confirmed the true statement and made it live. These statements of truth, even when they are quite unimportant, more, of course, when they illuminate matters of great civic moment, have a cumulative effect.

I am confident, for instance, that at the present time the mass of middle-class people are not only acquainted with, but convinced of the truth, that, long before the war, the House of Commons had become a fraud; that its debates did not turn upon matters which really divided opinion, and that even so, the pretence of a true opposition was a falsehood.

This salutary truth had been arrived at, of course, by many channels. The scandalous arrangement between the Front Benches which forced the Insurance Act down our throats was an eye-opener for great masses of the people. So was the cynical action of the politicians in the matter of Chinese Labour after the Election of 1906. So was the puerile stage play indulged in over things like the Welsh Disestablishment Bill and the Education Bills.

But among the forces which opened people's eyes, the Free Press played a very great part, though it was never mentioned in the big Official papers, and though not one man in many hundreds of the public ever heard of it. The few who read it were startled into acceptance by the exact correspondence between its statement and observed fact.

The man who tells the truth when his colleagues around him are lying, always enjoys a certain restricted power of prophecy. If there was a general conspiracy to maintain the falsehood that all peers were over six foot high, a man desiring to correct this falsehood would be perfectly safe if he were to say: "I do not know whether the *next* peer you meet will be over six foot or not, but I am pretty safe in prophesying that if you ask the name of the next few dozen men you come across, and note which are peers, you will find among them three or four peers less than six foot high."

If there were a general conspiracy to pretend that people with incomes above the income-tax level never cheated one in a bargain, one could not say "on such-and-such a day you will be cheated in a bargain by such-and-such a person, whose income will be above the income-tax level," but one could say: "Note the people who swindle you in the next five years, and I will prophesy that not less than a certain proportion of the number will be people whom you will find to be paying income-tax."

This power of prophecy, which is an adjunct of truth telling, I have noticed to affect people very profoundly.

A worthy provincial might be shocked, for instance, to hear that places in the Upper House of Parliament were bought and sold. He might indignantly deny it. The Free Press says to him: "In some short while you will have a glaring instance of a man who is incompetent and obscure, appearing as a legislator with permanent hereditary power, transferable to his son after his death."

The man who reads that prophecy, and who might, but for it, not have kept his eyes open, sees first a great soldier, then a well-advertised politician, not a notoriously rich man, widely talked about, made peers. The events are normal in each case, and he is not moved. But sooner or later, there comes a case in which he says to himself: "Who on earth is So-and-so? Why, in the name of goodness, is this unknown, and I presume incompetent, man, suddenly put into such a position?" Then he remembers what he was told, begins to ask questions, and finds out, of course, that money passed.

* A friend of mine in the Press Gallery used to represent "I have yet to learn that the Government" by a little twirl, and "What did the right honourable gentleman do, Mr. Speaker? He had the audacity" by two spiral dots.

Mr. Shaw's Advent in Lombard Street.

Now, as always, basing his opinions upon his personal experiences (you can almost read his life by his plays), Mr. Shaw, having joined the fraternity of super-taxpayers, is concerned for the fate that threatens in the conscription of their capital. He has accordingly rushed to the support of his menaced brethren and, in good round terms, has flatly denied that you can tax capital. He argues it, in a column of leaded type in the "Times." He is distressed that a previous communication of his should have led other correspondents to think that he regards a levy upon capital as reasonable. "I do not even regard it as possible." A reactionary Oxford don, Mr. J. A. R. Marriott, has said that if you tax capital it disappears by mere depreciation. "Mr. Marriott is quite right in his contention," says Mr. Shaw, who proceeds to demonstrate how "sound on the goose" both he and Mr. Marriott are. Obviously it is necessary to clear the ground with a definition or two. "What is a millionaire capitalist?" he asks. His answer would delight a Fabian audience. "He is only a man with £50,000 a year. Tax his million at the current rate of 5s. in the £ income-tax, plus 3s. 6d. super-tax, and the collector will demand from him more than eight times his entire income for the year—three hundred thousand odd pounds. He will simply reply, 'I haven't got it.'" As we are familiar with Mr. Shaw's dialectical methods we prefer to pause at this point to recover breath. It is a biggish problem, worthy of a more pedestrian treatment. First of all, is a millionaire capitalist merely a man with £50,000 a year? Is his case on all fours with a man with an annuity of £50,000 a year? Suppose he earned £50,000 a year and yet possessed no capital? We believe there is an administrator in New York actually in receipt of a salary of that amount. Let us, however, state the case in a more measurable compass. If a millionaire is a man with £50,000 a year, a capitalist with £20,000 is merely a man with £1,000 a year. Now, there are thousands of men with salaries of precisely that figure. Are they in precisely the same category as the capitalist with £20,000? Mr. Shaw knows perfectly well that they are not. Apart from other considerations, the one is a capitalist and the other belongs to the salariat. The plain fact, which Mr. Shaw cannot induce us to forget, is that the millionaire not only controls, but owns property capitally valued at £1,000,000. Whether he ought to control and own so much property is beside the point: the fact remains that with this property he is in a position to compel other people annually to refresh his bank balance with £50,000. The other fellows earn their incomes. Inasmuch as it is this million pounds that securely places its owner amongst the super-taxpayers, there is no reason why the State should not detach some of it, if it be so minded. But the salaried man can only be taxed on his income, for the simple reason that he neither controls nor owns a capital fund out of which he draws his salary. If he dies, his salary disappears and can no more be taxed. But should the millionaire die, his property continues, less the slice seized by the State by way of death duties. Oddly enough, the State does, in fact, "make a levy" upon the dead man's capital, although Mr. Shaw confidently asserts that it is not possible. But, of course, we should hardly expect a fact like that to deter Mr. Shaw from pursuing his argument.

From an inadequate definition, Mr. Shaw proceeds to a false assumption. He assumes that any levy on capital would be by the same methods and at the same rate as the income-tax. On that assumption, the State would have annexed every scrap of available capital in less than four years. We have not heard of any proposal so drastic. But it is an old trick much favoured by Mr. Shaw to take an extreme case and to reduce it to absurdity. It has this defect, however; it assumes that your audience is asleep to economics. That may or may not be true of the "Times" readers or a Fabian audience (Mr. Shaw, of course, knows best), but, fortunately, it is not true of everybody. Not that we should object to the absorption of private capital by the State or preferably the Guilds at such a rapid rate. We have no compassion in that regard, and, unlike Mr. Shaw, our withers would be unwrung. All we can say is that we had not contemplated such a raid on the rich man's henroost. No, no; we are moderate. All we thought of, at the moment, was sixpence or a shilling in the pound. Bear in mind that the underlying idea was the conscription of capital to carry on the war to a victorious issue. And a shilling or so per pound would meet our financial commitments. Nor would it be necessary to take it in cash. An equivalent share in the business, with prices reduced to the extent of our dividend, might suffice. It might, or it might not. All we need is the pleasant assurance that, Mr. Shaw and Mr. Strachey notwithstanding, the capital is there to be impounded.

Mr. Shaw is too shrewd to build much on his definitions and assumptions. The foundation of his argument is that, in practice, wealth simply cannot be conscripted. That three hundred thousand odd cannot be collected, because it is not in the conventional shape for collection. Mr. Shaw apparently thinks that currency is the only thing the Treasury can deal with. So he sets up a dummy "practical business man," who is supposed to say: "You haven't got it; but you can get it. All you have to do is to instruct your stockbroker to sell your income [still the false premiss, observe] of £50,000 a year, and he will get you a million for it before you can say Jack Robinson." As the levy would be general, with a consequent glut on the securities market, no "practical business man" would give such foolish advice. Mr. Pease, as an old stockbroker, might, but nobody ever suggested that the Fabian Secretary is a "practical business man." Let us state the practical difficulty in Mr. Shaw's own words:—"All the other capitalists would be selling out at the same moment to pay the collector; and the consequence would be, not merely depreciation, but zero, a total disappearance of the capital values, owing to the fact that all the capitalists would be trying simultaneously to sell to one another, not the existing produce on which they were existing for the year, but the, as yet, non-existent produce of next year and many succeeding years as well." Here, at last, after thirty years, is the fine flower of Fabian economics. Capital—to wit, factories, mines, mills, railways, farms, gas, electric and water supplies—have no "value," except in so far as they yield rent and interest. The utilisation of capital to produce wealth is a mere dream, the phantasy of national guildsmen and other cranks. Thank you, Mr. Shaw!

It is, perhaps, a work of supererogation to point out to Mr. Shaw that the conscription of *capital* is qua capital and not qua *income*. Mr. Shaw apparently assumes that the moment this capital passes to the State it ceases to be capital. If, for example, the State conscripts a quarter of some private munition factory (which probably it has already enriched by great additions of new machinery) the capital value of the factory is reduced to zero. Mr. Shaw and the capitalists concerned wash their hands of the business and pass out. Nevertheless, strange though it may appear, it is quite on the cards that the factory will continue to produce as before, quite sublimely unconscious of Mr. Shaw's sentence of extinction. If the State drew back, abashed at the loss of Mr. Shaw's super-tax fraternity, National

Guilds, instantly formed, would do the work better than it was done under the previous régime. So long as the labour is available, we can shake the departing capitalists warmly by the hand and wish them bon voyage on their way to a warmer climate. We hope, however, that Mr. Shaw will stay behind. C'est son métier!

Mr. Shaw might, however, try to avoid fiction when writing on finance. For example, he puts our national income at £2,000,000,000. On a basis of 5 per cent. he calculates our capital value, therefore, at £40,000,000,000. As at least £750,000,000 of the national income goes in wages (another big slice going in salaries and other services), Mr. Shaw, therefore, assumes that a wage-earner with £2 a week has £2,000 capital tucked away somewhere. In this instance we think that Mr. Shaw is generous before he is just. The masses of wage-earners who read the "Times" must feel very grateful to Mr. Shaw. It is true that they don't know where their capital lies hidden—the stocking must have got lost in the chimney—but the sense of riches subtly inculcated by Mr. Shaw is grateful and comforting. No doubt the local grocer, baker and butcher, impressed with the hitherto undreamt-of resources of their proletarian customers, will advance unlimited credit, and life will be one long joyful adventure. It is only to be feared that, when these small capitalists wake up to find their capital a mere figment of Mr. Shaw's imagination, there will be riots and tumults, and Mr. Shaw will be in the midst of them. An unpleasant play! Meantime, he had better review his estimates. He will find that the capital amount is only some ten or twelve thousand millions less than he asserts—enough to carry on the war for five or six years.

We do not grant, however, that a levy in cash on capital, apart from its theoretical aspects, is either impossible or undesirable. Mr. Shaw, of course, will not accept our word for it. But what has he to say to a practical city banker whose opinion carries weight in London? It is only a few weeks ago that it was proposed from this "responsible quarter" that—we really must quote—"*the new Government should suspend further borrowing altogether, substituting a tax on capital so that every able purse should be compelled to contribute to war funds even as every able body is compelled to contribute to the fighting force.*" This banker put our capital value at £24,000,000,000—a conservative estimate. He proposes a tax of 6 per cent. on this capital amount, which would yield £1,440,000,000. He does not propose to go at it like a bull at a gate-post. He knows a great deal more about affairs than Mr. Shaw. All that is required is a monthly impost of ½ per cent., which he assures us would cause little or no monetary disturbance, as Government disbursements would balance the tax payments. Our banker goes further; he carries the war into Mr. Shaw's camp: "Just as former borrowings have caused inflation and a consequent rise in the price of commodities, so would taxation have a contrary effect. It would enforce economy of consumption, bring about a fall in prices, restrict imports, and so help the exchange. To meet this taxation of capital people would either draw on their balances or borrow from their banks." Which, incidentally, would be a good thing for the banks. We are not convinced that the advantages cited would actually accrue; but we are satisfied that this responsible banker knows his subject.

The truth is that Mr. Shaw, wrapped in reverential awe at the seeming omnipotence of our currency system, is afraid to venture into new forms of credit. His social theories have reached the end of their tether; he steps out of the hurly-burly before the economic revolution has begun. Good-bye, Mr. Shaw! But new ideas and new methods are not at a stand-still because the Fabian leaders have stopped thinking. Nor will the currency system cease developing when Mr. Shaw has gone peacefully to sleep. In the case here cited, it would appear on good authority that our banks can meet the war demands made upon them. If, however, they failed us, the war could still proceed and we should learn some valuable lessons on the application of national credit to a critical situation. The mere monopoly of the coinage is one thing; possession of the means of production and distribution is quite another. One or two cardinal facts are gradually forcing themselves upon the consideration of thinkers. One is that the forms of credit have been moulded by the banks without regard to larger economic factors. For example, short-term loans, on the purely commercial ground that the shorter the term the greater is the security of the loan. But Germany has built up its present economic structure very largely on long-term loans, the banks in consequence being compelled to associate themselves with industrial undertakings. And when the war broke out, it was confidently predicted that the German banks would crack. They have not done so. The difference lies in this: the British banks have systematically retained control of the currency; the German banks had to finance each new industrial development. They could not afford to stand aside and dominate. The British banker quoted, however much he protest, really creates a new policy of long-term loans, for if the British banks were to lend up to 5 or 6 per cent. of capital value—say, £1,000,000,000—it is certain that this sum could not be repaid in a short period. We must remember that the bank customers would require the usual accommodation over and above this special loan. Another cardinal fact is that the gold coinage now prevailing is a token of distrust. It means that a piece of paper certifying a claim for so much work done is a suspicious document and not to be trusted. So the banks say that we must obtain possession of a piece of gold, or its equivalent, to the amount of the commodities earned by our honest labour before we can proceed to visit our tradesmen. Granting that the system is effective, it is, nevertheless, obvious that it confers a monopoly which may be both oppressive and restrictive. In counting the cost of the industrial system, nine-tenths of the gold industry is a dead-weight on the cost of production, certainly theoretically and probably in practice. All that is required of a true currency is that it should sensitively respond to valid wealth production. But this is only possible when real value passes with every act of labour. Fundamentally, therefore, the correlation between wealth production and currency depends upon the skill and honesty of the proletariat. But as labour is treated as a commodity pure and simple, any such ethical responsibility must be disregarded. It is for this reason that, financially considered, the employer cannot secure a loan upon his labour, even though the bank honours his wages cheque.

Whilst the banks readily advance money on raw materials, they cannot advance money on the labour commodity, because it cannot be put into bond or other custody such as the usual terms of security require. But we are now rapidly moving into a new phase, when the commodity Labour ceases and Labour enters into partnership. A new banking problem is here presented, and upon its right solution the future banking system depends. If and when Labour obtains partnership, with the State or with the employers, it will enter the category of "services," and, in so doing, come into practical touch with the banks, whether joint-stock, national or Guild banks. There will be an increased production and a diverted current of distribution. When that day comes, a piece of paper certifying the value of £1, backed by the credit of a Guild or the Government, will be quite as acceptable as a piece of paper certifying a like amount, backed by gold.

The Plague of ex-Lord Chancellors.

By W. Durran.

A day was named for the sacrifice. . . . The pathos of the procession was enhanced by the presence of no fewer than five ex-Lord Chancellors.—"The Dragon," "Times," September 13, 1916.

THE Dragon dissembled his love and appeared in a fearsome guise. Vomiting forth flames, he devastated a whole district in the Midlands. Then someone, greatly daring, got speech of the monster. We are not told whether he was invited to turn his terrific powers against the Huns; but we do know that he entertained other views equally helpful for our side.

On one condition only would he cease to ravage the land. It was that he should be given one hundred lawyers a year to devour, beginning at the top. The whole country was in a paroxysm of grief. One monthly review brought out "an edition printed entirely in white on a black ground." Sighs and lamentations rent the air.

The monster was inexorable. His terms were accepted in national mourning. But, to the astonishment of the world, a new vigour, an unexampled energy made itself felt in every phase of our activity after the first dread ceremony; and, after the second contribution to the gruesome feast, the war was brought to a victorious conclusion.

There is solid comfort in the reflection that if our Patron Saint and his namesake should, unhappily, fail —which the high gods forfend!—to save our much menaced State, then the advent of the Dragon will be a blessing in disguise, a harbinger of victory. Only the proverbial luck of the Empire could have brought these three to forget ancient quarrels and work on parallel lines.

If our high mandarins do succeed in attracting the attention of the Dragon in the allegory, they will render —all unwittingly—a disinterested, not to say a self-sacrificing service to the nation. Nor can we suppose that, in view of his unmistakable proof of appreciation, they will be so churlish as to disagree with him.

He has never beheld anything so appetising as a group of ex-Lord Chancellors. We have grown accustomed to them; but do we estimate them at their true value? There is much entertainment in bringing out the characteristics of this unique product.

The election of a Lord Chancellor is a striking exception to the rule that State lotteries are illegal in this country. The Lord Chancellorship is the blue ribbon of the Bar. It is open only to a small group of K.C.'s; and the choice is still further restricted by politics to which Justice, with us, is always ancillary. But the gambling element is perceived when we reflect that the Lord Chancellor is not only a judge, but a dignitary who has to concern himself with the appointment of judges; whereas the method of his calling and election offers no guarantee whatsoever that he possesses a vestige of the judicial faculty. More than this: in the opinion of other communities, his prescribed apprenticeship at the Bar precludes—rather than promises—that invaluable possession. Still, our good fortune may score, even against heavy odds in our recognised State lottery.

Passing from theory to fact, its corrective, we find no definite evidence either way in respect of one couple of the four ex-Chancellors; but in regard to the other two, there is irrefragable proof that the State has drawn blank. This is shown by their utter inability to form a dispassionate judgment on facts which intimately concerned its safety, and even its continued existence. They poured scorn on the German menace and on those who gave us warning.

When Lord Chancellors, unlike the old guard, are willing to surrender £10,000 a year, but refuse to die, they receive a pension of £5,000 per annum, even if they have held the seals of office for only a single day. Emoluments and pension on such a scale are two of the most injudicious and undesirable features of our great lottery. The effect is to attract a host of young men into the gamble; whereas their efforts in the coming scientific age should be directed to dealing with facts rather than conjuring with phrases; and wresting secrets from Nature rather than snatching verdicts from juries.

Adverse criticism is occasionally levelled against the amazing scale of these pensions, more especially when they aggregate £20,000 a year, as at present; nor does this sum include the pensions of Irish ex-Lord Chancellors, which are on a somewhat lower scale. But the accusation of extravagance is met by the specious allegation that an absolute economy of £1,000 a year is effected when an ex-Lord Chancellor sits as judge in the House of Lords; or on the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, instead of a Law Lord at £6,000 a year.

It seems, at the first glance, that sound policy dictates the expediency of passing advocates quickly over the Woolsack, so as to replace as many Law Lords as possible. As a matter of fact, that is the policy of the Bar.

The proposition on which it is based is a hardy annual which has flourished in the fostering soil of the Inns of Court; but, as regards real ground, we shall show that it has as little as the mango tree of the Indian conjurer.

The mystification is worked by artfully ignoring the essential distinction between salary and pension. A simple illustration will make this clear.

Suppose we go back to the time when there was no pension for a retiring Lord Chancellor. Let us suppose, further, that there is a vacancy in the House of Lords sitting as a supreme tribunal. Our retiring Chancellor, childlike and bland, says to the Prime Minister:—"Why pay £6,000? I will do the work for £5,000. You can announce an economy of £1,000 a year." The Prime Minister agrees. "Thank you," says the knowing one, picking up hat and gloves, "It will be understood, I take it, that as I have retired, my *remuneration* will be accurately described as pension, not salary." Again the Prime Minister agrees.

What is his defence when the pensioner is incapacitated after a brief period of service? Where is the vaunted economy? It is really a net loss to the country of £3,000 a year; because a Law Lord's salary, had he been incapacitated, would have ceased, and a pension, say, a third (or £2,000 a year) would have been paid him; whereas the pension of £5,000 in the other case is for life. This is an obvious misappropriation of public money; a financial gamble in which the chances are all against the public.

It is true that the pensioner may serve for many years. But, we must remember that actuarial calculations are not based on exceptional but on average lives. Observe, further, that the chances of life are incomparably better than those of the continuance of that degree of robust health, mental activity and level-headedness, which are indispensable for the adequate discharge of judicial functions.

At this point we find one abuse supporting another. It is notorious that our judges are often gravely handicapped by bodily or mental defects, chiefly infirmities of age.

Nor is this surprising, when there is no limit of age for retirement. "I refer," wrote a barrister in the "Times," November, 1909, "to the extreme age of some occupants of the Bench. When I went circuit in the 'seventies, I followed three judges whose continuance on the Bench was a scandal. The first had almost entirely lost his voice. . . . The second was tetchy to an intolerable extent. . . . The third was exceedingly deaf. . . . ."

It is true that these judges were not ex-Chancellors; but the same rule applies to all judges of the Superior Courts of this country; there is no limit of age for retirement, unlike the rules which apply to our judges in India, and the officers of all other public Services in the world.

An age limit fixed on somewhat similar lines to that observed in India would remove the last shade of plausibility in the defence of ex-Lord Chancellors' pensions. Consequently, the fixing of such a limit is most strenuously resisted; and with complete success up to the present hour. The last attempt was opposed by Lord Reading, then Sir Rufus Isaacs, when Attorney-General. He made himself responsible for the astounding statement that "some of the most vigilant judges are the oldest men!"

Despite this flattering pronouncement, there is evidence that the efficiency of our highest tribunals is impaired by the ravages of senile decay. In an interview published in the "Review of Reviews" for June, 1909, Sir Robert Stout, ex-Premier of New Zealand, said:—"We, in New Zealand, are, as far as the Privy Council is concerned, in an unfortunate position. It has shown that it does not know our statutes, conveyancing terms, or history."

Thus, we perceive that the pensions of ex-Chancellors, like the elections of Chancellors, are not a fair gamble for the public. It is a gamble in which the dice are heavily loaded against the public: a gamble which requires the perpetuation of conditions signally unfavourable to the satisfactory administration of Justice.

It must be accounted to the recently appointed Lord Chancellor for righteousness that he does not shelter himself behind sophistical argumentation and financial expedients which would be designated by a harsher name in the City. He signifies his intention of waiving the claim for pension.

But the most significant fact connected with the Lord Chancellor's Office has yet to be mentioned. He was not, originally, a lawyer at all. On the contrary, he represented the Throne as a corrective for injustice wrought by abuse of legal forms, when "Justice," according to an ancient writer, describing conditions existing in the year 1289, "was perpetually entangled in a net of technical jargon." Then the Office of the Lord Chancellor "was the refuge of the poor and the afflicted, the altar and sanctuary for such as, against the might of rich men and the countenance of great men, cannot maintain the goodness of their cause." Up to 1673 the Lord Chancellor was not a lawyer.

Then the Office, which had long been an eyesore to the Bar, was captured by the Bar, utterly perverted from its purpose, and a wild orgy of extortion began. The outcome was a series of grave scandals culminating in the dismissal of a Lord Chancellor for taking bribes in the reign of George I.

The following passages are from the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons appointed to review the position and emoluments of the Lord Chancellor in the year 1810:—

"A considerable part of the emoluments of the Office of the Lord Chancellor is derived from fees nominally paid to the Secretary of Bankrupts who accounts to him for the fees, and is allowed a certain salary." The amount thus received in 1810 was £15,532, exclusive of the emoluments accruing to the Lord Chancellor as Speaker of the House of Lords.

The Committee recommended an increase of salary for the Lord Chancellor and abolition of fees "which can be considered in no other light than as a tax on distress and insolvency."

Corruptio optimi pessima. We perceive that the real Dragon is not the monster of the allegory, but the insatiable rapacity of the Bar; while the veritable culprits are the laity, who, possessing the power to sweep away flamboyant extortion, meekly tolerate it. We have the ex-Lord Chancellors whom we deserve.

The British Consular Service.

I.

ALREADY a recrudescence of public interest in the consular service has come as a hint of the importance which must attach to it when the work of national reconstruction begins. Commissions have periodically "inquired into" the consular service, and more frequently the spokesmen of commerce bring forward characteristic suggestions for its improvement. But they all come and go, whereas the Foreign Office goes on for ever. Certain changes, it is true, have resulted from these stirrings of very stagnant waters. In 1904, for example, a great branch of the service was rescued from the depredations of nepotism, and the system of appointing consular officers by limited competition was introduced. The aim of the Foreign Office was defined on that occasion as being "to attract young men of good position who have devoted some time to commercial life, and thus obtained an insight into business transactions which could be of service in the position of consul." This ambition has not been realised, for reasons which will be explained in the course of these articles, but the intention was obviously good, and should be recorded as a sign of grace but too infrequent.

The branch of the service thus brought under the jurisdiction of the Civil Service Commissioners is known as the General Consular Service, there being two others, the Levant and Far Eastern Services. The two last were recruited by open competition, but since the reconstitution of the General Service all three are filled by limited competition amongst candidates nominated by the Secretary of State. The examination is entirely different for each branch, and men are rarely, if ever, transferred from the one to the other. The Levant officials are confined to the Ottoman Dominions, Persia, Greece, Egypt and Morocco, while those in the Far East are appointed to posts in China, Japan and Siam. With few unimportant exceptions, all other consulates throughout the world are staffed by the General Consular Service, and this is the branch of the service usually discussed by critics. It is the most important and the most familiar.

This arbitrary classification is peculiar to England, for no other country would think of shutting up its consular officials into water-tight compartments and emphasising the system by giving one branch of the service a special training, while ignoring the equally great necessities of the others. Thus, candidates for the Levant Service are sent to Cambridge for two years in order to study Oriental languages and law, after which they proceed to Constantinople as Student Interpreters, and it is not until two years more have elapsed that they are appointed vice-consuls. No such training is provided for the Far East or the General Service, except that in the former men are not made vice-consuls until they have served as Student Interpreters. In the General Service, three months divided between the Commercial Intelligence Branch of the Board of Trade and the Foreign Office is deemed to enable candidates to go abroad and take up their duties as vice-consuls. It was not until 1914 that a step was taken in the right direction, when successful candidates were obliged to go to some large consulate as probationers, before actually receiving an appointment on full salary. Prior to that date an utterly inexperienced youth might find himself on arrival in a foreign port called upon to take entire charge of a Consulate-General, in the case of illness or leave of absence on the part of the senior officer.

It may be asked if the divisions of the consular service do not correspond to real differences in the nature of the functions fulfilled by the three classes of officials. To some extent this is true, but the diversity of a consul's duties are such that it would be absurd to pretend that the posts in any one branch offer more homoge-

neous employment than do the branches amongst themselves. Havana falls into the Far East category, though San Domingo, Hayti, Tahiti and Portuguese East Africa are classed as posts with the same duties as Paris, Berlin, New York and Rio de Janeiro. The Levant Service covers Bulgaria and Servia, but not Roumania. If a Student Interpreter must be equipped at Cambridge with a knowledge of Turkish before he can enter upon his career, how is a vice-consul in the General Service prepared for the discharge of his functions in Brazil or Roumania by having passed an examination in French and German—as does the Student Interpreter—and then spending three months in London at the Foreign Office or Board of Trade? Obviously, the differentiation in question bears only a vague relation to the diverse needs of the consular service. An official in China may have very different work from his colleague in the United States, but the same is true of Reykjavik and Loanda, yet a vice-consul may pass from the former to the latter, having, perhaps, been initiated into the mysteries of his profession in Boston or Mexico City.

The first change, therefore, which suggests itself is the abolition of this unreasonable and inadequate classification of the service according to the supposed divergency of function. As it is impossible to make divisions which would correspond to the real, but too numerous, classes of consular work, the simplest plan is to treat the consular service as one department, and to train officials in accordance with the specific needs of the country in which they are going to serve. The present system of appointing men to countries of whose language they are ignorant is incompatible with efficiency, and seems strange when we consider the elaborate precautions implied by the divisions into which the service has been brought. While Student Interpreters are sent for two years to Cambridge in order that they may study the languages most likely to be of use to them, and that, moreover, after they have passed an examination in French, German, Italian and Spanish, candidates for the General Consular Service are not even tested in these four languages. Until 1915, the only obligatory language was French, with a choice of either German or Spanish, but now an easy test in Russian has been added to the compulsory subjects of examination. Russia is one of the countries to which officers in the General Service have always been sent, yet it never occurred to the authorities that a knowledge of Russian was of vastly more importance than the "cramming" of "commercial geography" and mercantile law, upon which they insist. As it is, candidates are received without being obliged to know *both* German *and* Spanish, the two most important commercial languages in the world, after English.

The variety of countries in which officials of the General Service are liable to be appointed is quite as great as in the Levant or Far East branches, but French and either German or Spanish were until the other day considered sufficient for the proper discharge of their duties. One may imagine how far such qualifications can assist men who are sent to Roumania, Holland, Denmark, Sweden, Italy, Portugal, Brazil and the Portuguese colonies. To this may be added the alarming fact that even such meagre linguistic qualifications as the candidates possess are never considered when selecting their posts. Those who have a thorough knowledge of German (and, presumably, are not wholly ignorant of Germany) will wander in many strange places, but the country where they might be of real service will not see them. A glance at some examination papers and the subsequent appointment of the candidates will illustrate the system.

Spanish, being the easiest language to "cram," is more popular than German, which demands years of study. In 1905, strange to say, four out of the five men appointed spoke German. The one who knew Spanish was sent to Roumania, a German speaker being chosen for Carácas, the only Spanish post vacant, while the remaining three went to Odessa, New Orleans and Baltimore. In 1907, two German and two Spanish speakers presented themselves, the former going to Guatemala and Zanzibar, the latter to Russia and the United States. In 1908, the candidate who knew German was sent to Odessa, and the others to Marseilles and Philadelphia. The following year there were again four men who knew German; one was appointed to Rio de Janeiro, the other three to cities in the United States. In 1912 the vacancies in Spanish-speaking countries were, with one exception, allotted to those who had passed the examination in German. If it be replied that vice-consuls are purposely appointed to posts which will enable them to add another language to their qualifications, a sceptical retort is fully justified. The preponderance of appointments in the United States is calculated to allow officials to forget more than they ever knew. Further, it is not an uncommon experience to find an official quite incompetent to discharge any business in the language of the country in which he has been stationed, without having brought out with him some knowledge acquired by previous study. Consuls-general, drawing salaries of £1,000 and more per annum, with innumerable and dubious perquisites, may be discovered with a rudimentary knowledge of Russian, though they have passed ten years or more in sole command of a consulate in Russia.

Vice-consuls, however, do not often incur this reproach, for the simple reason that their terms of residence in each country are so brief and irregular as to constitute ignorance and inexperience a chronic condition. Instead of accusing them of not profiting by their opportunities, as in the case of the older officials, we should rather marvel at their learning anything at all. They are so frequently transferred from one country to another that it is impossible to believe the authorities can have the need of experience as a motive in sending new men to posts involving linguistic qualifications not possessed by the candidates in the first instance. If the latter, having proved their knowledge of the languages required by the Civil Service Commissioners, were appointed for a substantial period to a place which would enable them to acquire another language, then the system would be intelligible, if not justified. But vice-consuls are transferred on the same perverse and arbitrary principle as governs the movements of candidates on passing the examination. Just as the latter are appointed without any reference to their proven qualifications, so the former are transferred without a thought for the efficiency of the individual, or the service, as a whole. It is apparently as undesirable that a vice-consul should remain at work which he is just beginning to understand as it is that he should obtain a vacancy in a country whose language he speaks.

During the first years of their service few vice-consuls ever remain more than eighteen months or two years at the same post. As they go out in complete ignorance of the duties before them, their usefulness begins precisely at the period when a transfer takes place, or is imminent, the result may be imagined. In cases of appointment to countries where a new language must be learned simultaneously, the officer proceeds to his second post a sadder, but not a wiser, man. After two years in a large port, such as Hamburg, Marseilles, or Philadelphia, the neophyte is only just qualified to take charge of the consulate, in cases of necessity, and has acquired a certain grasp of the affairs with which he has to assist in dealing. This presupposes, moreover, that he has not had to grapple with an unfamiliar language. Yet the Foreign Office would have no hesitation in taking a man from Rio de Janeiro, after a doubly inadequate period of initiation, and sending him to Bogotà or the Congo, where he is expected to cope with wholly different work, with the addition, perhaps, of another language.

It must also be remembered that the period referred

to, from eighteen to twenty-four months, is by no means an extreme example of a system which is seriously affecting the efficiency of the consular service. Anyone who cares to turn over the pages of the "Foreign Office List" will meet with paragraphs in the "statement of services" which reveal depths of consular mutability exceeding the worst fancies of the narrators of feminine fickleness. Here, for instance, is an officer appointed to a consulate in Italy; six months later he is in Algiers. After an interval he begins to move again, going to a German port for six months, thence to the Faroe Islands for two months, then to Casa Blanca for one month, and, finally, to Norway, where he again settles for some years. In 1913, however, his peregrination is resumed, and he proceeds to Portuguese East Africa, whence he is transferred, after three months, to East Prussia, remaining there until the outbreak of war. It might be expected that such an event would necessitate his being uninterruptedly employed for the duration of the war, but, no: early in 1915 he was sent to the Argentine for three months, after which he was transferred to Brazil. Each of these journeys is paid for out of public funds, and may have been undertaken by the officer's wife and family, if, as is not unlikely, he is married. In that case, his wife's full fare was paid, and a portion of the other fares. To this must be added an allowance for luggage, and the outfit allowance granted on transfer. Such are the expenses sanctioned by a department which refuses to pay for a deck chair on ocean journeys, and does not allow for sleeping cars on a European journey involving two days in the train! The legitimate expenses of travelling with comfort, and in a manner befitting the rank of consular officials, are in many cases not sanctioned, and in all cases refunded after preposterous delays and queries. But such shameful waste of public funds, when due to the erratic and irresponsible transfer system, excites no comment. We are to congratulate ourselves, doubtless, upon the many languages and the vast experience which this official must have acquired in his three months' residence in several countries and continents. His career reads like the diary of an American tripper rather than a "statement of services" in a semi-official publication.

GEORGE BERKLEY.

An Industrial Symposium.

Conducted by Huntly Carter.

WITH a view to pooling the practical wisdom of the nation upon the main problems of the after-war period, THE NEW AGE is submitting the two following questions to representative public men and women:—

(1) What in your opinion will be the industrial situation after the war as regards (a) Labour, (b) Capital, (c) the Nation as a single commercial entity?

(2) What in your view is the best policy to be pursued by (a) Labour, (b) Capital, (c) the State?

(36) MR. CHARLES HOBSON

(Secretary of the Britjsh Section of the International Metalworkers' Federation, Sheffield).

It has never before been known for men and women to make sacrifice so great for love of country as has been during the present War, and the motive inspiring the said sacrifice and self-renunciation (for it has been nothing less) has been a deep sense of the righteousness of the nation's cause. Were it possible to maintain the high standard of moral duty and act industrially as we have nationally—indeed, to make industrialism a national question instead of an individual one, making it the cause of humanity conceding the right of life and the opportunity of full development to others, equal to that we claim for ourselves—then the New Age would have dawned, making possible the solution of our industrial problems. Nearest akin to the above would be a condition of service where skill and labour were counted as invested capital, making the worker a shareholder. Call it profit-sharing or co-operation if you will. The writer has interest in a manufactory of this character, where every employee, from the yardman to the foreman, receives the same rate of dividend as the shareholders. The one is based on wages earned, and the latter on money invested. There is no mistaking the benefit accruing to the firm by such an arrangement. It more than compensates for the outlay, in the tone and temper of the workpeople, who speak of the undertaking as "our business" and "our firm," just as the largest shareholder would. As a matter of fact, many of the men are shareholders. And this not as a result of the firm's need of capital, but because the firm wished to encourage their workpeople to take a real interest in the success of the business, and secure thereby genuine and hearty co-operation..

But as the above is not likely to be generally adopted until we are blessed with a higher civilisation, we must content ourselves to deal with human nature as it is, and with man in his more selfish mood.

Let us, therefore, imagine the War is over, and the vast machinery organised to prosecute the War is no longer required, and the command is given to millions of men to return to civil life and again shoulder the duties and responsibilities associated therewith.

In such case it seems natural for each man, in taking up his former duties, to resume all his former habits and methods which had become his as the result of years of observation and experience, which may be described thus: "Whatever I may choose to be as a citizen, or in other spheres of life, in business I will live for myself only."

Imagine, therefore, a regular stampede of 4,000,000 men now serving with the King's forces, who inside two and a half years were engaged in industrial pursuits, making their way home again with no other thought or wish than to occupy the position they voluntarily gave up to do the higher duty. Every man of them will only feel that his conduct and service is worthy of recognition; but, at the very least, an equal place is due to him as is occupied by those whose fortune it has been to remain at home.

The undertaking given by the Government to organise Labour at the beginning of the War was that, on conditions they would relinquish certain rules and conditions of employment for the period of the War, all should be restored when the War was over—the correct interpretation of this being that the workman shall be as secure, from the point of view of wages and employment, after the War as he was before the War, and the instrument of his Union as effective. With a view to an increased output, employers have been given power to employ whoever they liked, and execute work in any manner they choose, with the result that 766,000 females have taken the places of men in munition works, and untold thousands of men with no previous experience have been drafted in the works, besides a large volume of junior labour. The above has made necessary the sectionalising of work, the obliterating of all lines of demarcation betwixt grades of men and grades of work, and the introduction of new methods by way of simplifying production. Every conceivable plan and appliance has been introduced without let or hindrance on the part of the men's Unions, although the obtaining of the working conditions aforementioned has cost the men many millions of pounds and untold privation and suffering. But they have stood loyally to their agreement, and none will regret the sacrifice, provided justice is done to the men and the cause from whom the nation demanded the concession.

The problem, therefore, briefly put, is as follows:—

1. What shall be meant by a return to pre-war wages?
2. Shall the millions of men returning to civil life return, also, to the situations they left?
3. How will you deal with the females occuping the men's places in the works?
4. In what way would you deal with unskilled men brought into the works?
5. How would you deal with juniors employed on munitions, provided they remain in the works?
6. How would you deal with the unemployed after the War?

It will be readily seen from the above that the problem is many-sided. It bristles with difficulties and

touches many interests. It is, therefore, difficult in a single statement to put the case intelligibly. Let me, therefore, put the matter as I view it, in as brief a form as possible, at the same time striving earnestly to make myself understood.

PRE-WAR RATES OF WAGES.

1. Wages shall equal in value those paid in the summer of 1914.

2. Every man is justly entitled to the situation he gave up when volunteering for service.

3. Speaking generally, the women must vacate the places previously held by the men, and the matter of their remaining at certain employment in connection with the work must be one to be determined or arranged between the men's union and the employers.

4. There is no greater danger to an industry than for untrained men to be allowed to meddle with skilled work, unless undergoing a course of training under well-defined conditions.

If these men, therefore, are allowed to remain, it must be to do such work as they did before the War, otherwise you introduce an element of competition in wages and rivalry among workmen, which no self-respecting skilled artisan would tolerate.

The only wise way to deal with juniors is to teach them in a trade school. Every boy should be properly indentured, so as to make some individual responsible for his training, both in school and workshop, when attendance at school during the apprenticeship period should be made compulsory.

Unemployment after the War is, perhaps, the most difficult problem of all. The clients are so varied, and their condition so uncertain. We must leave, therefore, the sick and wounded to the agencies already appointed for the work, and deal with those sound in body and mind. The men from the rural districts will generally find employment on the land. But, to make this doubly sure, land should be acquired by the State, and dealt with by municipal corporations and similar bodies in their particular vicinities. It should be devoted mainly to growing garden stuffs, and should gradually develop according to the needs of the neighbourhood and the possibilities of the land. This would absorb considerable unemployment. It should ever be kept in mind that few things pay better than land scientifically treated. Hence the need for special treatment, under the guidance of men of the school.

Dealing with unemployment in towns, and specially in centres devoted to the production of munitions, a considerabde amount of sieving will be needed. For example, many thousands of men and women will gravitate to their former employment, which was left to obtain higher wages. Then large numbers of men who, when the War began, had private businesses will never think of working under normal conditions. These will resume their own calling. Large numbers of persons in no way dependent on their own efforts—wives, daughters, sisters, who for patriotic or other reasons have gone into the works—will gladly resume their domestic duties and thus relieve the situation. With the latter class of unemployed, the War Pensions Committee can well deal, and they should take care that none receive grants in aid beyond that provided for in the Government scheme to which all will have paid their weekly contribution, unless they are really dependent upon weekly wages, and all such should be required to make a declaration as to their condition of need, and agree to resume work and continue to be employed when suitable situations are found.

The Government at this juncture should step in and save the situation by passing a general Eight Hours Bill, at the same time prohibiting systematic overtime. If they do this, it would mean jobs for hundreds of thousands of men and women who otherwise would be unemployed. I have heard officials of Trade Unions in high places say that some of the methods of production introduced during the War have come to stay, and that certain dilution of labour may have to be tolerated. Again I say this is a matter for the Trade Unions and the employers. At the same time, holding, as I do, a somewhat responsible position as a Trade Union official, I do not hesitate to affirm that it would be fatal to the best interests of all concerned, and not less so to the trade of the country if any looseness is allowed to creep in. Therefore we make the following suggestions :—

There must be a certain standard of efficiency if you are to demand a uniform minimum wage, and no satisfactory standard can be reached without a certain theoretical and practical training. If, therefore, the methods in question continue, and the operators too, then the teaching and training referred to is indispensable.

The task might be very much simplified, and be much less costly, if the school and the workshops co-operate. For example, in some of our large works, where thousands of hands are employed, it might be arranged for training to be given inside the works, or in close proximity to them, where tools and machinery and the best skilled workmen are ready at hand. The chief things to be avoided are, night work after a usual day's work is done, and removal from the atmosphere of the workshop perhaps to a remote part of a large city, where the school element dominates. *The best man from both is essential to success.*

It is as much to the interest of Capital as to that of Labour that the suggested standard of skill should be reached by all engaged on highly skilled work, and the best results would be gained if the said training be controlled by a committee of employers and of workmen's representatives.

I have heard it argued that hostility to Germany in the form of a boycott of her manufactures and a closer industrial alliance with our Colonies, giving the latter preferential treatment, would ensure to Great Britain industrial supremacy. To my way of thinking, such a policy would in the end be found to be morally wrong, hence would never be financially right. I would certainly prefer a "live and let live" policy. A nation is its own enemy that puts a prohibitive tax on imported goods, as by such means home-produced goods are the dearer, and foreign-made goods also, which means that the consumer is the victim in every case. Retaliation is no remedy. Like every other form of physical warfare, it engenders bad blood and intensifies unfriendliness. It is much better business to seek to establish proper business relations, giving each nation opportunities for full development. If it be found that certain countries possess natural advantages, or even acquired—say, a higher standard of education or a more stalwart manhood—then concede them the right and opportunity to prosper, for be assured that in the end no number of artificial barriers will suffice to hold them back.

The chief difficulty with regard to Germany is that it will not pursue a straight line of conduct. Here an example might be helpful. Solingen (Germany) is among the oldest centres for cutlery-making. For two centuries preceding 1750, some of the best cutlery was produced in this town and district. But from the latter date, down to 1850, the trade so degenerated that nothing but the vilest rubbish was produced there. The cutlery last named, although vile and worthless, was well finished, and took the eye at first sight, but a customer was only to be caught once. Therefore, ruin to the German cutlery industry was inevitable, unless the buyer could be impressed that beyond the bare fine appearance there was "real grit." There followed a universal practice of putting marks on goods indicating that they were made of steel of the best quality, were made also by the best methods (that is, by handicraft), and, further, that they were made in Sheffield (England) and by the best Sheffield manufacturers. As proof of all this, the cutlery bore the name and corporate mark of the firm, with the word SHEFFIELD all in English characters.

These practices continued for many years, with the result that the reputation of Germany suffered to such an extent as to make her name a byword in all industrial centres and in all markets. In 1887 the Government passed a measure dealing with the false marking of merchandise, the effect of which has been practically to stop the practices complained of, with a further result of bettering the class of manufactures made in Germany.

The object in view in giving the above instance is to suggest that, if a similar course were adopted with regard to other practices of which Germany is known to be guilty, perhaps similar results might follow. For example, some time ago, there was an exhibition of cutlery made in Germany, at the Cutlers' Hall, Sheffield,

the object being to show the quality of German production and the prices at which they were sold wholesale. From the point of view of utility and true beauty, they were in every sense a failure, but from the point of view of design, execution, and finish the goods were superb. The best experts in the cutlery trade costed the samples, and were agreed that the prices at which they were offered were not only less than cost, but in some cases less than the cost of the material from which the goods were made. Of course, we all know how this is done. But to quote the words of Sir William Ramsay, K.C.B., F.R.S., who says, "Under the German State there was a Trade Council, the object of which was to secure and keep trade for Germany. This Council had practical control of duties, bounties, and freights; its members were representative of the different commercial interests of the Empire; and they acted, as a rule, without control from the Reichstag."

My point, therefore, is, if, as has been the case under the British Merchandise Marks Act, 1887, the authorities in Germany have joined hands with the Board of Trade in prosecuting and punishing German manufacturers for striking false descriptions on their goods, and have been ready at any time to do so, might it not be possible, if a conciliatory spirit were manifested in the latter case, that an arrangement might be come to, to put a stop to these unjust, dishonest practices? Which would certainly be a nearer cut to the object sought to be attained by other means.

The reason I advocate the above procedure is because I know what organised labour in Germany is. At the termination of the War, we shall be called upon to meet the men face to face, and among the many vexed questions to be debated will be the industrial relations of the two countries, and I am confident that the 111 Social Democrats in the Reichstag, also the 600,000 members of the Union of Metalworkers, and the great body of Socialists, all of which are associated in a common federation, with organised labour in Great Britain, would elect to make sacrifice to support a constructive policy of the kind indicated, rather than one of continued hostilities.

Great possibilities present themselves if a policy of this kind is pursued, in view of the fact that the present Minister of Labour is personally intimate with and in the joint Trade Union organisation of Great Britain and Germany, and is officially associated with the men of influence in the working-class movement. And I am sanguine, provided the case is well put, and conferences are held, giving ample opportunity for the objects and intent of Great Britain to be well understood, that a friendly alliance of the character indicated can be brought about.

Immediately the War is over, the Trade Unions will begin to arrange to readjust many grievances, inflicted and patiently borne, consequent on the arrangement come to with the Government, and as soon as possible will formulate their demands. In this case it will be well if both the Trade Unions and the employers keep well before them the fact that both organised Labour and organised Capital are practically impregnable, and that true wisdom is evidenced in dealing with points in dispute if economy is studied and good business methods are adopted. Speaking generally, the Trade Union leader is against compulsory arbitration only because of the work of such boards in the past. In most cases the workman makes a good guess as to the award, believing that such is arrived at more in consideration of the parties concerned as employer and workman than as a result of an impartial judgment on the merits of the case. Capital and Labour must be prepared to come together with greater mutuality than ever before, recognising that, under existing conditions, each is necessary to the other. The former realising at the same time that the worker has a right to a higher standard of life, and that his intelligence forbids that he should be content with an income below efficiency. "Put yourself in his place" is the axiom that would work wonders with all of us if consistently followed.

Employers should encourage men's organisations, as by doing so they help to develop a species of union which tends more than any other thing to harmony and goodwill among workmen; that is, organisation by industries rather than by small sections. This class of union engenders a oneness of feeling and interest, which makes impossible the diversions and dissensions so common where sectional unions exist.

If we are successfully to compete with other progressive nations, we must pay greater attention to our own internal arrangements and management. For instance, we should get better work and a much larger output were we to provide better workshops and improve the surroundings of the workman inside the factory. The workplaces of Great Britain, especially in the metal industry, are not to be compared with those in Germany from the point of view of cleanliness, light, and general convenience and comfort. It is well known that a man can do more work and of a higher quality in a clean, well-arranged shop.

Another matter requiring special attention is the need for an arrangement by which we can be brought in closer contact with our customers and other consumers in other countries. It would certainly help us to a better knowledge of the real requirements of both were bureaus established in each country, through which all necessary information might pass. This would keep us informed as to the requirements of the markets and the consumers and traders as well, and at the same time as to the doings of our competitors.

Readers and Writers.

AGAINST the massed attack made by Mr. de Maeztu upon my position last week—or was it, after all, only his defence?—I do not propose upon this auspicious occasion (I thought for a moment I was replying to a toast!) to do anything more than skirmish with his patrols. And the most exposed and daring of them shall certainly be taken prisoner before Mr. de Maeztu has time to say Kamerade. What means so subtle a mind in lending his leg to a lawyer to be pulled? The Master he quotes was much more on the alert. Listen to Mr. de Maeztu's authority, and mark the irony of it: "Then one of them, *which was a lawyer,* asked Jesus a question, *tempting* Him and saying"—well, we know not only what he said, but what the trap was this ingenious little lawyer was laying for Jesus. He was cross-examining the Master in the hope of discovering Him tripping in the Law. If only he could have drawn an admission of ignorance or, still better, a criticism, of the Law from the new Teacher, he would have felt the satisfaction of his kind in the triumph of it. Jesus, however, gave the correct answer to the pedant in words the careful objectivism of which Mr. de Maeztu ought at once to recognise. Expressing neither approval nor dissent, and conveying no criticism, whether constructive or destructive, Jesus replied, like a child repeating a catechism, that "on these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." But was that to say that the doctrine of Jesus therefore hung upon them? We know, on the contrary, that the commandment of Jesus and His unique contribution to ethics was the injunction, often repeated, "that ye love one another, as I have loved you." Doubtless, the love of God was implied in it, but only, I think, as a secondary consideration. In fact, I make bold to say that if the Law and the Prophets can be said to have relegated mutual human love to a second place in the order of values, the distinction of Jesus lay in reversing the order, and in making fellowship primary over the love of God. To what else, indeed, does the warning contained in the following saying point, if not to the danger contained in the primacy upheld by the Law and Mr. de Maeztu? "Yea, the time cometh (said Jesus to His disciples) that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." Would not such service necessarily follow at times upon the primacy of the love of God over mutual human love? And was it not with this knowledge in His mind that Jesus laid down His own commandment as the better way? Mr. de Maeztu, I am sure, will have some difficulty in escaping this conclusion, especially now that I have the foundation-quotation of his article a prisoner in irons in my hands.

I am reminded of a reflection I made many months ago upon the strange company the modern doctrine of Objectivism appears to like to keep. You will note that the conception of Christianity upon which Mr. de Maeztu and his school prefer to rest is Old Testament Christianity—in short, Judaism. And they are wise in their generation, for relatively to Christianity, Judaism is a typical instance of objectivist ethics; and the New Testament in relation to the Old is the gospel of subjective ethics. What, in fact, is more evident than the contrast between them? In the Old Testament everything is objective, real and independent of man, from God Himself to Heaven and Righteousness; in the New Testament, on the contrary, everything is subjective, ideal, and "within you," from the Kingdom of Heaven to the Creator Himself. In the Old Testament God is the God of Power; in the New, He is the God of Love. In the Old Testament God's in His heaven and all therefore is right with the world; but in the New Testament God is within every one of us, and therefore all is right with all of us. In the Old Testament God is everything and man is nothing, that God should be mindful of him. In the New Testament man is everything that God should send His only-begotten Son to die for him. Is not all this undeniable, is it not, in fact, the commonplace of thought upon the subject? And may we not, therefore, conclude that in fortifying themselves behind the Old, instead of within the New, Testament, the modern objectivists, possibly without intending it, are really relapsing from Christianity to Judaism? But that is perhaps an irrelevant question.

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A good deal of play has been made by Mr. de Maeztu (and by Mr. T. E. Hulme, as well) with the notion that in a very precise sense the error of Humanism, or the doctrine particularly associated with the Renaissance, was the error of subjectivism. We are, therefore, bidden to undo the Renaissance and to return in thought to the more objective theories which it displaced. I am prepared, as I have many times said, to compromise with Objectivism, and to admit it to a fellowship with Subjectivism—an inferior fellowship, it is true, but a fellowship, nevertheless. I am prepared to count Things, as well as Persons, real, and only to maintain that the eternal Things are for the sake of the immortal Person. But what I am unable to do is to dismiss Subjectivism as of no account in comparison with Objectivism; and, consequently, to regard the doctrine of the Renaissance as essentially erroneous. That the doctrine of the Renaissance implies the subordination of the love of God to the love of man, I am not only, as a student, compelled to admit; but, unlike Mr. de Maeztu, who regards this forgetting of the primacy of God as an error, I accept it as evidence that the Renaissance was fundamentally a renaissance of Christianity. And my conception of "the whole error of Humanism" is simply this: that it was an imperfect form of subjectivism (or of Christianity) in that it substituted for the love of man the glory of man! The difference, it will be seen, is considerable; at the same time, it cannot be said to be vital. Both forms of humanism—the Pagan humanism into which the Renaissance degenerated, and the Christian humanism taught by Jesus, are forms of subjectivism; and the true corrective, therefore, and true alternative of the Renaissance, is not objectivism, but Christianity.

* * *

But Mr. de Maeztu has almost as strange a conception of human love as of the Christianity that commands it. He says, for instance, that he can conceive a society existing in mutual love which is, nevertheless, "savage" or "inane." Such a society of Christian fellowship may, in his opinion, be not merely negatively valueless, but positively bad. I will not say to Mr. de Maeztu what Plato made Socrates say to someone who talked lightly of love—that he seemed to have been frequenting the company of sailors. Sailors are not what they were in Greek days, slaves for the most part. Nor can I *prove* that mutual love—Mr. de Maeztu is so emphatic, that he includes "the most perfect mutual love"—is incompatible with "the absolute intellectual, physical, sentimental and moral degeneration of the human race." Nobody, in fact, by mere reasoning, can prove that a perfect Christian fellowship—a society obeying the single commandment of Jesus—may not become, from that very cause, all that Mr. de Maeztu fears. But I think we can say that it seems highly improbable; and, for myself, I would add that if it implies "degeneration," I would we were all degenerate! But enough of skirmishing. I shall bring up my guns upon another occasion. R. H. C.

Letters from Ireland.

By C. E. Bechhofer.

IF I were to attempt a definition of the Irish character, I should, I think, have little to oppose to the traditional opinion which credits the Irish particularly with imagination. This trait has its two sides: there is sympathetic imagination, but, more commonly nowadays, there is selfish imagination. The latter, it seems to me, is manifested in Ireland particularly in two ways: dreaminess (nothing matters!) and chauvinism (only Ireland matters!)

But I shall not persist, for I realise that, by doing so, I should only give fresh offence to the Irish "intellectuals." These have a way of leaping out upon the rash stranger and asking him what the Devlin he, a foreigner, means by discussing Irish affairs. It is no secret who these intellectual highwaymen are; they do not hide their dark lanterns under a bushel. A few notes upon them here may, I hope, serve to damage their title to a monopoly of criticism, and to clear the way for future students of Ireland.

Quite the most aggressive are those Irish nationalists who are resident in England. The arrival of a book or an article about Ireland means a field-day for these gentlefolk. When the work happens to be written by an Irishman, the occasion becomes a triumph.

Patriotism may be one of the least of the virtues, but it is a virtue, nevertheless. At the same time, a riot of articles inspired by patriotism, and nothing else, leads the reader at last to suspect serious limitations in the writers. Who, six months ago, thought that the "Adventures of an Irish R.M." were anything better than insipidly amusing magazine tales? But an Englishman, Mr. E. V. Lucas, exhuming this book, every Irishman in Fleet Street has taken up the cry. How weary Mr. Boyd must be of the reviewers who ask him, often with asperity, why he did not write a chapter about the "Adventures of an Irish R.M." in his recent history of Anglo-Irish literature! It is a bad English tradition that gives Irish books to be reviewed only by Irishmen. These reviews have come at last to be bounded on the one side by chauvinism, and, on the other, by mutual admiration.

This journalistic clannishness is a phenomenon not peculiar to Anglo-Ireland. But, while in most other cases little difficulty is found in exposing and dissipating such vicious circles, we are faced here with a quite unusual form of self-justification, which has its roots in politics. Briefly, the assertion is that no Englishman is capable of appreciating Irish achievements, the reason being an instinctive desire on his part to countenance and continue the age-long oppression of Ireland. Ireland, you see, prides itself on being one of the few nations in Europe with a clean conscience. We do not read that Irish armies ever devastated Cornwall with fire and sword, or starved Wales into a wilderness of corpses. But it may be objected that Ireland has never ill-treated her neighbours because she has never had the chance. The Irish have never been tyrants;

but are they, therefore, not potentially tyrannical? The only effective answer that might be made would be a demonstration that tyranny is incompatible with the Irish character. But this, I fear, would be a difficult task.

My object in accusing Ireland of the crimes which, but for the grace of God, she might well have committed, is to suggest a truce in the everlasting controversy about the political affairs of many years ago. When we take into count the political circumstances of those times, and, especially, the economic conditions, we see that the Englishman of to-day need have no reason to reproach himself for the deeds and misdeeds of his ancestors. It is really high time now that the Irish abandoned ancestor-worship to the Chinese.

In the near future of Ireland, we need not look for National Guilds. They are a development far beyond the range of the present embryonic economic organisations. Irish Trade Unionism is still a babe in arms, in power of imagination as much as in standing. The most promising economic development in Ireland is the co-operative movement. And this is as far as we can expect most Irishmen to look for a long while yet.

In the first place, it is only recently that, after centuries of conflict, the Irish farmers have wrested the ownership of their lands from the landlords. As well ask a hungry dog to surrender a bone as to expect Irish farmers of to-day to consider an extension of co-operative ownership from ploughs and dairies to the land itself. And there is little reason to believe that the co-operative farmers are becoming full of social zeal. On the contrary, they would seem, thanks to the profit the system brings them, to be developing into the ordinary European type of small farmers. It must not be forgotten that they employ wage-labourers, so that their social elevation will come more and more to be based on the existence of an inferior and servile class. But, within its limits and as a means of checking Ireland's impoverisation, the co-operative movement is all for the best. In some way or other, Ireland will learn that to rehabilitate herself as a nation she must abandon the pretence of being the fairy queen of the United Kingdom, and become its—dairy queen.

The internal political future of Ireland may, I think, be foreshadowed. It is quite certain that any plan which will appeal both to the Nationalists and to Ulster will be agreeable to England. But all attempts of either party to obtain a one-sided solution are certain to fail, and the usual partisan proposals, so popular hitherto, may as well be thrown overboard now for ever. If my memory is not at fault, the Ulster Covenant binds its signatories not to eat or drink in the event of Ireland's receiving Home Rule. Well, I see that the Covenant will be broken. Ireland will have Home Rule, but not a Carson will starve.

A successful plan of Home Rule must conciliate both parties, or else the whole trouble will start again. The first difficulty is evident when we realise that the Nationalists are split into three bodies. First, there are the Sinn Fein irreconcilables, who desire complete separation and independence. But they are a small and uninfluential body, and may safely be left out of account. The largest Nationalist party consists of the orthodox Home Rulers, who desire a united and self-governing Ireland within the Empire. But they look upon Ulster as just one of four more or less equal provinces, and are prepared to grant it representation proportionate only to its geographical and numerical status. In case of conflict, Ulster would find three-fourths of the Government ranged against her. The third and right wing of the Nationalists is prepared to offer large concessions to Ulster for the sake of uniting the country in peace.

On the Ulster side there are the die-hards and the moderate men. The die-hards may be allowed to disappear in the track of the Sinn Feiners. We are concerned now with the Ulstermen who would welcome Home Rule if they saw Ulster safe from Nationalist oppression. A. E.'s plan is designed to conciliate the moderate men on both sides. He would have a lower house elected in the ordinary proportions, but he would place an Ulster majority in the upper house, as if an Ulster government had just gone out of office. Vacancies in this upper house would be filled by the government in power. Meanwhile, like Candide, the peasant proprietors will cultivate each other's gardens!

Write is Might.

I look forward to the war when men of letters will be ranged on opposing sides with all the ceremony of artillery.—"R. H. C." in THE NEW AGE of December 28, 1916.

THROUGHOUT the winter of 1971 all the universities in Veritia rang with the sound of the sharpening of pencils, the bubbling of fountain-pens, the overhauling of type-writers, and the mobilisation of printing presses. The flower of the country's vocabulary was called to the national banner, and a measure for the general compulsion of pens passed through Parliament at a sitting.

Not less active was the double-tongued enemy who had collected copious companies of clap-trap with which he hoped to overwhelm the invading force of arguments. His cavalry boasted the fleetest scribblers in the world: his factories were filled to overflowing with the newest pattern pens, and every seaport rang with the echo of the triple-expansive adjectives at which playwrights worked day and night.

Never before in history had two such armies met in conflict. In Veritia men spoke with admiration of Professor Probity, who, in the last May manœuvres, had put down a rising of pedantry by sheer force of common sense; while in Fallacia no less brilliant was the record of Professor Perfidy, who, in a recent debate, had inflicted a crushing adjective on a rival professor.

It was early spring *before the fighting began, a reason* for the delay being the severe cold which went to the heads of the professors, making it impossible for their ideas to advance till the March winds had swept away the cobwebs.

At last, however, just before dawn on April 23, the anniversary of the discovery of italics, Professor Probity opened fire with an attack upon the enemy's front-page, to which Professor Perfidy replied with a quibbling counter-stroke of his pen, defending his equivocal position with volleys of abuse, supported by columns of calumny amounting to about fifteen thousand bad words, and armed with ingenious repeating paradoxes. By the combined libel of these, the Fallacians hoped to inflict fatal wounds on the enemy's feelings, and completely to destroy his reputation where it had gained a foothold in neutral headlines. Then refreshing himself with a draught of mixed metaphors Professor Perfidy threw the whole weight of his argument at the weakest points in the opposition, and as his printing presses began pouring out broadside after broadside, thousands of Veritian verbs turned passive and in a subjective mood surrendered their persons. Notwithstanding this reverse, which greatly heartened the enemy, the Veritians wrote hard all that day, facing charge after charge with mere handfuls of facts. When night came the Fallacians had fortified their premises, having with one of their indiarubber pieces wiped out a whole regiment of Professor Probity's footnotes. So heavy, however,

were the losses they had suffered in neutral respect, and with such dignity had the Veritians replied to the most insulting of their base operations, that no decisive article of victory could be claimed.

The next morning, resolving to cross the enemy's purposes before he should have time to seize the situation, Professor Perfidy mounted a battery of typewriters to discharge a curtain lecture into the Veritians' first column. But the trick failed; for after advancing in self-contradictory propositions the Fallacians proceeded on false assumptions, and were reduced to an absurdity by the well-directed home-thrusts of their opponents' leader. Professor Perfidy was now compelled to withdraw the front line of his charge; but, lying at full length, he contrived to keep up the offensive in a series of anonymous attacks, completely destroying the subsidiary supports of the enemy's main positions. At last, bestride a dashing black hyphen, Professor Probity discovered a dry spot in the Fallacians' ink, safely crossed the stream of abuse, and, with an army increased to fifty thousand up-to-date theories, succeeded in waylaying the enemy's out-going post before it had time to be delivered. The struggle here was fierce and badly smudged. Heavy clouds of rhetoric enfolded both armies, and volleys of blank verse were interchanged with such amazing originality and vigour that an ambush concealing a terrible rumour was stripped of all its verbiage. On the Veritian side the professors fought fluently, inserting bold aphorisms wherever the lines began to waver and infusing fresh meaning into every sally, while, safely entrenched behind a double entendre, Professor Perfidy made rough shots at the enemy's figures of speech. It was now long past noon, and though the Fallacians had been forced to take refuge in bathos, they continued throwing mud and casting the most foul aspersions. Professor Probity determined, therefore, to try a new plan. Reading between the enemy lines he discovered a convicted cliché in the guise of a jeu d'esprit, while further on he came across a battery of evil intentions. These discoveries filled his pen with indignation, and, soaring in fancy, he dropped 75 cm. epigrams right over the heads of the Fallacians, the flash of wit being visible for many miles around. Then, advancing on his chief Captial, the Veritians pursued Professor Perfidy, till he fell into a contradiction. At the same time, a paragraph of picked sentences was detached to assail the fallacy of the undistributed middle, the destruction of which was effected by simple force of style. Column after column of the Fallacians now stormed the Parnassian heights which Professor Probity still occupied, and by opposing a superior number of false quantities they succeeded in capturing a metre. For one moment it looked as though the Veritians would be compelled to fall back into their armchairs, but rallying their headlines they sent the enemy plagiarising in all directions, while the fire from their ruthless maxims told with terrible effect even on the denser mass of the Fallacian people. Nearly the whole of Professor Perfidy's innuendos were now put to shame. But in another part of the field of debate fortune favoured his flying columns, and here the body of Professor Perfidy's argument was almost completely destroyed. Large detachments of dictionaries were now brought into action; lumbering platitudes were heard coming over the wires, and waggons bringing up quotations appeared on both sides. At last, carefully scanning the enemy's lines, the Veritians succeeded in capturing a foot of light verse, and advancing in hexameters, Professor Probity swept a complete ode off its feet, at the same time inflicting a serious minor poet on his dismayed antagonists. New drafts of the Fallacians' plans, however, were seen rushing into print, and, presently, fresh proofs of their cunning appeared true to bourgeois type. Their design was to catch the enemy in the abstract, and thwarting his aim by cutting off his supplies of information, to proceed by false reasoning upon his unsupported hypotheses. For this purpose, volumes of gas were discharged at the Veritians' main episode: formidable adjectives mounted on solid substantives kept up an incessant shower of abuse, and high expletives burst in upon Professor Probity's brown study. It was obvious that the enemy was preparing a climax, and, when night came inkling on, the Veritians were forced to abandon their case. Words had failed them, and many parts of their speech were missing. In fact, so desperate was their plight that, overcoming their scruples, some of the professors were in favour of doubling their meaning. Let us fight the enemy with his own vers libre, they cried. Let us turn the point of his jokes! Let us penetrate him with puns! An i for an i! We also can gas! Let us also be frightful! But Professor Probity only grasped his pen tighter. Better be blotted out, said he, than take up a false position; and, with a swift turn of a phrase, he rounded a period, causing many misprints in the enemy files.

Amid the clash of symbols the battle continued in the light of a scintillating young epigram, and when dawn came, the Veritians had extended their lines, and a split was visible in the enemy's infinitives. Ascending his high horse, Professor Perfidy had ridden off on a verbal technicality, leaving his men up to the neck in half-truths. In vain they shifted their ground. Professor Probity cut off their straggling sentences, and, fortifying his lines with appendices, took up a preposition at the end of an advancing column. But the battle was not yet won. The Fallacians had still some magazines in reserve, and, for a whole day and night, volley after volley of bombast swept the field of inquiry. The Veritians replied in iambics. Whereupon, wheeling his literary hack, Professor Perfidy headed a raw levy of witticisms, and with these ill-trained bon-mots succeeded by sheer force of numbers in making a circular attack. Then, concentrating his aim on the enemy's leaders, he advanced in a cloud of obscurity which the Veritians only penetrated by putting their men in large caps. Reinforcements of ink now came pouring in on both sides, and trains of reasoning brought fresh inspiration to the gallant Veritians. New issues were obviously at hand. Blowing his own trumpet, Professor Perfidy opened fire with a super-blue pencil, and relying on his adjectives dealt a left-handed compliment between the enemy's i's. Then, disguised as a peace note, he sent a bad motive offering the Veritians convertible terms. Professor Probity replied in italics, and his pen, coming up to the scratch, drove its spike between the enemy's lines, pressing home a hitherto unobserved point. But even now it was unsafe for the Veritians to think of putting the paper to bed. A few worn-out truths retired into damp sheets, but the others just rested on their laurels, their only refreshment being a draught of the red ink of the country; while the Fallacians fared even worse, being reduced to a handful of Latin roots eked out with chestnuts. It was an hour before sunrise when the Veritians heard an ugly rumour coming from the enemy files; but misdirecting his ambitions, Professor Perfidy made a false step, exposing himself to a withering retort: his case collapsed under him, and he was forced to seek a hasty conclusion, leaving the enemy in possession of his celebrated ink-wells. Later in the same day a threadbare excuse, carrying a white lie in its mouth, arrived, begging the Veritians to call a semi-colon. Tell your leader, said Professor Probity, this is a fight to a full-stop. Then your ink be upon your own fingers, shouted the Fallacians, and, distributing raging posters, they wrote off at a tangent, scattering insinuations all around. Fling-

ing back their words at them, the Veritians maintained their standpoint, and levelling criticisms at Professor Perfidy's headline compelled him to revise his version. The Fallacians now collected their wits for a last coup de plume. Fighting with pause and clause they succeeded in polishing off an epigram, and followed up their advantage by throwing hyperboles at the enemy's ink-tanks. Then, drawing a bow at a venture, Professor Perfidy sent a poisoned thorn into the Veritians' side-issue, referring them back to an amendment. Now, well-meaning neutrals paved the path to print with good intentions. But the Veritians made a turn of expression. In spite of slips and a chapter of accidents, they resolved to argue on till the enemy again made fresh advances. They knew that their blockade was telling, and the Fallacians were short of adjectives and would soon be out of print. Another essay was launched. Neat idioms were posted at short intervals along the front line, and, with these, Professor Probity now cut short a digression, and, applying the whole weight of his learning, so far made good his case that he had effected a passage of the classics before the evaders had time to misquote it. Professor Perfidy realised that only a misprint in the Veritians could now save his face, and seeing his irregular verbs, he feinted. Disguised in a pseudonym, he cast a reflection on the Veritians' unsullied margin, and thinking they appeared discomposed, followed it up with an unheard-of remark which fell flat, and was immediately overwhelmed by a 17-in, piece of evidence. There was a deafening report, and, with a lightning flash in his brain-pan, Professor Perfidy cracked his last joke and fell—dead to honour. Panic seized his files, and they scattered in confusion, hotly pursued by running commentaries. Many nouns threw away their cases to facilitate their object: a retiring subject was hit in its last syllable with the knotty point of an implacable argument, and a retreating appendix was cut off with a double-edged sarcasm. Only a few threats passed unobserved in the darkness, and a leader escaped with a broken parole. The scene of inkshed was terrible. Many truisms lay hors de combat: i's were dotted everywhere, and a hypothesis was left without a leg to stand upon. Bones of contention strewed the field: verbs lay plucked up by their roots, and parts of speech were littered on the ground. Side by side with a stifled conscience lay a gross mis-statement exposed to the cold truth without a shred of evidence on it, and near by a false accusation lay silenced for ever. When the Veritians came up they heard a veteran pen complaining of thirst, and as Professor Probity held his ink-bottle to its lips the poor thing crossed itself devoutly and spluttered its last. Elsewhere, the field was covered with foolscaps, and journambulists, marked with a blue-cross, went round with paper-baskets, picking up dogs' ears, while others carried blotting-pads to staunch the flowing ink. In the same spot heaps of promises were broken; a lame apology was caught in the act of defending itself, and thousands of misprints were captured in a state of decomposition. Here, indeed, it was that the death-blow was given to the hopes of the Fallacians. Their defeat was final; every edition was suppressed, and as the Veritians broke the last piece of news and turned over the paper, they found its circulation had ceased.

No battlefield had ever been the scene of a victory more verbose or better-edited; and many were the congratulations received by the Veritian professors. Their aim throughout had been literary and logical, and their style had been well-sustained. What wonder that the ink-scarred leaders of this great Press-campaign received long titles from a grateful country! As for the defeated Fallacians, their sentences had a dying fall. Their leaders were expurgated, but afterwards sent to Coventry, where they died of the cold shoulder. The rank and file were pardoned on condition that they either turned over a new leaf, or remained out of print for the rest of their lives.

J. R. MACLEOD.

Views and Reviews.

LET ME PERISH!

THE war has been the occasion of a revival of interest in spiritism; police and public vie in their attempts to know the truth of it. But it must be admitted that spiritism itself is not so interesting as it was during the fifty years after the Rochester rappings were first heard; a blight of dreariness has fallen upon it, "and common is the commonplace, and vacant chaff well-meant for praise." In the attempt to become scientific, spiritism has lost what poetry it had; it does not speak of the immortality of the soul, but of the survival of human personality, and, with most tedious iteration, it repeats that the dead have only passed over. What comfort there can be in this doctrine, I do not pretend to know; all the mediumistic revelations that I have read reveal so similar a state of existence, so identical a state of thought, that I feel sorry that these spirits have not gone a little higher. What shall it profit a man if, when he throws off "the body of this death," he still retains the clichés not only of spiritism, but of politics? Surely, if a journalist has to lie daily, a spirit should die daily to the lies of journalism. Yet with the utmost confidence, they repeat* through "Recorder" all the cant of patriotism that, from the "Morning Post" to the "Referee" and "John Bull," has degraded the war to a slanging match; and, in addition, tell us that the war on earth is a mere reflection of the war in spirit-land. Apparently, the teaching is that all bodies have souls, that all motions have a spiritual counterpart, that in the other world, there are spiritual soldiers, spiritual guns, spiritual shells, spiritual "tanks," spiritual rations, and, let us hope, spiritual generals. It is true that these correspondents do not describe these battles; they only mention the fact that there is "a war on somewhere," but that their duties are confined to receiving the spirits released from the body, and making them aware of the change?

There is, in this conception, a lack of dramatic fitness; for, if a personality survives with all its memories, its interests, and its aptitudes, if the conditions of life on earth are reproduced in spiritual equivalents, obviously the gallant young soldiers who have been working "Recorder's" arm (or pulling her leg) ought to be firing spiritual bullets from spiritual rifles, throwing spiritual bombs in spiritual dug-outs, and killing spiritual Germans with spiritual bayonets. Surely both spiritism and patriotism should combine to raise new armies from our total casualties, armies of soldiers trained in the methods of modern European warfare, and perpetuating them in a metaphysical Nifelheim. It is true that there would be no military advantage, for, if "numbers alone annihilate," the army that had suffered most casualties on earth would be victorious in the sciomachy. The success of the Allies in saving their men would tell against them in the battle of the shades, and, once again, "whosoever will save his life shall lose it." But even if there is no military advantage in continuing the war on the other side, in mere fairness to material soldiers, the spiritual War Office should spiritually "comb out" these spiritual "slackers" who are skulking at the "receiving station," and put them in the spiritual firing line. Surely, their work can be done by women or C_3 men, or other disembodied non-combatants.

I have pressed this pretended parallelism to an absurd conclusion because its inherent absurdity does

* "Do Thoughts Perish? Or, The Survival after Death of Human Personalities." By "Recorder." (Kegan Paul. 2s. 6d. net.)

not seem to be observed either by "Observer" or "Recorder." Although these letters assert a parallelism of the two states, they also assert that the spirit-world is indescribable. This is fundamentally false; for apocalyptic literature, although frequently bewildering, is not unintelligible. From St. John to Swedenborg and Blake, the invisible has been capable of description; and those who assert that the human personality survives just as it was, but freed from the limitations of sense-perception, cannot evade the necessity of writing apocalyptic literature by pleading that we "in the body pent" cannot understand it. There is no evidence whatever to support the assumption that human personality is limited to sense-perception; no one pretends, for example, than an algebraic equation is intelligible only to a disembodied spirit, and certainly the spirit-world, as experienced by these correspondents, is not more abstract than an algebraic equation. On the contrary, when spirits get a "pass" to other planets (we are not told whether they had to pay a 50 per cent. increase in fares), when they speak of other spirits as being "not the only pebbles on the beach," we begin to suspect that spirit-land is as material as, say, Peckham Rye.

It may be admitted that these letters are not put forward as literature, but as evidence.

But the literature of Grub Street is evidence of the existence of Grub Street, not of spirit-land; and if Thought is, as is here asserted, the substance of the spiritual life, we ought to have some evidence of thought. We are not dealing in this volume with Bill Jones or Sally Slapcabbage; the correspondents are supposed to be Fellows of the Royal Society, Bishops, one even signs himself "The First Gentleman of Europe," but says nothing about the Brighton pavilion or Mrs. Fitzherbert. The medium herself seems to be of good family, education, health, and intelligence; she is a member of various learned societies, is an explorer, and has written books upon her travels, according to her own account. Yet she is satisfied with communications from C * * *, who in earth-life was her friend, "a Fellow of the Royal Society, an Alpine-Club man, and a keen yachtsman," in which he says (Letter 6): "Mentality, i.e., thought allied to growing spirituality is our make-up for this plane. Apparently for higher stages we drop mentality—as divorced from spirituality—and the latter only remains"; and in Letter 43 says: "You have been talking of the body which succeeds the physical, and in which we function. Of course it is made up entirely of material. I use this word for lack of any other—say 'stuff,' if you will. The stuff of the bodies of this sphere is in your actual earth, as is radium or electricity." When we think of the precision of physics, of the subtlety of metaphysics (with both of which, it may be presumed, a Fellow of the Royal Society would be acquainted), we can only marvel that one intelligent person should be willing to accept such inanities as I have quoted as evidence either of the survival of her friend, or of the nature of that unknown country. The personality of an F.R.S. should at least remember to define his meaning, should at least be capable of developing a conception with some show of logic; but he seems to drop as easily into the clichés of spiritism as do the little black boys for whom media have such affection. These Fellows of the Royal Society seem to undergo a change not for the better; another one writes in Letter 39: "The unseen forces of Nature are those which are to convert the world into a uniform belief of the One-ness of the Plan." The profundity, the bathos, of it! Yet this is the rubbish that is offered to us "because of the urgent need in these terrible days for some knowledge, and much comfort." If the Fellows of the Royal Society can do no better than this, they were "better dead"; we know more of the spirit than they can tell us, and beg them to "come in any shape but this." A. E. R.

To the German Nation.

By Yakov P. Polonsky.

(*Written during the Siege of Paris.*)

An ordered strength not vainly hast thou bred,
And courage in thyself engendered;
Thy foe, in captive wise, his sword surrendered,
The emperor his sceptre forfeited.
All-armed didst thou arise and shed
Calm on the nation blindly war-impassioned,
And thou didst pacify thy dread;
Thus, all that time e'er prompted, thou hast fashioned.
Enough! From further ills of war forbear. . . .
And if renown thou art to share,
Strong sovereignty thou wilt attain in earnest,
If thou barbarian glory spurnest,
O'er ruined towns with bloodstained bodies there. . . .

"Enough!"—this cry did we upraise,
We, nurtured by thy lore from childhood days,
We, feeble-visioned neighbours;
Powder and steel and copper, end these labours,
This iron and lead, their thunder, smoke, and roar
Torrents of tears 'mid victory's triumph pour;
Thy trophies, emblems are of mourning,
Of woes and fears. "Enough!" was heard the warning
From all who this ideal have made;
Liberty, justice, human moderation,
Which in thy strains of splendour were arrayed
Superbly when thine accolade
Went forth from Schiller's lips to every nation.
. . . . . .
Now all is blotted out!
These youths of thine
For universal love no longer pine;
The art they love, it is the art of fighting. . . .
(Their science fervidly the cannon moulds. . . .)
. . . . . .
And only him thy race a patriot holds
Who, with a spirit full of slighting
For other nations, testifies
That God himself bids thee arise,
The East and West to Germanise!
. . . . . .
With honour 'neath thy roof thou didst acclaim
Him who once could, and durst, thy strength dissever,
Who thought to raise his tyranny for ever,
And naught through this, his tyranny, became.
With honour welcoming, didst march to maim
The race his henchman sapped by their endeavour.
Crowning thy vile success with glory, thou
Promptings of savag'ry obeyest,
And all behold thee like a hangman now,
Unmoved by cries of him thou slayest.
Thou at thy victim's throat hast rushed,
And treason's spirit hast commended,
And thou his twitching limbs hast crushed,
As though they on the block were rended.

Mowing on women, greybeards, babes, dead hordes,
Wilt thou let pillage loose on Paris, singing
A canting anthem to the Lord of Lords?

O most enlightened race of all!
O thou, our mighty lore-preparer!
Be thou assured, if France should fall,
Her tomb shall yield a vengeance-bearer.
He, snake-like, shall thy path molest,
And make thee learn what strength remaineth
Amid beliefs but half-suppressed,
Which in its girth no tomb containeth. . . .
He, whom our days as Nemesis invest,
For thee, scarce have thy trophies yielded
Garlands for all thy passionate unrest,
Shall by a thousand pygmies wielded,
With thousand nets thy path infest. . . .
And if that thou, but this thou knowest,
On wisdom of thy sons bestowest
The hopes whereof thou art possessed,
That ne'er this wisdom be abated,
Sheathe thou thy sword, and cleanse thy hands betimes.
Which powders's vehemence begrimes,
And which with reek of blood are sated. . . .

Translated from the Russian by P. Selver.

Towards National Guilds.

AN antithesis is very often made between Quality and Quantity. It is commonly assumed that when the standards of Quality are abandoned, the standards of Quantity are substituted in their place. Thus, we assume that the present system of production is Quantitative as contrasted with the Qualitative production the Guilds would bring in. But are we quite sure that this is the right pair of opposites? Is Quantity, as distinct from Quality, the actual aim of capitalist production? It may seem, perhaps, to be so; and, as a practical working hypothesis, the assumption that capitalist production tends to Quantity, and Guild-production to Quality, may safely be made. But a more exact psychology, and, therefore, economics, would never suggest Quantity as the true alternative to Quality but *Cheapness*. Let us note in ourselves that, in proportion as our taste is good, we desire Quality first; but that if we cannot have Quality we do not ask for Quantity, *or* for an inferior degree of Quality, but for something entirely different, namely, cheapness. Who has not been struck by the fact that men who have failed to obtain the *best* of something have deliberately chosen the *cheapest* in its place? A smoker of our acquaintance, who, when he was well-to-do, smoked the best cigarettes in the world, regardless of cost, insisted afterwards, when he became poor, on procuring the cheapest in the market. And he used to say that if he could not have his choice of Quality he would renounce the standard of Quality altogether, rather than submit to the second or third-rate—and set up the standard of Price instead. Quantitatively, he continued to smoke the same amount; but it was quantity with cheapness instead of quantity with quality. The application of this observation to economics is as follows: After the decline of taste, and, hence, of qualitative production, that took place in the eighteenth century, the kind of production that set in was not quantitative production (as is commonly supposed), but cheap production. The industrial revolution was primarily psychological: it was from the standard of taste to the standard of price. Quantity could never make up for quality; and, in fact, nobody ever thinks it does. But a fresh standard, namely, of Price, produced a new orientation. The conclusion to be drawn is that the next industrial revolution must be preceded by a renaissance of taste. The restoration of taste and the expulsion of the usurping god of cheapness would involve the revolution of industry from its present price-production to quality-production. Price would once more become "no object"; and quality would be again everything. Note, in confirmation, that when we are about to buy something for a friend, or for somebody in emergency, we state in the market that "price is no object." That same attitude, maintained throughout, would revolutionise industry and bring in the Guilds.

The new monthly magazine, the "Guildsman" (1d.), published by the Glasgow Group of the National Guilds League, is really, to judge by its first two issues—a credit to guildsmen. It is true that, as was complained of elsewhere in these columns last week, the first and still the only considerable work upon "National Guilds," namely, the volume under that title, published by Messrs. Bell (and selling very badly, all considered, we may say!) is unmentioned in a list of "What to Read"; but the omission is probably an oversight, and the less to be admired at that the celebrated initials of Mr. G. D. H. Cole are wrongly given, and the title of the third pamphlet of the N.G.L. is announced as "Towards a United Guild" instead of "Towards a Miners' Guild" (1d. of the Secretary, N.G.L., 17, Acacia Road, St. John's Wood, N.W.). At any rate, this is a sufficient explanation.

The appearance of a magazine devoted to the propaganda of National Guilds is, after all, a matter for congratulation to readers of THE NEW AGE. The writer of this paragraph remembers the remark of a well-known Socialist when he heard—how many years ago is it now?—that the I.L.P., then in its cradle, was setting up a journal for itself: Ah, that means the I.L.P. has come to stay! We may, therefore, hope that the appearance of the "Guildsman" is a sign that the League and all it stands for have come to stay—and, indeed, we believe it.

We should like to point out for the encouragement of the fainting that the progress of National Guilds, when once it begins, will be productive from the outset. In the case of the I.L.P., the goal—namely, the conquest of political power—was, in the first place, a very long way off, for it assumed the attainment of a Parliamentary majority of Labour M.P.'s; in the second place, it was, even at that, only a means to an end, since political power had afterwards to be converted into economic power; and, in the third place, there could be no expectation of a reward concurrent with the political progress—in other words, the increment of Labour representation by no means involved, as a necessity, any increment in the well-being of Labour. On the whole, indeed, it must be said that the pioneers of the political movement of Labour must not only have had great faith themselves, but power to inspire faith in others. For otherwise, who can conceive a movement setting off for so distant an object as a Parliamentary majority, and contenting themselves with no fruit by the wayside? The Guild movement, on the other hand, being economic in its origin and application, and, hence, direct in its effects, will produce changes concurrently with every step it takes. Is it to-day that, let us say, the idea of partnership in workshop control becomes acceptable? Well, to-morrow it is in operation. Is it next year that partnership of the Unions with the State in the control of mines and railways is conceded? At once the fruit is ripe, and the Guild idea is by that degree advanced both in practice and in theory. The distinction, in fact, between the I.L.P. and the N.G.L. is that the former was mainly theoretical, while the latter is practical. The former aimed at acquiring the means; the latter aims at the end itself. The former was always liable to slip between the cup and the lip; the latter leaves no interval between precept and practice. The former hoped to find the way to industrial control through the windings of Parliament. The latter goes straight to industry, leaving Parliament to time the pigeon.

In the January "Guildsman," V.H.R.," writing on the vexed question of Workshop Control, comes to the conclusion already reached by THE NEW AGE: that "better is it that workshop control should be repudiated than that any Trade Union right should be given up in exchange for it." That workshop control—however advantageous to employers—will be given to Labour on any other terms than as a concession, is improbable. And, as a concession, it will obviously expect to be reciprocated. Now, what is it that Capitalists require, above anything else, of Labour? Think what *you* would wish of Labour if you were in the position of Capital—is it not, O friends, is it not the renunciation of the right to strike? The right to strike is the only weapon left in Labour's hands; it is Labour's last pebble against Goliath Capital; and Capital is aware of it. Is it not, then, probable that, in return for the concession, so much advertised, of a share in workshop control, Capital will require of Labour the dropping of its pebble? "V. H. R." concludes that "for Labour to renounce its right to strike for anything less than the abolition of the wage-system is to deliver itself bound hand and foot to Capital." We agreed.

NATIONAL GUILDSMEN.

AFTER ANDRE FERDINAND HEROLD.

Belovéd, all the dust has turned to flower,
The frolic Centaurs like spurred cavalry
Charge on; the ships sail sunward, quit the quay
Where winter through they shrank from the sea's power.
Now are the temple columns made a tower
Of trailing roses and convolvuli,
And Dryads from each happy forest tree
Hold smooth white hands out in the glad green bower.

Come! for the ways with flowers are a-flame.
The lily's white, the poppy's hue of shame,
Or the blue violet wilt thou cull for pledge?
Now hill and vale in joyousness conspire.
Come! wander on the wide green meadow's edge
That Eros fondles with a breath like fire.

Now with the black grape's blood the barrels flow,
And happy songs rise to the welkin's height
From vine-dressers whose gladness seems a slight
To forest boughs made voluble with woe.
Sere leaves and unconsoléd murmur "Lo!
Autumn on branch and tree-bole like a blight,
While men, in our dire misery's despite,
About their toil with heartless singing go.

You laugh, poor simple churls, that have no mind
For winter stark swift-striding down the wind,
The slayer of the leaves. Poor fools that sing,
And hail Death's coming!" But still loud and clear
Sound the glad carols of the vintaging
Above the drowsy avenues and drear.

WILFRID THORLEY.

PILGRIMS.

We may not rest,
But ever journey on our constant quest.
Our parching lips
Cry at each lash of hunger-weighted whips,
Yet still we press,
Halting and stumbling, to our blessedness.

What though beside
Green fields invite and restful rivers glide,
We take no care
For ease and rest which all men may not share,
And no delight
Shall lure us from the path, for soon comes night.

Hope is the goad
Which pricks us forward on the dusty road.
Our opened eyes
See lights and landmarks hidden from the wise,
And no delay
Can take our hope of commonweal away.

Or soon or late,
We know that all shall enter at the gate,
Then no man's pain
Or nakedness shall be his neighbour's gain.
"For one, for all,"
Be this our marching song, our rally call.

MARCUS TYDEMAN.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

"IRELAND'S LITERARY RENAISSANCE."

Sir,—It now remains for "R. H. C." to brand "Ireland's Literary Renaissance" as a Sinn Fein document, since the writer's objection to the annexation of Anglo-Irish literature is "politically-minded." "He is thinking of England," says "R. H. C.," with a bland determination to ignore the possibilities of an Irishman's thinking only of Ireland. Whenever we dare to take any interest in our country as such, these unpleasant suggestions of unavowed alliances are attributed to us. The "Pall Mall Gazette" has already denounced "Ireland's Literary Renaissance" as a treasonable manifesto, and, although "R. H. C." has not conjured up the spectre of a positive alliance against England, he hints that the "curse of politics" is blighting the pages of literary history.

As an Englishman he is undoubtedly in a position magnanimously to welcome whatever pleases him in the English tongue as an addition to the literature of the Empire. "It is a matter of no concern to me whether a writer in English be Irish or Welsh, or Canadian or American, and, as such, have political, national, or even racial prejudices and prepossessions." Curiously, it matters a great deal to us, for we cannot identify ourselves with Canada or America, whose language and literary traditions are English, whereas ours are Irish. Were Ireland just a settlement of English colonists, "R. H. C." would be justified in ignoring our "racial prejudices and prepossessions"; but, it so happens, he is trying to ignore a national culture which, in spite of difficulties, has persisted and has left its imprint upon us.

"Whether by accident, force, or by our own consent, we share a common language—namely, English—the standards, qualities, and potentialities of which we ought in common to appreciate, respect, and develop." It ought not to be necessary to remind "R. H. C." that the process by which a people comes by a language is of vastly more importance than this quotation would imply. In the case of Ireland, the acquisition of English has been a very different process from that which has resulted in the great English-speaking countries elsewhere. The consciousness of this fact is precisely the impulse from which the literature of the Irish Renaissance has sprung. Prior to that, Irishmen were writing as English colonists write, conscious of themselves only as part of England's literary evolution. As the word Renaissance indicates, we are now discussing the rebirth of a tradition in letters which had lain dormant since the decline of Gaelic literature. The spirit of the race has crystallised once more, not in mere "notes" and vague intimations of national identity, but as the literature of a bilingual people, fundamentally un-English.

Wales, having escaped with her linguistic and literary heritage intact, has not had the same need of moulding the English language to her own use. But, had Welsh been driven out of literature as Gaelic was, there would doubtless have been a literary revival in Wales as in Ireland. Canada and America, knowing only one instrument and tradition of culture, English, do not present any analogy with countries more fortunate in the possession of a native literature and a civilisation independent of England. It is probable that, when American civilisation is as old as Celtic, it will express itself characteristically in all the arts. The perceptible, if gradual, elimination of the English influence justifies the supposition that the American nation, when it exists, will be other than a "localised" English community. Then, no boubt, historians will regard Whitman, "Mark Twain," and Theodore Dreiser as writers of the transition, in whom the first faint suggestion of literary independence was noticeable.

"R. H. C." misrepresents the Anglo-Irish writers, when he identifies them with those who think "it is derogatory to them and to Irish nationalists to wish to write in perfect English." Experience will prove that all but the minority, who are silent because they cannot write Irish, are satisfied with English as a substitute for the language of which they have been deprived. "A. E.," Yeats, John Eglinton, O'Grady, Synge, and the rest are filled with no political dislike of English, whose "standards, qualities, and potentialities" they keenly appreciate. The more logical, if hopeless, idealists, taking their cue from the imperialists of literary England, profess the greatest contempt for the Irishman who claims to be Irish in English. This domestic controversy is of little importance here, except as indicating how extremes meet. Such Gaelic-speaking Britishers as have excited the wonder of Mr. Bechhofer prove by their Oxford accent that, whereas Irishmen may be bilingual, few Englishmen can be. And that is the claim of almost every *educated* native Irish speaker.

Ireland is doubtless flattered by the remembrance of her contributions to England's literary history, just as some of us take pride—as does Mr. Bernard Shaw—in the fact that Wellington was an Irishman. France also congratulates herself on Lafayette's rôle in the story of America, but she will probably be more satisfied with her Napoleons and Joffres. National pride, like charity, begins at home, and Ireland will give Yeats and Synge

precedence over Swift, in considering the literary history of Ireland, as distinct from the English-speaking world. We regret, not our share in English literature, but the cost at which we came to make the contribution. The Jews would probably agree that the domination of Western civilisation by Hebrew philosophy has been an expensive achievement for their race. They would be content with a more parochial victory. "R. H. C." would ask them to rejoice in England's possession of the Revised Version.

Since "R. H. C." insists that Ireland should take back Swift to her bosom, it would be ungracious to refuse. She is not so hard-hearted a mother as to deny a son because of his English accent, though she has a liking for those who speak with the familiar and family brogue. So many of our "shoneens" have sent their children to English schools to acquire fashionable pronunciation that one is naturally suspicious. But, when all is said and done, we recognise with "R. H. C." that there were Irishmen writing English who could not disguise the fact of their nationality. Indeed, his "play-boy" theory describes the situation cleverly, though not so accurately as an Irishman would like.

There is a "play-boy" in most Irish writers, but there is more, and it is their unfortunate insistence upon the former element which makes us distrust English criticism. The "play-boy" is probably the most obviously Irish quality in the earlier Anglo-Irish writers, and so little did this represent us that we repudiated them as soon as we could produce a literature which expressed us more profoundly and more generally. There is little of the "play-boy" in Synge, for all his marvellous genius in seizing the essentials of the phenomenon. Wilde and Shaw, on the other hand, are true to the old type; they exaggerate the quality in Irish writing which has so long done service with English critics. The Renaissance has given us a group of writers whose part in it is in precise proportion to the degree of their success in keeping the "play-boy" in his place.

As "R. H. C." rightly says, "to know how to treat his 'play-boy' is the first duty of the Irish writer." By cultivating the deepest, and not the most superficial, impulses of national being, the Renaissance writers have displaced the conventions of their predecessors. They have had no encouragement from English criticism in doing so, and, remembering what was developed with the approval of England, they may well disregard the patrons of Lever and Thomas Moore. "An English critic is not to be despised as tutor to the child," concludes "R. H. C." May we not ask why, present company excepted, none has adequately minded his own charges? Meanwhile we prefer to look after the education of our own children.

ERNEST A. BOYD.

* * *

"THE RUSSIAN STAGE."

Sir,—Mr. John Francis Hope is misinformed on my pre-war attitude towards the drama and the theatre. He admits, however, that he has a vague recollection of facts. I know, therefore, he will not mind if I tell him precisely what they are. It is not true that I "denounced everything theatrical that was done in this country." On the contrary, I sought and praised whatever to me appeared to be theatrical, and, as such, in harmony with a tendency which I had met first-hand in Continental cities during my prancings from Paris to Petrograd. I did so because this tendency promised very emphatically to re-exalt an ideal of unity towards which the wise men of the theatre have been moving ever since the theatre began. To visualise it I used the interchangeable terms re-theatralising the drama and re-dramatising the theatre. These terms, I find, are now being used in America wherever people are discussing the advance of the theatre. Anyone can see the sort of unity they imply. It is defined in one of my books in these words, "We want a stage (or more comprehensively, theatre) which lends itself to the simple and single vision, that brings even the most unintelligent spectator into the action of the drama and holds him there, that promotes a direction of effort on the part of all concerned which will unify the results." A similar definition appears elsewhere in the words of an American writer, Professor J. E. Spingarn, who courteously sent me his "Notes on Dramatic Criticism" after reading my book, in which, by the way, the body of the articles generously referred to by Mr. Hope is contained. Professor Spingarn's words are, "The theatre and the drama are not two things, but one only; the actor and the theatre do not merely externalise the drama, or interpret it, or heighten its effect, but *they are the drama.*" It is not difficult to gather that the idea in which we both have an interest is the early Greek one of dramatic and theatrical unity—that is, theatricalism in its truest sense.

By theatrical, then, I understood a unity which belongs peculiarly to the theatre, without which the drama cannot attain its greatest dramatic effect, and which must continue to belong to the theatre till drama ceases to need a stage and a spectator-place to contribute to its total effect. To me the theatre is a habit which drama has been led by false modes of human expression to assume in order to take complete possession of the soul of the spectator. The fact is, drama can best discover itself through intimacy. Knowing this, it turns to the agent nearest to it for the spirit it needs. This agent is unity. Intimacy in unity is the great thing which the wise men of the theatre have ever sought and will continue to seek till drama resumes once more its business of self-revelation under the touch of eternal truth. I fancy this was the business of the earliest "comedians" who celebrated the harvest home with movements and maskings provided by the universal spirit of Harvest.

Anyhow, this question of the pursuit of unity in the theatre brings me to a rather curious error into which Mr. Hope has fallen while under the influence of a book which he is reviewing. The book is Mr. Alexander Bakshy's "The Path of the Modern Russian Stage." Mr. Bakshy's first aim in this book is to reveal the fact that the Russian stage has lately stood in a similar relation to theatrical modes as the women of Paris have stood to Poiret's sumptuous modes. It has undergone certain reasonable and unreasonable unified dressings-up. His further aim is to say something of his own of a "courageous" character. Here is a sample of Mr. Bakshy. He observes it is a common belief that there can be one "ideal theatre." All theatrical reformers have been working towards its realisation. But the outcomes have assumed varied forms. Mr. Bakshy concludes, therefore, that there is no standardised form of "ideal theatre." Whereupon he stands upon a little hill of his own and "courageously" declares that his "contention that theatrical evolution has revealed no unifying principle remains unimpaired." Which, when one comes to think of it, is pretty sorry stuff. But the amazing thing is, Mr. Hope neglects to see how sorry it is. Instead of dismissing it as immature nonsense on the evidence of indisputable historical and contemporary fact, he is content to take sides with Mr. Bakshy, who appears as apologist for the separatists. First he repeats the mistatement that reformers are "advancing in all directions," and then he is kind enough to direct us to the various by-ways which they are taking under the guidance of Mr. Bakshy's book. It is very singular that Mr. Hope should err in this fashion, for of recent years there has been a very large output indeed of reliable books on the history, theory, and practice of the theatre and the drama, which have told us as plainly as they could that the wise men of the theatre are and ever have been actuated by one great motive—namely, the application of a unifying principle to the theatre. From the dawn to the present they have upheld one ideal. Like the men of the church, they are temple-builders who exalt the ideal of intimacy in unity. The intimate theatre is the common ground upon which they advance. Even Mr. Bakshy's book cannot deny it. On the contrary, it is brimful of evidence of a united search for and discovery of this rare and elusive environment. To take but one example. Mr. Bakshy is describing the idea of "the theatre of a single will" and "congregate action" as it occurred to the poets Fyodor Sologub and Viacheslav Ivanov. He says, "The theatre, it was argued, is capable of revealing the inner mysteries of life and of arousing religious sentiment. These, however, can never attain to their highest intensity so long as the audience remains merely a passive observer. The example of the early Greek theatre and the mediæval mystery-plays provides the form in which the audience not merely listens to what is proceeding on the stage, but itself takes an active part in the performance. The

theatre, united into one whole, thus becomes a temple, with the stage as a sacrificial altar, serving as a medium of religious purification." Here in a few words is a description of a common or standard form of ideal theatre— a temple, that is, with a stage for altar, and a general air of confession and conversion—which "theatrical reformers" in the best sense are in the habit of realising. This Mr. Bakshy proceeds to show in a multitude of instances. I will not quote further. I have pointed out that Mr. Hope has got the wrong drift of my idea of theatricalism, and Mr. Bakshy has written a book (a very nicely illustrated one, let it be said), obviously designed flatly to contradict his own views on the theories of the Russian stage. In order not to appear unfair to Mr. Bakshy, I ought to say that the fault is not his altogether, but is partly due to his nationality. He is careful to inform us that he is hampered by what he terms his "pronounced Russian accent," but which I should term his inability to think in English. Let him, however, take heart, for racial thinking is a very common defect. Many persons born in England are utterly incapable of thinking in Irish.

HUNTLY CARTER.

* * *

"WE MODERNS."

Sir,—Mr. Edward Moore is a good sniper, but snipers do not win battles. He is also an amusing sniper—amusing to the looker-on—for he takes the characteristically modern and agnostic delight in setting up Aunt Sallys—Christian Aunt Sallys—and neatly knocking them over, and then regarding their fall with an innocent grin of delight. In the course of his amusing notes in this week's NEW AGE I counted the prone bodies of six Aunt Sallys—that is to say, what I recognise as Mr. Moore's Aunt Sallys. Doubtless he himself regards them as vital Christian doctrines which he has riddled beyond hope of repair. The first Aunt Sally was his idea that Christianity conceives life as an ever-present battle, in which victory is impossible and defeat ever imminent. It does not; it conceives life as an ever-present battle, in which the stalwart and persevering fighter will win his salvation if he avoids evil and does good. The second Aunt Sally is his idea that Original Sin involves the levelling down of humanity to its lowest common factor—the sinful man. It does not; it helps man in his struggle towards perfection—i.e., towards salvation—by reminding him of his limitations. Otherwise he is apt, as moderns do, to attempt to "advance in all directions." The third Aunt Sally is Mr. Moore's idea that Original Sin was invented to blast the great man utterly, in the centre of his being; which means that Original Sin and great men cannot co-exist, which means that no great men have believed in Original Sin! The fourth Aunt Sally is the idea that Christian equality consists of a universal consciousness of the common sinfulness of humanity. This is an ingenious Aunt Sally, for it is dressed up in a half-truth. The other half is the common Christian consciousness that men are equal in being the "sons of God." Mr. Moore tries to discount this half by dressing a fifth Aunt Sally with a deduction he draws from it—namely, that salvation is not common to all men because it is "something conferred as the reward of a belief and a choice." Salvation is not conferred as the reward of a belief, but as the reward of good works. "Faith without good works is dead." An atheist may do good works, but he may also be doing bad works while he thinks he is doing good works, because he has not the clearer vision of what constitutes good and evil that is the privilege of the Christian who is alive to the teaching of his religion. Mr. Moore's sixth and perhaps most amusing Aunt Sally is his idea that Christianity has killed the expectation of wonders in the future—and that when Christianity is a perpetual endeavour to realise the Heavenly City on earth, to create the perfect man!

Mr. Moore would be more amusing if he were not so negative. I have searched in vain for a single positive affirmation throughout his notes. What does he build his table of values on? Where does he think he and his moderns are "progressing"? Perhaps Mr. Moore thinks it a limitation of man's "progress" to define his goal?

E. O'C.

"LONDON PRIDE."

Sir,—Mr. Hope admits to "an anti-feminine bias in criticism"—in other words, he admits to sexual selection in his judgment; and then he wonders that I find unconvincing his conclusion that the woman in the case of "London Pride" is responsible for *all* the faults of the play. I do not deny and I have never denied that he may be right. What I contend is that, right or wrong, Mr. Hope would have come to the same conclusion from which, in fact, he now admits he started—namely, that the woman is to blame. And other women, no doubt, will agree with him.

M. G. S.

Memoranda.

(*From last week's* NEW AGE.)

To be able to examine oneself objectively and one's neighbour subjectively is the only sufficient evidence that reason is ready to take the place of force.

The duty of giving your life for the nation without hope of return has nowhere been preached with more fervour than in circles where the duty of giving your capital and income is not so much as dreamed of.

The future is not bright for private enterprise in farming, subject, as this industry must more and more be, to State considerations.

Unemployment is quite as necessary to capitalism as employment.—"Notes of the Week."

The willingness on the part of Labour to sell itself as a commodity is the essence of wagery.

Wagery to-day is as morally devastating and as socially degrading as was slavery in the first half of last century.—THE NEW AGE.

The modern police system is such that a man can be decoyed into cases for prosecution at the will of those who govern.

There never was a time in European history when the mass of people thought so little for themselves, and depended so much for the forms of society upon the conclusions and vocabulary of a restricted leisured body.—H. BELLOC.

There have been many great artists who cherished false ideas regarding the essence of art.

The works of men differ infinitely more in value than men themselves.—RAMIRO DE MAEZTU.

Labour is a social status which can only be "improved" by its disappearance.

If Labour directs its action with a view to securing that, whatever be the industrial arrangements after the War, they shall *not* be such as to involve anything of the nature of a property right in the labour of employees, shall not involve, in respect to "agreements," the declaration of contracts where there is no proper contract, shall *not* be such that they can only be carried out through a disintegration of family life, it will have done as much as it could towards its own emancipation, and at the same time "deserved well of the State."—W. ANDERSON.

No work more quickly becomes old-fashioned than the work of youth.

If we are ever again to have "style" as well as "character" in acting, we shall have to establish a classical as well as a "natural" theatre.—JOHN FRANCIS HOPE.

To know how to treat his "play-boy" is the first duty of the Irish writer.—R. H. C.

In Mr. Chesterton's philosophy the original thing is the Original Sin.

Must not things be *foreseen* before they can be accomplished?

Dogma is religion for the irreligious.

Mr. Chesterton is always saying what a fine future mankind has behind it.—EDWARD MOORE.

The absence of the Prussian menace may enable us to reduce the Estimates by, say, a hundred pounds.—A. E. R.

PRESS CUTTINGS.

SLEEPING AT THEIR POSTS.—At the Hull Munitions Court three local electrical workers were charged with being asleep when they should have been at work. They were engaged on a 24-hour shift on a ship. It was stated that owing to the fact that their particular department did not work diligently, the ship was delayed for three days. The Electrical Union desired a heavy penalty to be imposed for this slacking. Two of the men were fined £2, and the third, aged 17, who said that this was the first time he had done a 24-hours' shift, was fined £1.—"Electrical Review."

I trust that Mr. Bonar Law, who will soon have to think about his budget, will make his compulsory contributions as big as he can. We have paid about 500 millions in taxation during the past year, and if there is still enough ready money in the country to produce a loan of that amount or more—everybody expects that it will be very much more—the inference is that we could have paid a thousand millions without difficulty if the taxes had been levied in the right way. It is the business of a Chancellor of the Exchequer to find out where the money is made and who gets it, and then annex it by taxation. I do not suppose that this view of the matter will be popular; I am not yearning for more taxation myself, and do not know anybody who is. But I trust that many others besides me will recognise that, after calling for or acquiescing in compulsory levies of our neighbours' flesh and blood, we cannot object to any compulsory levy of our own money without confessing ourselves the most contemptible of hypocrites.—"Truth."

The recruiting sergeant says, "Come along, all you well-paid miners, mechanics, and comfortable clerks! Give up your two or three or five pounds a week and risk your lives and limbs in the bloodiest and most horrible war that ever was fought, and take a shilling a day and such food and clothes as it may be possible to provide in the firing line!" And they tumbled over one another to answer the call.

When the country wants money to finance the greatest fight for the greatest cause that ever was fought for—the cause of honour and decency and freedom and progress—it is put to us like this:—

> If you will be so very kind as to lend to one of the wealthiest debtors in the world, concerning whose power to repay there can be no possible question, in order to enable it to pay and equip the men who are risking their lives for you and suffering untold hardships on your behalf, it will give you such a rate of interest as it has not paid for a long loan for over a century, and it will promise to repay your money, with a bonus of £5 for every £95 that you put in, in 30 years at latest, and perhaps twelve. If you have your stock inscribed your interest will be paid without deduction of income tax, so that if you are not liable to the full rate of the tax, you will not have the trouble of recovering.

It is an extraordinary contrast between the two methods employed of asking men in the first place for their lives and in the second for their money.—MR. HARTLEY WITHERS in the "Daily Chronicle."

In many directions the lessons of the war have been brought home to the United States naval authorities. There has been created a Chief of Naval Operations, and under him a definite scheme has been evolved to ensure preparedness. There has been reorganised in all respects the Secretary's Advisory Council, including all the technical officers and the heads of the various departments, with a legal status and a responsibility to Congress. The Secretary of State also recommends that officers should be promoted for merit, and not by seniority, a proposal which scarcely needs any comment or commendation. Mr. Daniels, however, puts forward a somewhat novel system of nomination for promotion. On the plea that the navy as a whole knows the best officers in the various grades, he suggests that the system of promotion should be based practically upon the vote of the officers senior to the grade under consideration. An officer, he contends, so selected would certainly possess such comparative merit that, from the point of view of naval efficiency, no mistake could possibly be made in nominating him for promotion. The result would be threefold—an ever-present personal stimulus for professional efficiency on the part of every individual officer throughout his career; utilisation of every officer who is physically competent to perform any of the various duties required of naval officers so long as they remain competent to do so; and the promotion of the officers specially adapted for command and flag ranks when they are in the prime of their vitality and ability, and with sufficient years yet ahead to enable them to perfect themselves in the vastly responsible duties that go with those grades.—"Glasgow Evening News."

Certainly every man of moderate means should take the Fours instead of the Fives. I say this because I understand that when Mr. Lloyd George came to terms with the Labour Party he agreed to conscript capital as a set-off against his conscription of labour. He can only do this by increasing the income tax, for I presume he is not going to value the possessions of every individual citizen in the midst of a war. This would be a stupendous task and lead to innumerable squabbles. Therefore, he can only conscript capital by raising the income tax to, say, 10s. in the £. This he is quite likely to do. Indeed, I look upon it as one of the certainties of the War. Having the conscription of capital in view, it was very necessary to debar the rich from subscribing to the 4 per cent. tax free issue.—MR. RAYMOND RADCLIFFE in "The New Witness."

The quickest and the fairest way to release productive capacity for munitions and the essentials of civilian consumption is to restrict people's means to purchase non-essentials. Our tax system bears some relation to capacity to pay; an increase of taxation will not, like inflation of the currency, impose hardships haphazard with a tendency to concentrate them on the weakest shoulders. Taxation presses universally, and compels economy automatically. If the Government will only deprive its subjects of the means to divert the country's economic resources into non-essential channels, our economic organisation is elastic and adaptable enough to apply itself to the country's real needs; there will be no need of officials and committees to attempt the impossible task of deciding in detail what work is "essential" and what not; nor would there be further need for the regimentation of industry and dragooning of workers. At the same time, by checking inflation increased taxation would reduce the money cost of the War and lessen the need for loans; thus the capital charges, which already threaten to hamper social reform for a generation, would be reduced.—"The Athenæum."

Associated with this view is that which is opposed to the segregation of Labour and to "class legislation" and treatment. It is held that the conception of a Ministry of Labour rests upon a false view of society and of the functions of Government. There is no more reason why there should be a Ministry devoted to class interests, such as Labour, than that there should be a ministry of capitalists, or of landlords, or of vegetarians. The State is primarily concerned with the workman as citizen. This criticism is of considerable importance as it goes to the root of the matter and contains the germs of a suggestion as to the lines on which the Ministry should develop.—"The Athenæum."

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One Year	**28s. 0d.**	**30s. 0d.**
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All communications relative to THE NEW AGE *should be addressed to* THE NEW AGE, 38, *Cursitor Street, E.C.*

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