

THE NEW AGE

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

SUPPORT for the proposal to conciliate the German democracy while continuing implacably hostile to the Prussian system is accumulating on all sides. Mr. Balfour and his "successor," Lord Northcliffe, have, it is true, set themselves in a kind of opposition, the one upon academic and the other upon journalistic grounds; but the idea, as the French say, goes. It is too late in the day for Mr. Balfour to affirm that "it is not the practice of any British Government to interfere with foreign nations in the direction of their own destinies." Not only is the war itself an example to the contrary, but if the Allies have not been "interfering" in the constitutional affairs of foreign nations, it is high time for them to begin. The era is out of date when it was a matter of lofty indifference to this or any country what constitution its neighbours adopt; constitutions are now seen to be both aimed and loaded; and when they chance to be aimed at their neighbours it is folly of the latter to pretend that they are not interested until the shot is fired. For another reason altogether Lord Northcliffe's opposition to the democratisation of Germany is to be deprecated. He appears to find a satisfaction in war for the sake of journalism; and with a sound instinct from this point of view, he plumps for the retention of the Prussian militarist caste on the understanding that the present Allies are to remain leagued against it for ever. The prospect of perpetual war which this division of forces opens is, however, revolting to all save the few whose self-importance is fed by times of trouble. The world would prefer peace to war and Lord Northcliffe stimulating the growth of sweet peas to Lord Northcliffe stimulating the weeds of mutual hate.

Journals in this country so unlike one another as the "Nation" and the "Spectator," the "Daily News" and the "Evening Standard," agree, on the other hand, that only in the democratisation of Germany is there any hope for the world's hope of peace. Like ourselves, they do not over-estimate the chances of it, or believe that its attainment is less difficult in its

way than the military defeat of Prussia. It remains, nevertheless, in their opinion not only a proper object of diplomacy but the only object that at present diplomacy should entertain. The heaven, moreover, is beginning, if we are not mistaken, to work in Germany itself. Herr Scheidemann, we all know, returned from Stockholm to Berlin with the conviction that nothing less than the democratisation of Germany is essential to peace; and he has now been followed by Herr Harden, Professor Weber, and a considerable number of German publicists of diverse schools of opinion. That the movement is not without importance is evident from the attempts made by the Prussian Government to put an end to it. Herr Scheidemann, from having been the pet of certain Prussian journals, has now become anathema to them; Herr Harden's "Zukunft" has been completely suppressed; and the "Frankfurter Zeitung," for publishing Professor Weber's bold articles in criticism of the Prussian constitution, has been condemned to the "preventive censorship"—in other words, to the editorship of the Prussian General Staff. All this, it must be admitted, is satisfactory as far as it goes, and encouraging to that part of the world that retains its faith in democracy. For it proves that not only are the seeds of democracy in Germany alive, but that they are sprouting visibly to the Prussian eye. Let us do all we can to foster their growth. Let the Allies in their forthcoming joint re-declaration of policy bear this in mind and direct their policy accordingly. We are by no means without the hope that a declaration on their part that a reformed Germany will instantly find peace will indeed find peace.

In the meanwhile we are all being assailed by programmes of peace-terms drawn up by this or that society, league, convention, or individual. Without for one moment denying the value of such discussions as a means of bringing home to a larger part of the public the importance of foreign affairs, we are of opinion that their exact formulation as terms of settlement is altogether premature. Everything, it is clear, in the actual settlement will turn upon the nature of the party with whom the Allies will treat; and until it is

settled whether this party is to be the Prussian oligarchy or the German nation the terms of settlement must needs remain uncertain. If, on the one hand, diplomacy, here and in Germany, fails to bring about the democratisation of Germany, thus leaving the Allies with a defeated but a continuing Prussia to deal with, the terms of settlement will inevitably be different from the terms that would be offered to a Germany that had, with the aid of the Allies, got rid of Prussia. In the former case, we do not imagine that any efforts upon the part of groups of persons in the Allied countries would succeed in averting what may be called "knock-out" terms of settlement, for the simple reason that "the Prussian menace" would remain in being, and popular opinion everywhere would demand security and guarantees against it. In the latter event, on the other hand, even the terms of settlement laid down, for instance, by the Union of Democratic Control, would, in our opinion, be not more generous to Germany than the terms that an actual peace-conference might safely offer, for the no less simple reason that the world's response to a great moral event like the democratisation of Germany would be an immense liberation of goodwill. Under these circumstances, therefore, we are convinced that the time has not yet come for an exact formulation of the terms of settlement. We can only influence certainly the findings of the peace-conference when we are certain what parties will compose it. And until we know whether Prussia or Germany will be present at the table, our anticipations of the settlement are bound to be guess-work. Once more, therefore, it becomes clear that our first business is to ensure the presence of Germany rather than of Prussia at the council that is to lay anew the foundation of human society.

While it is natural enough for people to demand reprisals for such an air-raid as took place upon London on Saturday last, the scientific nature of the attack itself makes any further talk of mere reprisals ridiculous. It is doubtful whether in our present state of air-equipment we could effectively reprise upon an enemy whose means of attack, both material and tactical, have been demonstrated to be at least equal to our own. And if, on the other hand, we can carry out reprisals effectively, how much more easily could we defend ourselves, and thereby make reprisals unnecessary. The disposition to ask for reprisals is, however, we are glad to believe, less upon this occasion than the disposition to call upon our own Government to defend us better. The charge is no longer only the charge that the Germans are savages who must be paid back in their own coin; but it is beginning to be mixed with, and to give place to, the charge that our own Government authorities are incompetent. But this, we need not say, is a great improvement in public opinion; for it implies, in the first place, a realisation of the folly of mere revenge, and, in the second place, a resolution to discover the means of meeting the air-attacks where they should be met—in the air itself. Against Germany, it is obvious, we have no appeal during time of war save the appeal of superior force or of superior skill. To every other remonstrance, whether of protest, threat or reprisal, it is absolutely certain that she will turn a deaf ear. Our only course, therefore, is to oppose force to force and skill to skill; and since it is our own Government in the last resort through which all our efforts must be directed, and by which they can alone be made effective, our reprisals upon Germany should be an increasing criticism of the War-Cabinet. That there is room for it and to spare not even their partisans can deny.

It is a misfortune that the advice to hold a General Election within the first year of the war was not followed, since it is now apparent that the present House

of Commons is going from bad to worse in the matter of control over the Executive. Consisting, as it does, chiefly of placemen and pensioners of the Government itself, independent criticism is scarcely to be expected of it; and the influence of its dependent criticism is nearly nil. Upon no subject more clearly than upon the conduct of our national finances is the decadence of the present House of Commons to be seen; for with every increase of our daily rate of expenditure the control of the House of Commons over it has visibly declined. That successive leaps in the cost of the war from two to four, from four to six, and now from six to eight millions a day were, perhaps, unavoidable, we may admit; but that with every rise in these alarming figures the House of Commons should progressively weaken in its control over them is really a national peril. And there was nothing surprising in the fact that at last a few members of Parliament have recognised it. The debate, however, that took place last week leaves matters pretty well where they were. The Select Committee will, no doubt, be duly appointed and will duly report; but its appointment being in the hands of the Government which is the defendant in the case, will in all probability report in favour of a complete acquittal. In other words, the present investigation as a means of Parliamentary control is a sham. It is intended to save the face of the House of Commons, while, at the same time, saving the Government's bacon.

* * *

The final defeat of Proportional Representation last week has been represented by its advocates as the defeat of an honest attempt to reform our parliamentary system. We do not deny that the attempt was honest, we deny merely that it was well-inspired or calculated to effect its purpose. Proportional Representation proceeds, in our view, not only upon a false assumption, but upon an assumption that is actually responsible for most of the evils Proportional Representation sets out to cure. In other words, Proportional Representation would aggravate the disease by intensifying its existing causes. The false assumption upon which it rests is that the proper aim of the House of Commons is to become the replica and reproduction in miniature of the nation; and in so exact a manner that it should reproduce proportionately in its own constitution the actual groupings of opinions in the nation at large. Apart, however, from the fact that in the present constitution of the House of Commons the process of such reproduction is already seen at work in the formation of compact groups of special interests (railway, engineering, finance, labour, etc.), the only outcome under present circumstances of the application of Proportional Representation would be to multiply these groups by the addition to their numbers of interests not as yet consolidated sufficiently in any constituency to return a representative. And if it is replied that it is the representation of opinion rather than of interests that Proportional Representation seeks, our rejoinder is that interests are more likely to combine than opinions. Even, however, if the claim were allowed that interests and not interests would be represented in a Parliament elected by this means, the result would be very little different. In place of a Parliament consisting of groups of conflicting because competing interests, we should have a Parliament consisting of conflicting and mutually destructive opinions; with, again, the same general consequence, that these conflicting elements would be of themselves unable to do anything more than acquiesce in a virtual dictatorship exercised by an executive Cabinet. The wonder is, indeed, that anybody should imagine that an assembly nicely balanced in opinions should be able to come to any decision at all. The more reproductive, in fact, a national assembly became of the actual groupings of opinion in the nation itself, the more infallibly it would tend to

resign executive power to the official Executive. Only when an assembly is *not* reproductive but representative has it either the power or the will to exercise real control over the Government.

* * *

The distinction between reproduction and representation is well worth dwelling upon for a moment. It links up with contemporary problems of such apparently different contents as the relation of Realism to Romanticism, on the one side, and the relation of the Imitative to the Original, upon the other. We have often urged in these columns, however, that the intellectual phenomena of any given age are congruous, that, in short, the problems under discussion at any period are fundamentally the same. And, hence, it should be no matter for surprise that the important discussion recently brought to a conclusion by the defeat of Proportional Representation should be active in other areas of contemporary thought, notably in art and in philosophy. But what is the subject-matter of these contemporary problems; what is their common root? It will be found to be, we think, precisely this distinction we have been making between what reproduces or imitates or presents realistically, and what represents or stands for or conveys by suggestion; between, in short, the thing itself or an organ or symbol of the thing. In art and philosophy, we may say, the discussion is still continuing with, however, a tendency towards the better conclusion; but in political science, which, in this case, has found its voice first, the discussion is over, and the reproductive theory has been definitely defeated. But how much yet of the meaning of the decision has been realised even by those who made it? To how many of the members of Parliament who voted against Proportional Representation last week is it clear that not only have they voted against the extension of the principle of reproduction, but implicitly for the removal from the House of Commons of its present imitative non-representative features? To defeat Proportional Representation (a self-contradictory title, by the way) is to put a stop to the further degradation of the House of Commons; but in itself it does nothing to raise the status and character of the existing House. What is needed to effect this is a *purgation of the House of all those members who owe their seats to special interests or special opinions*. The criterion of fitness to sit in Parliament is the exact reproduction of nobody's opinion or interest, but the representation in a well-proportioned mind of everybody's opinion and everybody's interest. The real representative is the representative of the nation; and we cannot have too many of them.

* * *

By what means we should seek to make the House of Commons more representative of the nation (as we desire no less than the Proportional Representationists) is a practical problem the solution of which will only become possible when the nature of representation as distinguished from reproduction is realised. The solution, however, must include, if not the abolition of the party system, the removal of the special conditions under which our particular party system is maintained. That a division of representatives among themselves upon matters of national policy into which neither private interest nor private opinion enters is possible and probable we do not deny; and in this sense the party system is a natural necessity. But the admission of this philosophical justification of party and approval of the caricature of party contained in our present party system are very different matters. We can love the one as much as we hate the other. A philosophical division of parties needs no secrecy to maintain itself, no concealment of its differences, and, above all, no bribed support. When these, in fact, are present we may be sure that we have a simu-

lation of differences rather than a reality; and a corrupt caricature, therefore, of party rather than the fact of party. It is to these props and supports of a false party system that attention should be directed by reformers, in the certainty that no damage but only good can come from their destruction to the party system in its purity. The publication of the accounts of the party funds, the specification of the reasons for public honours and titles, the publicity of official party meetings, periodical declarations of party policy, with reasons for the same—these are the means by which the House of Commons may in course of time be purged of its non-representative elements. And there is, we believe, no shorter cut.

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The powerful group of shipowners who brought "pressure" to bear upon the Government to compel it to rescind Clause 19 of the Finance Act found in Mr. Bonar Law an unexpected resistance. What Mr. Bonar Law lacks in subtlety he makes up for in frankness and honesty; and upon this occasion, and not for the first time, his plain talk put down the whole elaborate case set up by a special interest. Not only, he told the shipowners, had they to his personal knowledge misrepresented their dividends and profits; and not only would he decline to allow them to pay with their last year's taxes the taxes of this year; but he candidly assured them that in permitting them to make war-profits during the earlier years of the war the Government had been wrong. It cannot have been a pleasant experience for Mr. Runciman, if he was in the House, to listen to this confirmation by Mr. Bonar Law of the worst we said of him while he was piling privileges upon shipowners. That the shipping industry should have been brought under national control along with the railways in the first week of the war; and that the Government, in the person of Mr. Runciman, was "wrong" in exempting the industry from national service—are now admitted facts. And the reflection upon the impartiality of Mr. Runciman himself is now substantiated. The plea of the shipowners, of course, is plausible. It is that they should be allowed to make profits in order to accumulate capital for the competitive rehabilitation after the war of the mercantile marine which is, admittedly, "the foundation-stone of national policy." It is a plea, nevertheless, that will not bear inspection. In the first place it is doubtful, as Mr. Bonar Law observed, whether, in fact, the profits so obtained would ever find their way back into the shipping industry; the bulk of them are divided among the shareholders and no doubt spent annually. In the second place, even if the whole of them were set aside to form fresh capital, the justice of taxing the general public for the purpose of capitalising the private shipowners is not very obvious. In the third place, by so much as the shipowners prove their case that the mercantile marine is a key industry of supreme national importance, they prove the nation's need to bring it under national control. Finally, it is absurd to maintain that the necessary capital for the rehabilitation of the industry can only be procured by the private shipowners themselves by taxing the consumer. If capital is needed and a tax for the purpose is essential, the taxing authority is the Government. We do not see, in short, why the nation should not acquire the mercantile marine and delegate its management only to the shipping experts.

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The expenditure by the State of a considerable sum of money on the rebuilding of Silvertown after the recent explosion is apparently for the duration of the war and for no longer. For the rebuilding is to be carried out on the original site without the least attempt to improve its insanitary condition. The excuse offered by that well-known patriot, Sir Alfred

Mond, who is in charge of the expenditure, is that the rebuilding must be begun at once. The war will not wait for even elementary decency. Unfortunately the excuse is own brother to the pleas urged for similar neglect before the war, and will no doubt do good service after the war as well. There is never the time and there is never the right occasion for the building of sanitary houses for the working classes. Before the war the expense and the temporary difficulties of trans-housing the slum population were too great to be worth encountering. During the war it is time and labour that are wanting. And after the war it will be the cost and trouble again. The ironical part about the Silvertown comedy (for why should we call a tragedy anything in which Sir Alfred Mond can possibly be engaged as a principal?) is that the inauguration of a State slum occurred during what is known in the Press and on the Cinema as Baby Week—a week, that is to say, given over to the cult of the healthy child. What possible encouragement to health the deliberate construction of insanitary dwellings can be we can only ask Sir Alfred Mond to tell us.

* * *

Lord Selborne's explicit admission in the form of an explanation that under the Empire Resources Trading Committee certain Crown Colonies and other native areas within the Empire are to be State-exploited for the purpose of paying off our war-debt will be read abroad with the usual comments on English hypocrisy. It is hard, moreover, to deny that upon this occasion they will be deserved. No doubt, on the face of it, the exploitation for profit of the labour and resources of native territories is safer, as Lord Selborne contends, in the hands of the State than in the hands of private adventurers. But the right of the State to regard the native territories within its jurisdiction as property is no better founded than the right of any private individual or corporation. Our sole justification for being in "possession" of these native lands is our power to benefit them; and when by a sinister transition this power is diverted to the object of benefiting ourselves, our occupation becomes definitely immoral. The shifts to which the wealthy classes in all countries will resort, however, rather than pay off the war-debt out of their own pockets will be instructive to watch. Expecting everywhere to be frustrated in their attempts to transfer the burden to the proletariat at home, capitalist Government will look about over the world for territories defenceless enough to offer no resistance to exploitation. And upon these they will cast "the white man's burden."

* * *

Referring to the Whitley Report, on which we commented last week, the "Times," in a special leader, wrote as follows: "To the theoretical reformers whose aim is to abolish employers altogether, nothing is so odious as harmony between employers and employed. They will ridicule these proposals and denounce them as a trap, and do everything possible to set trade unionists against them. If the councils are established, these irreconcilables will not cease to undermine and counteract their influence. They will poison the atmosphere and upset any decision reached if they can. There must therefore be some more binding force for the observance of agreements on both sides than at present exists." We recognise the description, we believe, as the "Times" no doubt intended us to; but the psychology is incorrect and the conclusion is unsupported in the text. It is neither the case that for us any real harmony between employers and employed is "odious" or that we shall be instrumental in creating difficulties in the administration of the Councils when once they come into being. On the other hand, it is our case that real harmony between employers and employed is as impossible as real harmony ever was between Prussia and democracy; and,

again, that in the very constitution of the Councils there are the seeds of tremendous industrial troubles. Were we and those who agree with us to cease writing on the subject and to give the Councils free scope for a score of years, their errors of construction would still become patent, for in truth they are not theoretical at all, but they are practical. We are only saying to-day, in fact, what the "Times" itself will be saying after experience of them. The conclusion to which the "Times" comes that, because of our opposition, the Councils must be fortified with more rigid bonds than at present exist is a conclusion that would have been reached without a word from us. More rigid bonds—to be precise, the liability of Trade Union funds to confiscation—are a plain necessity in agreements which one understands beforehand to be unjust. The more certain you are that what you are about to do is unjust, the more security you will require against the reaction of your victim. No bond can be too strong to bind the Trade Unionists who are entering into the trap prepared for them.

* * *

At the Canterbury Convocation the Bishop of Southwark, an old teacher himself, supported the recent educational proposals of Mr. Fisher on the ground that they would raise the status of the teaching profession. "Their real inwardness and kernel was," he said, "the raising of the sense of dignity and vocation in teachers"; and this was important because "everything hinged upon the status of teachers." This would be excellent if it were the case that Mr. Fisher's proposals have an inwardness and a kernel approximating to the Bishop of Southwark's notion of them. But where, in all the evidence at anybody's disposal, is there a sign in Mr. Fisher's proposals that they are designed to achieve this object? That he proposes (with the kind but doubtful permission of the local rating authorities) to improve the salaries of assistant teachers is to his credit; and we welcome his intention. But that the raising of salaries will improve the status of teachers we deny. If income alone were the measure of status, then the taxi-drivers would rank above the teaching profession even when the latter had received the kernel of Mr. Fisher's proposals; for we do not imagine that the average income of teachers, when the best has been done, will be more than half the income of the average taxi-driver. The assumption of the correlation of status and income is, however, false. Salary brings self-satisfaction, but only responsibility brings status, which is the satisfaction of society. The key, therefore, to the status of teachers, present and future, is the amount of responsibility they assume and are known to assume. If this is small—as it is at this moment—their status is servile, be their salary what it may. If, on the other hand, it grows, as it may by their assumption of the control of education, their status will rise with it. But there is nothing of all this that we can discover in Mr. Fisher's proposals.

MERRY LONDON.

Ay me, thy merriment is overcast
Since Spenser named thee in his bridal song;
Thy Thames now creepeth sulkily along
Too full with refuse e'er to know the past
When gracious nature, whose caresses vast
Had clothed his banks in other ways than long
Hath commerce dealt him unrecovered wrong,
Still loved to spread her magical repast.

The children of the poor are all thy mirth;
The fiends that do possess thee can not break
One squalid slumpling's beauteous display
Of crystal. Till liberty's re-birth
Rebuild thine honour, 'midst thy smoky wrack
Thou shalt lose also these in sad affray.

J. A. M. A.

An Apologia.

I.

FOR some months now, I have been variously criticised, even verbally executed, by the anything but peaceful group of pacifists that gathers about M. Romain Rolland, and that, with or without his consent, enjoys the advantages of his immortal prestige. And this attack upon my written words and their seeming inconsistencies is so extended as to include the whole American nation, and especially President Wilson. I naturally count myself miserably unworthy of the honour these critics thus bestow upon me, for I am, indeed, one of the least representative of Americans, and among the least of our great President's supporters. Despite my inadequacy, however, I feel that a measure of responsibility is now laid upon me for reporting America aright, and for defending myself as an American anti-militarist.

Particularly am I called to account for having supported, by a written manifesto, a year and a half ago, an anti-militarist league in America. The critics most triumphantly contrast certain words I then wrote with words that are more recent.

But I have not changed my mind about what I then said. I am as anti-militarist now as I was then. And this nowise contradicts, as I shall undertake to show, my position as pro-Ally and as a profound enthusiast in regard to America's entrance upon the war. I was then writing against a pernicious propaganda to make America a military nation after the fashion of Germany. The propaganda had begun long before the present world-war, and had no logical relation to it; nor was there then any prospect that America would join the Allies in the defence of the world against the German. It had been part of the programme of Mr. Roosevelt, supported by certain capitalist over-lords, to force America into a career of Imperialistic expansion. Mexico and China were the chief objectives of this programme, carrying with it also the domination of North and South America. I was absolutely opposed to the transforming of America into a military empire. I did not wish to see America become a second Rome. That she would become such was the prophecy of Guglielmo Ferrero, the historian, and it was also the resolute purpose of Mr. Roosevelt. And, both first and finally, it was the basis of an American capitalist programme for the financial control of the world.

Nor was it my humble opposition which was to be reckoned with; that would have been a small and futile matter. President Woodrow Wilson—who is to-day the world's greatest pacifist—was steadfastly opposed to this militarist programme from the first, as he is steadfastly opposed to it now. The leading educators of America were, and still are, opposed to it—even while fervently supporting the participation of America in the war between Germanism and humanity.

II.

There has been no conversion whatever in my position as regards the war, I have been always, as now, at once both pro-Ally and pacifist. It is precisely because I am a pacifist that I am profoundly pro-Ally. I have never deviated from this position. I did not become pro-Ally on coming to French-Switzerland, as the critics declare. Five years before the war, I wrote a long review article, published in England and America, and afterwards translated into French and German, urging the German peril upon the attention of civilised nations. I declared then, eight years ago, that Prussian Germany did not belong to the category of civilised nations, but stood for a materialist and military barbarism that would overwhelm Europe, and afterwards America, if the nations did not then unite and compel Germany's disarmament. Surely—and

alas!—has Germany fulfilled my prophecy. Fourteen months before the war, I again wrote at length and vehemently upon the subject, pointing out the world catastrophe that was near unless the civilised nations should at once unite to prevent German action; I outlined the Berlin-to-Bagdad-programme as the pivot of the war. This appeal was widely published in England and America, read by perhaps millions of people, and dismissed as fantastic. In fourteen months the catastrophe came upon the world, almost according to the schedule I had outlined. Immediately on the outbreak of the war, I wrote a brochure condemning the action of the German social-democrats, and calling upon all other socialists to rally to the support of the Allies, in view of the fact that they were fighting, consciously or unconsciously, for the world-democracy which affords the only sphere wherein international social reconstruction can take place. Let me quote from what I then said:—

The German apologists claim that they are fighting a defensive war against Russia. They are deceiving neither themselves nor their comrades in other nations by the shameful subterfuge. No nation is justified in beginning an aggressive war against another upon the ground that the nation so attacked will become the aggressor if it is not forcibly suppressed. Besides, in the case of Germany and Russia, the explanation is untrue. It was Germany, not Russia, that declared the war. The German Socialists perfectly well know that Russia never intended to make war upon Germany. They know, on the contrary, that Germany has long meant to make war upon Russia. She has indulged in yearly threats against her Slav neighbour, striving to drive her into war by a process of diplomatic bullying. The extraordinary war tax raised by the Kaiser and his Chancellor, a few months ago, was justified by the Chancellor, when speaking before the Reichstag, on the ground that Germany must soon engage in a life-and-death struggle with the Slav. It is Germany, and Germany alone, that has been the aggressor. She has steadfastly planned to eliminate Russia from the Balkans, to establish herself at Constantinople and Salonika, and then go on to the Persian Gulf. All this the German Socialists know. And they also know they are making Russia a mere excuse for their own apostasy. And what I say is not to excuse Czarism and the Russian tyranny: it is to accuse Kaiserism and the much more menacing march of the Prussian idea.

History never afforded to a large body of men so great an opportunity as that which the German social democracy has just thrown away. The responsibility for the catastrophe that has come upon the world rests with the German Socialist leaders as well as with the Kaiser and the Prussian military caste. They have known that Germany was preparing to dominate the world; they have known the pressure and the poison of the Prussian idea; and they could have prepared against this evil day. German Socialists could have prevented the war, if they had had the will to act. Their failure is not due to their lack of power, but to a lack of that moral force which is essential to the accomplishment of any great purpose or revolution. The failure is due to their taking counsel of their fears; to their following expediency rather than principle. They could have stopped every wheel in Germany, if they had been willing to pay the price. They could have made it impossible for the Government to amass its armies along the French or the Russian frontiers. Some of the leaders would have been shot; some would have been imprisoned; but the Kaiser could scarcely have slain or imprisoned five millions of his subjects. And those who so died would have died fruitfully, and would have glorified Socialism in the eyes of mankind.

Or, if the German party had not courage to act, it could at least have refrained from voting the supplies for war; it could at least have condemned the action of the Government. Instead of this, it has failed both positively and negatively. It has bewildered and paralysed the international movement. It has done its best to make the Socialist body a despicable thing in the eyes of men. And if the action of German Socialists is a revelation of the moral quality of the Socialist

movement, then the world would be right in despising the whole of us for ever.

I am on record, *messieurs les pacifistes*, for the past ten years, in my opposition to Germanism as a military autocracy; to Germanism as a world-politic; to Germanism as a religion. I have spoken and written so much upon the issue between Germanism and humanity, between Germanism and the essential religion of Christ, that, so far as I am known or read at all, I have well-nigh become an international nuisance upon the subject.

III.

Now as to the question of America's entrance upon the war. This is not at all the triumph of militarism: it is exactly the contrary. The entire American nation has mobilised itself, with its immeasurable resources, to bring militarism to its full and final end. And there is no contradiction between America's opposition to militarism and her nearly rapturous determination to assist in exterminating Prussianism and the autocratic principle. The American resolution to help clean up the world, and to make it the dwelling-place of democratic peoples and societies, is the perfect sequence of American anti-militarism.

So far from their being any contradiction or inconsistency in the present American situation, it is one of the highest consistency and unity. It is true that capitalists had planned the conversion of America into a military nation; but these capitalists have not accomplished their purpose by the present action of America. On the contrary, they know that America has taken the course that will probably defeat and make an end of them for ever. It is for this reason that some of the greatest capitalists of America did all in their power to bring about a premature peace with Germany, and to prevent America's entrance upon the war on the side of the Allies. It is for this reason, also, that some of them are even now supporting the pseudo-pacifism that is everywhere working for Germany, seeking to compose a peace that shall leave her as relatively powerful as she was before the war. In this the professional pacifists are working for precisely the same end that the international financiers and Kaiser Wilhelm are working.

IV.

Nor is there any inconsistency between the doubt and hesitation which some of us had about America's entrance upon the war, one or two years ago, and our enthusiasm for America's participation at the present time. When the European war began, the population of America was, as I have previously shown in *THE NEW AGE*, largely pro-German in its sympathies. A great deal of American finance was under German control. A powerful public Press was advocating an alliance with Germany against England. In even the mildest action against Germany, the President could not then have had the common and hearty support of the people. The only support he would have had would have been from intellectual leaders of the Atlantic Coast—leaders without large influence on the nation as a whole. But with a leadership unequalled in history, with a wisdom and patience that seem almost omniscient, President Wilson guided the nation into an understanding of the meaning of the war.

Thus America travelled the road to Damascus and saw a great light. She now enters upon the war with a purpose and in a spirit that perhaps never hitherto inspired a warring nation. It is, indeed, a holy war, so far as America is concerned. From the Atlantic to the Pacific, the nation is literally transfigured with the purpose "to make the world safe for democracy"—to create, in fact, a world-State embracing all nations in a League of Peace.

No, America has not become a militarist nation: she has rather become practically and exultantly anti-militarist. America has armed herself for what is

essentially a pacifist crusade. She has taken up arms to destroy the need of arms. She has made herself the determined and militant exponent of the millennium.

Nor is it the munitions-makers and the capitalists who would have America act as she is now acting. They would stop the action to-morrow if they could. They would block the wheels of the American chariot in a moment if they dared. For the crusade of America for a world-democracy is nothing else than a sounding of the doom of militarism, and, perhaps, the doom of the whole capitalist system of production and distribution as well. There need be no fear that America will turn back. Her sword will never return to its scabbard until its purpose is accomplished. And this purpose includes a world-revolution and a world-State. The old world of government by ruling classes, by diplomatic jugglery and financial conspiracy, has come to an end.

V.

I hope I have made it clear that I am for the Allies because I am a pacifist. I am not only for war, I am for "the fight to the finish." I am against those who cry peace when there is no peace. I am against Prussian Germany, because it is this Prussian Germany alone that has prevented the world from travelling the path that leads to peace. Before the war, the world was under a conviction of sin regarding war, and was seeking a way to disarm: Germany barred every way that was proposed. And the nations cannot disarm as long as Germany stands armed, shaking her sword in the face of the world. Prussia is the very foundation of universal militarism of the past generation. There can be no peace until that Prussianism is destroyed, root and branch, beyond any possibility of recovery. Until then, there is not a nation or a tribe that can settle down to social reconstruction and a chosen progress. And the true pacifist is the one who now allies himself with the men and the nations that would lay the axe at the Prussian root of the world's present overwhelming military evil.

VI.

But I would not leave with the reader the impression that I am for the crushing of Germany; or for war a single moment beyond the time of Germany's repentance and sincere request to enter a fellowship of nations on equal terms. Of course, if such repentance and request should come, Germany would prove her sincerity by denouncing her own course and conduct, both before and during the war, and by making, of her own initiative and volition, the uttermost possible restitution and reparation for the immeasurable ravages and wrongs she has committed. She cannot bring back the dead, nor restore the desolate or vanished homes. She cannot evoke armies of eager workers and lovers, of fathers and brothers, from the miles and millions of graves which are the seal she has set upon the earth. But she can make even these, by her own revolution and re-birth, fruitful with new life for the world.

Can there be revolution in Germany? Can a democratic mind, can democratic institutions, spring from a nation whose philosophers and mystics, even the best and the greatest of them, have so long been obsessed and demented with the idea of a super-State, a State above all morality or mortal responsibility, yet demanding the most detailed and servile responsibility from each of its citizens? Can any good political thing, can any manifestation of international brotherhood, come from a past so insolently and ignorantly egoistic, so insanely and brutishly insensible to other peoples?

It is possible. It is the thing above all others to be hoped for, to be prayed for, to work for, to die for if need be. A German revolution that is real can change the face of the world as nothing else can—can be more creative than the Russian revolution, or than America's great democratic purpose.

Let Germany arise from her past, and not another inch of earth need be stained with a soldier's blood. Let Germany speak the word, and the swords of the nations may not only now be sheathed, but sheathed for ever. It is possible for Germany to speak this apocalyptic word. It is possible that there are among the German tribes men sufficiently sane to sound the trumpet that will wake these tribes, one and all, from the long and horrible hypnosis which none other than some sort of Satan could have laid upon them. It is possible for Germany to arise from her deep spiritual night, from the universal orgy of murder she has therein precipitated, and then to join the world in a festival of both social and international peace—an actual brotherhood of man.

Nor are the Allies without responsibility here. They say, and say sincerely, I believe, they have no intention of crushing Germany. But are there no statesmen in England or France to step forth and plainly address the German nation? If the statesmen of the Allied Powers would clearly declare to the German race its opportunity, if they would explain to the German nation their whole purpose, and appeal to the nation to disencumber itself of its Hohenzollerns and its Prussian doctrines; if there were authoritative minds among the Allies great enough to make this appeal, it is possible the German peoples would believe and respond.

GEORGE D. HERRON.

The "Times" as Hare and Hound.

By W. Durran.

RUNNING with the hare and hunting with the hounds is proverbially difficult. It is the life-history of the "Times." This policy is a necessary part of its traditions and an inevitable corollary from its name. The performance, owing to its exceptional demands on the skill of the artists in trimming, is always interesting, and not infrequently entertaining during the piping times of peace. But at the present juncture, when a definite attitude on grave questions is imperatively demanded of a leading journal, it presents this novel and disquieting feature: two irreconcilable views are presented with refreshing impartiality, and the reader is left to choose between them. There is no longer a volte-face without explanation: nor is there a series of adjustments preparatory to a changed position. Both courses have been exhibited in the history of the "Times": neither is inconsistent with leading, whereas the innovation, just indicated, is its negation. This aloofness resembles that of the purveyor of drugs who says, in effect, "bane and antidote are both before you"; but he takes care to label the deleterious product "Poison." The "Times," on the other hand, sounds no note of warning, expresses no preference for either of the rival doctrines, but gives them both its blessing.

In a leading article of May 16 last, the "Times" assured its readers that "Blackstone's Commentaries have probably done more to mould average American thought than any other book except the Bible." What is the true inwardness of this alleged moulder of thought? Has America reason to be grateful for his moulding? Bentham makes answer and says, "Blackstone carries the disingenuousness of the hireling advocate into the chair of the professor. He is the dupe of every prejudice and the abettor of every abuse. No sound principles can be expected from that writer whose first object is to defend a system."

Nor is Sir Henry S. Maine's opinion one whit more favourable. "In all the literature which enshrines the pretended philosophy of law," he writes, "there is nothing more curious than the pages of elaborate sophistry in which Blackstone attempts to explain and justify the exclusion of the half-blood." Another witness sheds further light on the intellectual equipment

of the great moulder of thought. We read in the "Encyc. Brit.": "He evidently regarded the law of gravitation, the law of Nature, and the law of England as different examples of the same principle." All three examples being equally mysterious in their origin, equally divine and equally beneficent, it follows that they are all equally incapable of any improvement whatsoever. That was Blackstone's attitude to the common law. He is its tutelary deity; and, as the common law is the chief asset of the Bar, Blackstone is a name to conjure with. In the cult of advocacy, one of the leading religions of Anglo-Saxondom, there is no deity but Blackstone, and Brougham is his prophet.

Advocacy rampant readily indulges in the trick of substituting its own interest for that of the community. An admirable illustration of this artifice is found in the article mentioned above. Blackstone is said to have helped "to form one of the strongest bonds between the minds of the two nations," the Americans and the English. Obviously, these strong bonds are formed between the minds of the respective lawyers. Not less obvious is the fact that laymen in both countries would benefit immensely by breaking these bonds. It is sheer professionalism of the narrowest, most hide-bound type that appeals to such bonds as a unifying influence between nations which have a common language, common ideals, a close intermingling of social relations, and now a common enemy. Why, then, does the "Times" seize upon the common misfortune of a heritage of Blackstonism as a subject of congratulation? Such American progressives as Mr. F. R. Coudert, a legal writer of distinction, repudiate Blackstone's divagations with scorn. Blackstonism and crime may be bracketed with absolute propriety. Universal uncertainty in the rule of law is producing a rank luxuriance of crime in America. According to ex-President Taft, himself a lawyer, the great majority of criminals in the United States escape punishment. Great is Blackstone of the advocates and of the "Times." His high priests are the strenuous opponents of codification: the champions of that uncertainty which "pays the lawyer," and is such a grievous handicap for the laity.

This is the place to address a respectful appeal to Lord Northcliffe. Common report attributes to him responsibility for the general policy of the "Times." He is a successful innovator in many fields. Here is the opportunity of a life-time if his many avocations leave him the leisure to appreciate it. My suggestion is that he should use his influence in counteracting Blackstonism, and not in permitting it to be extolled and bracketed with the Bible. Further, that he should urge the Government to approach the French Ministry with a view to borrow the services of a body of jurists who would collaborate with our own progressive minority in a scheme of codification. Blood brotherhood has been sealed between the two nations. Our War Staffs are in close consultation; a conference of jurists should even now be preparing measures for the eternal rivalry of peace. In the legal domain we are a century behind our allies. By his Imperial fiat and by close personal attention to the subject Napoleon hustled lawyers along the path of progress. There is assuredly no higher ideal for our Napoleon of the Press. "In days to come," said Napoleon, at St. Helena, "I shall be remembered by my Code rather than by my conquests." These words did not serve as a warning to his imitator in war. Let them serve as a stimulus to his imitator in peace!

Be it observed that we are not guilty of the presumption of endeavouring to impose a policy upon the Northcliffe Press. On the contrary, we applaud its determination not to hide the truth: while, as regards the "Times," a single eye to the public interest in legal matters by supporting the demand for codification

would be acting in accordance with its own advice proffered to the ecclesiastical authorities with the utmost solemnity on a recent occasion. They were adjured to be receptive to new Truth. Further: a clear lead on codification would remove the reproach of running with the hare and hunting with the hounds. In a word, insistence on codification and on the conditions which make it possible is the obvious completion of the proposals to which the "Times" gave prominence during July and August, 1916.

These articles appeared under the heading, "The Elements of Reconstruction." A thorough overhauling of our legal system is made a *sine qua non* of this process in the following passage:—"This country can no more do with old-fashioned lawyers than it can do with old-fashioned business methods and old-fashioned guns, and so any scheme for a policy of Imperial re-organisation must certainly fail if it does not include the vigorous promotion of liberal as well as technical education and a thorough revision in the light of modern needs of the procedure, organisation and qualifications of the legal profession and all the circumstances of the politico-legal career." This revision is necessary, not only because our lawyers are old-fashioned, but also because of still more definite defects such as "their mediæval organisation and unsatisfactory general culture . . . their cramped minds and cramping methods. . . . They bring exceptional natural abilities to bear upon obstructive, cautious, and delaying expedients." "Legal education must be improved," says the "Times."

Our readers will agree that the categorical imperative is not out of place when they find the Past President of the Society of Public Teachers of Law pronouncing an elaborate eulogy on Blackstone on a recent occasion. "Back to Blackstone," says this egregious moulder of the legal minds of the future. "Back to Blackstone with his culture, his wide outlook and his good sense." We are accustomed to such travesties from a parasitical professionalism.

"Back to Blackstone!" is conceived in the spirit which proclaims unblushingly the advantage of uncertainty in law. The spirit of the articles on "The Elements of Reconstruction" is "On to Bentham"! Nor is a compromise possible between these protagonists. Blackstonism has achieved the ascendancy of the advocate who exploits the community by expert use of the most cumbersome and the most chaotic system in Western Europe. Blackstone's orientation is towards the past. Bentham, on the other hand, although, like Blackstone, a member of the Bar, is a Modernist of the Modernists. He is less honoured in this, the country of his birth, than on the continent of Europe. He is the protagonist of precision in the rule of law and therefore of codification. His most optimistic forecasts of its advantages have been surpassed. Bentham's face is turned to the future. For him the interest of the laity is supreme.

In accepting Blackstone as Master, the position of the Inns of Court lecturer is clear. Not so that of the "Times" in rendering allegiance to Blackstone and Bentham by turns. Lord Northcliffe must perceive that this is not a case for compromise, qualification and adjustment as if there were agreement about the direction but not about the rate of progress. Here the respective directions are diametrically opposed; so are the respective purposes.

But supposing the "Times" exorcises the voice of Blackstone and speaks in future in the voice of Bentham, what need is there for foreign assistance, it may be asked. We answer that the inertia to be overcome is immense. A lengthy course of Blackstonism has produced "cramped minds and cramping methods" even in the progressive minority. As regards the majority, Judge Parry tells us, "there is the certainty that the lawyers, as a profession, will always offer a strong opposition to any proposition of legal reform."

Just as Russia stands in need of foreign advice and assistance in emerging from Tsarism, so England requires the aid of experienced jurists with wider horizons than our cramped methods permit, if we are to emerge into the upper air and free ourselves from the shackles of Blackstonism.

Our Allies in the United States have everything to gain by joining us in this movement. No longer would prevailing uncertainty in the rule of law conduce to conditions thus described by the late Colonel Homer Lea in "The Valour of Ignorance": "The annual number of persons killed in the Civil War was but slightly in excess of persons now murdered each year in times of peace in this land not of liberty but of license." So much for Blackstonism as a bond of union! Its destruction in the Republic and the Empire is a task worthy of Napoleon. May both States come into line with France in a beneficent heritage!

Provincialism the Enemy.

I.

If they had read my "Education Sentimentale" these things would not have happened.—GUSTAVE FLAUBERT.

PROVINCIALISM consists in:—

(a) An ignorance of the manners, customs and nature of people living outside one's own village, parish, or nation.

(b) A desire to coerce others into uniformity.

Galdos, Turgenev, Flaubert, Henry James, the whole fight of modern enlightenment is against this. It is not of any one country. I name four great modern novelists because, perhaps, the best of their work has been an analysis, a diagnosis of this disease. In Galdos it is almost diagrammatic: a young civil engineer from Madrid is ultimately done to death by the bigots of "Orbajosa," solely because he is from the Capital, and possessed of an education. His own relatives lead in the intrigue for his suppression. Turgenev in "Fumée" and in the "Nichée de Gentilshommes" digging out the stupidity of the Russian. Flaubert in his treatment of last century France. Henry James in his unending endeavour to provide a common language, an idiom of manners and meanings for the three nations, England, America, France. Henry James was, despite any literary detachments, the crusader, both in this internationalism, and in his constant propaganda against personal tyranny, against the hundred subtle forms of personal oppressions and coercions.

Idiot said he was untouched by emotion.

This in the face, or probably in their ignorance, of the outbursts in "The Tragic Muse," or the meaning of the "Turn of the Screw." Human liberty, personal liberty, underlay all of his work, a life-long, unchangeable passion; and with it the sense of national differences, the small and the large misunderstanding, the slight difference in tone, and the greater national "trend." For example, this from "A Bundle of Letters." His Dr. Rudolph Staub writes from Paris:

"You will, I think, hold me warranted in believing that between precipitate decay and internecine enmities the English-speaking family is destined to consume itself, and that with its decline the prospect of general pervasiveness, to which I alluded above, will brighten for the deep-lunged children of the fatherland."

"Universal pervasiveness." We have heard a lot of this sort of thing during the last three years. My edition of the "Bundle of Letters" was, however, printed in '83, thirty-one years before Armageddon. It had been written before that. However, the lords of the temporal world never will take an artist with any seriousness. Flaubert and Henry James had their previsions almost in vain.

Provincialism is more than an ignorance, it is ignorance plus a lust after uniformity. It is a latent malevolence, often an active malevolence. The odium

theologicum is only one phase of it. It is very insidious, even with eyes open one can scarcely keep free of it. (Example, I have been delighted with the detection of Gerlach. All the morning I have been muttering, a priest and a burglar; Italy has scored by setting two burglars to deal with one clerical.)

Religious dogma is a set of arbitrary, unprovable statements about the unknown.

A clergy, any clergy, is an organised set of men using these arbitrary statements to further their own designs. There is no room for such among people of any enlightenment.

England and France are civilisation. They are civilisation because they have not given way to the yelp of "nationality." That, of course, is a debatable statement. All the same, they have not, at bottom, given way to the yelp of "nationality," for all their "Little England," "La France," "Imperialism," etc.

More profoundly they have not given way to the yelp of "race." France is so many races that she has had to settle things by appeal to reason. England is so many races, even "Little England," that she has kept some real respect for personality, for the outline of the individual.

This is modern civilisation. Neither nation has been coercible into a Kultur; into a damnable holy Roman Empire, holy Roman Church orthodoxy, obedience, Deutschland über Alles, infallibility, mouse-trap.

There has been no single bait that the whole of either nation would swallow. It has been possible to cook up for "the German" so tempting a stew of anaesthetics that the whole nation was "fetched." A certain uniform lurability could be counted on.

America has been hauled out by the scruff of her neck. She had imbibed a good deal of the poison. Her universities were tainted. Race, her original ideas, i.e., those taken over from France, and her customs, imported from England, won out in the end. Until they had done so it was very difficult to get any American periodical to print an attack on Kultur, Kultur which will still be found lurking by the grave of Munsterburg in the cemetery of the American universities.

I still find among educated people an ignorance of "kultur," that is, of all save its overt manifestations, the bombing of infant schools, etc., etc., etc.

Distress over a system of education and of "higher education" remains as much a mystery to people with whom I converse as was my disgust with the system, to my professors, fifteen years ago. People see no connection between "philology" and the Junker.

Now, apart from intensive national propaganda, quite apart from German national propaganda, the "university system" of Germany is evil. It is evil wherever it penetrates. Its "universal pervasiveness" is a poisonous and most pestilent sort of pervasiveness. The drug is insidious and attractive.

It is, as Verhaeren said, the only system whereby every local nobody is able to imagine himself a somebody. It is in essence a provincialism. It is the "single" bait which caught all the German intellectuals, and which had hooked many of their American confrères (even before "exchange professorships" had set in).

Its action in Germany was perfectly simple. Every man of intelligence had that intelligence nicely switched on to some particular problem, some minute particular problem *unconnected* with life, *unconnected* with main principles (to use a detestable, much abused phrase). By confining his attention to *ablauts*, hair-length, foraminifera, he could become at small price an "authority," a celebrity. I myself am an "authority," I was limited to that extent. It takes some time to get clean.

Entirely apart from any willingness to preach history according to the ideas of the Berlin party, or to turn the class room into a hall of propaganda, the

whole method of this German and American higher education was, is, evil, a perversion.

It is evil because it holds up an ideal of "scholarship," not an ideal of humanity. It says in effect: you are to acquire knowledge in order that knowledge may be acquired. Metaphorically, you are to build up a dam'd and useless pyramid which will be no use to you or to anyone else, but which will serve as a "monument." To this end you are to sacrifice your mind and vitality.

The system has fought tooth and nail against the humanist belief that a man acquires knowledge in order that he may be a more complete man, a finer individual, a fuller, more able, more interesting companion for other men.

Knowledge as the adornment of the mind, the enrichment of the personality, has been cried down in every educational establishment where the Germano-American "university" ideal has reached. The student as the bondsman of his subject, the gelded ant, the compiler of data, has been preached as a summum bonum.

This is the bone of the mastadon, this is the symptom of the disease; it is all one with the idea that the man is the slave of the State, the "unit," the piece of the machine.

Where the other phase of the idea, the slave of the State (i.e., of the emperor) idea has worked on the masses, the idea of the scholar as the slave of learning has worked on the "intellectual." It still works on him.

No one who has not been caught young and pitchforked into a "graduate school" knows anything of the fascination of being about to "know more than anyone else" about the sex of oysters, or the tonic accents in Arumaic. No one who has not been one of a gang of young men all heading for scholastic "honours" knows how easy it is to have the mind switched off all general considerations, all considerations of the values of life, and switched on to some minute, unvital detail.

This has nothing whatever to do with the "progress of modern science." There is no contradicting the fact that science has been advanced, greatly advanced, by a system which divides the labour of research, and gives each student a minute detail to investigate.

But this division of the subject has not been the sole means of advance, and by itself it would have been useless. And in any case it is not the crux of the matter.

The crux of the matter is that the student, burying himself in detail, has not done so with the understanding of his act. He has not done it as a necessary sacrifice in order that he may emerge.

In the study of literature he has buried himself in questions of morphology, without ever thinking of being able to know good literature from bad. In all studies he has buried himself in "problems," and completely turned away from any sense of proportion between the "problems" and vital values.

In most cases the experiment has been merely blind experiment along a main line, in accord with a main idea dictated by someone else.

The student has become accustomed first to receiving his main ideas without question; then to being indifferent to them. In this state he has accepted the Deutschland über Alles idea, in this state he has accepted the idea that he is an ant, not a human being. He has become impotent, and quite pliable. This state of things has gone on long enough already.

It is time the American college president, indifferent to the curricula of his college or university, and anxious only "to erect a memorial to his father" (as an American provost once said to me), it is time that he and his like awoke from their nap, and turned out the ideal of philology in favour of something human and cleanly.

EZRA POUND,

Out of School.

"MANY are now realising," a correspondent writes to me, "that the development and training of the super-conscious mind is the next step in evolution." I hope it is true; and I hope that many are also realising that evolution is a perpetual step in the development and training of the superconscious mind. One cannot talk for long about education, or about anything else of importance, without declaring a philosophy; and I am committing myself to a philosophy when I continue to assume that mind must be anterior to process. If anyone objects, I shall be delighted to discuss the objection.

It is quite true that mechanists and vitalists arrived at a common philosophy. Vitalists can recognise, if they choose, the high value of mechanistic method, as distinct from mechanistic dogmatism; and mechanists can begin to apply their method to the curious fact of observation that vitalist data are always cropping up in the middle of their own arguments—the results of such an investigation, capably and honestly carried out, would be interesting. Both are right; all philosophies are true, though no philosophy is entirely true. And the war-to-end-war between them has already been fought, though desultory scrimmaging, in the form of disputation for disputation's sake, still goes on. Perhaps I can best get the atmosphere of this pertinacious residual campaigning in a Ruthless Rhyme:—

Dad, controverting the Bishop busily,
Suddenly stopped, and staggered dizzily;
Aunt stepped into the breach, while I
Said, as I carried him out to die,
"Cheer up, Daddy! You won't be missed—
Auntie's a born logomachist."

Logomachy, of course, has, or has had, its function in the evolution of dialectic, as every form of strife has, or has had, its evolutionary value; I am only suggesting that in philosophy, as in everything, it is important to notice when, and to what extent, the past tense becomes operative.

The chief thing that is wrong with the philosophy of education is that it is not yet a philosophy which can be taught to children. Until they knew the main bases of idea upon which their teaching rests, they cannot carry out the main item in the modernist programme, that they should educate themselves. We have to press a little further the principal modern requirement (I say "modern," although it is three hundred years old, because the educational philosophy of Comenius is still in front of us, not behind us)—the demand that acts, not facts, should be the bricks with which we build, and that children themselves should do the building. The conception of originaive activity for children is too apt to resolve itself, in practice, into a mere fiddling with materials. Meanwhile, we neglect ideas, which are the most important acts because they are the most direct manifestations of mind.

Directly we teach, or, rather, co-operate with children in teaching themselves, the idea that lies behind and inspires the act, we are beginning really to educate them. If this is platitude for the reader, as it should be, it is platitude introduced for a purpose. Among all the free activities which we, as good followers of Froebel, are encouraging children to perform, there is none that is not included in the single, general activity of self-education. If we believe in teaching the idea behind each of the subordinate activities, we must also

believe in teaching the idea behind the main, inclusive activity. In other words, we must lead children to realise the principles upon which they are being taught, and give them an opportunity to take a creative interest in those principles. You can do nothing with children, ultimately, except in so far as they understand what is being done with them. They must not only acquiesce, but co-operate, in the process. The understanding mind of childhood is prior to any process that can be imposed upon its working. There will be no effectual philosophy of education until it is a philosophy so far simplified and clarified that children can begin to grasp it.

This does not mean that we should solemnly set to work to teach educational philosophy as a class subject. It means, in practice, that we should discuss with children the method which they are to follow in every subject, and encourage them to make suggestions. In this way a philosophy of education grows of its own accord, and children can learn to formulate it for themselves, and to make it their own. The consequent vitality of class work, and the spirit in which it is done, more than repay the time spent in discussing method. Children, like the rest of us, never get their hearts into their work until they know why they are doing it, and never get their work into their hearts until they are doing it from an inner initiative of their own.

"Let your scholar be never afraid to ask you any doubt, but use discreetly the best allurements you can to encourage him to the same, lest his overmuch fearing of you drive him to seek some disorderly shift, as to seek to be helped by some other book, or to be prompted by some other scholar, and so go about to beguile you much, and himself more." This was written by Roger Ascham, in the sixteenth century. Most of us, in the nineteenth, had an uneasy consciousness that all our school work was a series of "disorderly shifts," designed to avoid as much as might be the pain of meaningless mental effort while keeping ourselves, as much as might be, out of trouble. There were times when we felt, and were, appalling little humbugs; until a comfortable atrophy of the intellectual conscience set in, and our humbug became unconscious instead of conscious. Unconscious humbug is the fine flower of an education imposed upon children, not worked out in collaboration with them.

There is a connection between humbug and vain disputation, which is full of "disorderly shifts" that have no other purpose than to gain, dialectically, the upper hand. A man will generally argue sincerely an opinion that he holds sincerely, and his sincerity in argument is a fair measure of his sincerity in opinion. But there is an art in argument, and it should be taught, or those will always argue the most fluently (I do not say the best) who are most interested, not in truth, but in argument for its own sake: the kind of people, in fact, who make the most successful politicians as distinct from the best statesmen. The kind of discussion which I have been advocating as an integral part of school work has a value besides its effect upon the spontaneity and reality of the work. It gets children into the habit of arguing towards a common end—arguing for agreement instead of arguing for difference—and teaches them the technique of this, the only fruitful kind of argument. Many sincere people are argued down by those who regard discussion as a kind of chess—and have learnt their openings.

Two of the things most commonly said to children are "don't guess" and "don't argue." We really mean, "don't guess wrong," and "don't dispute"; and it is our business to teach children to guess right, and to reason instead of disputing. It takes some trouble, but the trouble is well worth while, from every point of view.

KENNETH RICHMOND.

Readers and Writers.

Two of the four books I recently mentioned as being about to be reprinted from THE NEW AGE have now appeared. They are "Guild Principles in Peace and War," by Mr. S. G. Hobson (Bell. 2s. 6d. net); and "Books and Persons," by Mr. Arnold Bennett (Chatto and Windus. 5s. net). The former consists mainly of articles that are, I imagine, too fresh in the minds of my readers to need any notice of them from me; I pass it by with a bow of recognition. But the latter may need a fresh introduction, since the last of Mr. Bennett's "Jacob Tonson" series appeared in this journal nearly six years ago. My office, however, is one of difficulty—as you will see if you perform the Christian miracle of putting yourself in my place. For I am the successor of "Jacob Tonson," and, therefore, unavoidably under the appearance of being in comparison with him. Should I praise him as he deserves, it will assuredly be put down to magnanimity rather than to judgment. And should I censure him as he deserves, it will be counted to me for malice. Under these circumstances there is no safety save in writing as I please, while leaving my readers to judge.

To get over the praise first, since it is likely to be easier, let me say that in this series, of which the present volume is a select third only, Mr. Bennett displays all the gifts of a nearly first-rate literary causeur. That he is not first-rate is due to the fact that his range of interest is limited by a nineteenth-century rationalism beyond which and below which he never allows even a hint in his essays to stray. Of that, however, more anon. Within these limits, on the other hand, there neither is, nor has been, in English letters, Mr. Bennett's parallel as a literary causeur. He has all the qualifications for a leading part in this rôle—an immense store of reading, an eye for contemporary literary happenings, a minute acquaintance with the practical world of publishing, personal relations with authors, a practical experience both of writing and of selling, liveliness, audacity, and, above all, a most readable style. You can read Mr. Bennett's literary criticisms even when you do not agree with a word of them. They are written almost to read themselves! And I can well believe that Mr. Hugh Walpole (to whom this volume is dedicated) read through the whole series without a break in the course of a breathless four hours. His supreme readableness—the first essential quality of writing—is, however, by no means the last of Mr. Bennett's admirable characteristics. Disagree as you may please with his judgments, you can seldom dismiss them either as superficial or as idiosyncrasies. There is always something competent, professional and respectable about them. It is true that, for my part, I can discover among them no daring judgment that first takes your breath away, then illuminates and finally masters you. No literary revolution is ever likely to be worked by any of Mr. Bennett's opinions. It is also true that some of his judgments are to my mind almost grotesque in their wrongness, as when, for instance, he sets up Mr. Whitten as "a first-class prose-writer," or Mr. Stapoole's "Blue Lagoon" as a memorable romance, or Mr. Montagu's "A Hind Let Loose" as a book to charm the few who know literature. In these judgments I suspect Mr. Bennett of having had other objects in view than critical truth. But outside these slips, and upon the plane of his equals, Mr. Bennett's judgments are, I think, usually final, or, at any rate, good juryman's verdicts. And this is the more creditable since it must be remembered that many of the writers with whom he was concerned were not only contemporaries of his, and, therefore, rivals, but their place in general opinion had not been fixed. Mr. Bennett was, in fact, one of the discoverers of several of them; and more than one writer owes a degree of his

popularity to the praise given him by "Jacob Tonson" in these pages.

Then he has many of the right prejudices for a polemical literary critic desirous of "helping the sacred cause"—to use his own phrase. He was, I believe, the first critic to apply the withering word "mandarins" to the academic anatomists of literature—the Professors Saintsbury, Raleigh, Churton Collins, Herford, etc. His complaint of them is the natural complaint of the skilled craftsman that they are not themselves skilled in the craft they profess to judge. For the same reason he condemns Literary Academies in this country; they would be sure to be composed (and the event has proved it!) of mandarins, accomplished or predestined. He was an apostle, too, of freedom in writing, both as to subject and style. There is always something new to be said, and always a fresh effective way of saying it; and no tradition, he urged, should be allowed to stand in the way of discovering them. To my mind, of course, such a wholesale invitation of all and sundry to experiment is full of dangers—as, indeed, has been proved by the literary wrecks that strew our libraries. Equally, I think, it is true that no great writer would ever dream of following such advice; for to the extent that a writer knows himself to be original he usually elects to work within the great traditions of his craft. But, on the other hand, it was distinctly encouraging advice, encouraging, I mean, to young writers. It encouraged them to "be themselves," to strike out, and to write—even when they could not. Nobody knows how many writers Mr. Bennett has made whom God certainly never intended to write at all! And for this he deserves, and, I believe, has received, their gratitude, if not ours, in one form or another.

Well, let that pass as praise. I will now turn to the other side of the picture. I have said that Mr. Bennett's outlook is restricted by rationalism; and this is manifested by, amongst other things, his preference for Mr. Lucas over Mr. G. K. Chesterton on the ground that Mr. Chesterton cannot have "a first-class intellectual apparatus," since he accepts dogma. "It is impossible," says Mr. Bennett, "for a young man of first-class intellect to accept any form of dogma." But how faded does that dogma of rationalism now appear in the light even of modern ethical speculation, to say nothing of Plato! It is almost true to say that rationalism itself is only one of the minor dogmas of a universe whose very foundations are dogmatic. Mr. Bennett's rationalism is, however, of a lower variety even than that of the classical rationalists: it approximates when it does not reach to materialism itself. This, I think, is evident in the absence from Mr. Bennett's critical apparatus of any appreciation of art as distinct from craft. I have praised Mr. Bennett's praise and practice of good workmanship; without good workmanship there is no art worth consideration. But in Mr. Bennett's case good workmanship and good art are convertible terms. Coleridge it was, I think, who said that when he spoke of ideas, his hearers usually thought of bricks and mortar; and, similarly, I should say that when Mr. Bennett is writing of art he is thinking of the craft. His pre-occupation with the craft of writing is exclusive. Everything connected with it, including its wages, is a matter of absorbing interest to him. He is never weary of discussing the craft structure of literary work from its inception to its sale and effect upon the public. And he will use himself as an illustration without any modesty whatever. By the time that you have read all that he has written on the subject of authorship, you know his own hours and methods and motives and remunerations of work as if you were a fellow-craftsman in the same shop with him. He is very generous of himself in this respect.

But what all the while one misses is a recognition that the artist is something more than a craftsman or is concerned with other matters than the technique of turning out good and saleable stuff. Good and saleable, be it observed; for the one, we must allow, is as indispensable in Mr. Bennett's opinion as the other. To be saleable, to sell, to make a great deal of money by it, is not the only ambition or criterion of the work set up by Mr. Bennett; the work itself must be good, and this, in his opinion, literally means work and nothing more. His gospel, in fact, summed up amounts to this: that anybody can succeed as a writer who puts his back into it as if it were a business and is willing to make and to sell good stuff. But need I say that this is scarcely the fact? Nor is it in the least true that the pre-occupation of the artist is with the craft, or with anything connected with it. Occupation in the craft is, of course, a necessity of the artist; but his pre-occupation is with something altogether different, namely, with what he has to say. The distinction between the artist-craftsman and the craftsman is precisely in this matter of pre-occupation. While the latter thinks of nothing so much as how he shall say it, the former thinks of nothing so much as what he shall say. The artist-craftsman, in other words, is primarily a thinker, a teacher, a seer, a missionary; the craftsman wants to make a future and a reputation.

But Mr. Bennett is so far from understanding the psychology of the artist that he imagines him to be exhausted in the psychology of the craftsman; and in flagrant contradiction of well-known facts (including those of his own personal experience) he asserts that all "authors capable of producing really high-class stuff . . . are strangely keen on getting the best possible remuneration for it." Never you believe, he says, that genuine artists are indifferent to money! I would not like to say that every genuine artist has been indifferent to money; I would not deny off-hand that some authors capable of producing high-class stuff have been keen on getting well paid for it; but it is not the rule, it is not the tradition, and I am not certain that it is the fact. English literature, I know, would be very poor if it had had to depend upon writers strangely keen on getting paid top-prices, or even upon getting any remuneration whatever. The sums actually spent upon literature in this country have never afforded an income for many of its greatest writers, whose motive to keep on must, therefore, have been something other than money. The historic examples are familiar; and I may, therefore, cite Mr. Bennett himself. To my mind, these present essays of his—"Books and Persons"—are the best work Mr. Bennett has ever done, or is likely to do. But not only were they written practically for no remuneration, but they were written anonymously, and without any notion even of their subsequent publication. When, therefore, Mr. Bennett can tell us why he wrote them, week in week out for a period of three or four years, he will, at the same time, be able to tell himself that "an author capable of producing really high-class stuff is *not* always keen on getting the best possible remuneration for it." Unless—ah, I recall Mr. Bennett's words—unless remuneration includes "helping the sacred cause!" Which then makes nonsense of the materialism otherwise suggested.

Quite by the way. Mr. Bennett says in his "Prefatory Note" that these essays "enlivened" *THE NEW AGE* during the years 1908-11. How dull these pages were before Mr. Bennett began and since he has ceased enlivening them, we all of us know. But as Mr. Bennett acknowledges to writing to-day "with perhaps a less challenging vivacity" than during those years, the enlivening effect may have been reciprocal. Who knows? Mr. Bennett would not be the first writer to

discover that in order to write vivaciously he must write in company. It takes more than one writer to make a writer.

* * *

I come to my final remarks on my predecessor. Brilliant (the word must be used), pleasing, intimate, fully informed, accomplished—in all which respects I follow without succeeding him—his judgment is, nevertheless, never to be trusted when it concerns matters beyond craftsmanship. The *body* of literature he is competent to discuss with any man; but of its anatomy, on the one hand, he knows little; and of its soul, on the other hand, he knows nothing whatever. In short, the deeps and the heights of literature—the Quintilianism, let me say, and the Platonism—are outside his range; and in these respects I do not follow him.

R. H. C.

The Conspirators.

By Triboulet.

(London in Queen Elizabeth's reign. A room in a tavern which is a secret meeting-place for English and foreign Jesuits. Two men are within. One, named Parry, sits by table; the other, Morgan, is preparing to go out.)

MORGAN: I'll go now, brother. The Holy Faith can expect a great service from you if you mean what you say.

PARRY: I am ready to plunge this poignard in the heart of the first lord in England.

MORGAN (whispering): Not the Queen?

PARRY: The Queen!

MORGAN: Not so loud. You have heard aright.

PARRY: Is that sanctioned? Brother Perault does not think so.

MORGAN: Reason and faith sanction it, brother. We endanger our lives in trying to lop off the limbs of this heretic government, and it would be less dangerous to strike at the head.

PARRY: There is a great gulf between the monarch and the subject, brother. I suspect this proposition, but I do not doubt your sincerity and zeal for the Faith. Let me ask brother Criton his opinion.

MORGAN: You are always anxious to get the opinions of the whole fraternity. This fact often makes me doubt that you are a man of action. Action is not inquisitive; it domineers opinion.

PARRY: It is best to hear the results of all friendly thinking. I am willing to undertake the bloodiest, yea, hear me gently, brother, the very bloodiest work, if, yea, brother, if it be sanctioned. We must ask Criton, not that I doubt your noble zeal—but we must ask brother Criton.

MORGAN: Keep your heart good. Don't you know Criton yet? He has been in the schools, and a schoolman can only talk. Besides, he is a frivolous man who delights in unsettling men of resolution.

PARRY: Nay, brother; each soldier of the Faith has his value, and Criton, as everybody knows, is the intelligence of our group. Truly a strong man in thought as we are strong in action.

MORGAN: Have your way. I'll go over to Exeter Street now. We can talk later. God guard you, brother. (He goes out. Parry stands motionless for a few seconds as he listens to the creaking of the stairs, then he stoops down and raps with his knuckles on the floor. In a moment or two a lean, shaggy tapster enters.)

PARRY: Now, Dick, run you to Moseley's and bring the major. I have the traitors. Criton is coming here, and Morgan has gone to Exeter Street house. What's this? Someone is coming up the stairs. Get out quickly. It's Morgan and Criton. I can hear them. Be ready with an excuse; you'll meet them on the stairs.

TAPSTER (loud, as he goes out): No, Sir; that dish is

not ready yet. I will send the boy as soon as it is, Sir. (Goes out. Enter Morgan and Criton.)

MORGAN: I met Criton in the yard. I thought we had better be together to settle this question about action, because Criton may pervert you, brother Parry. Ah, brother Criton, why do you not refrain from wine? You are even now unsteady, and you know what mighty work we have. This task must not be postponed again.

CRITON: Good drink sharpens my wit, brother. Did you drink from my bottle, you—

MORGAN: I have been telling Criton what we were discussing, and in three words he has revealed a great difference of purpose. Criton calls his policy wisdom, but it is Scotch wisdom. He is too cautious, being a Scot.

CRITON: 'Tis true, by the Virgin Mary and Queen Mary, 'tis true that I'm a Scot, but as for caution, this poor body that has been bruised and cut for twenty years knows I have none. Brethren, the present subject is more than a matter of caution. If brother Parry would murder a lord and you would murder a—

PARRY: Hush!

CRITON: — then I am out of place with you at once.

PARRY: Is it not wrong to aim at the body of an anointed person?

CRITON: I do not distinguish by oil. Divine and natural law teaches us that we cannot serve God by crime.

MORGAN: Tush! Have you no heart for the cause? Is the Faith to be impeded by mere bags of flesh and bones? You men have never felt or known the reality of anything greater than men. Elizabeth's fate is England's fate. The monarchy is so great to-day that by striking at the crown we strike at every heart in the realm.

CRITON: How you generate heat, brother! Marry, by drinking a tun of the best I could not grow so red in the nose and cheeks as you do by uttering half a dozen stale arguments. I don't like so much heat, and seeing it makes me want to throw off my jerkin in sympathy. I am only a Catholic because I believe we are of the same spirit in various degrees, but when I perceive the enormity of your zeal, I doubt my philosophy and think God made souls of two distinct sorts represented by calidity and luminosity: devil and angel.

PARRY: You do not countenance these strong actions, brother?

MORGAN: Don't put it that way. Let me question this joker. Do you, Master Moderation, believe in using force?

CRITON: I do.

MORGAN: In using death?

CRITON: I do, O Socrates.

MORGAN: Then what are you quibbling about?

CRITON: Take hemlock, brother. If you push a knife no better than you push a question, you'll do little harm. Harken to me, brethren. Tully, in his oration for Caelius, said, we will refute accusations by evidences brighter than light itself; fact shall engage with fact, cause with cause, reason with reason. I would add that force and death shall engage with force and death. This is all I know. I fight by this scale, in sequence as here laid down, by one and two and three, by fact, by cause, by reason, by force, and finally by death. If we do otherwise, it is not war but murder.

PARRY: God's light, close reasoning that I can scarcely follow. But I understand that I could not serve God by crime as brother Morgan would. I don't know why. By the way, who was Tully?

MORGAN: Criton is as big a fool as you.

CRITON: I'll make a demonstration.

PARRY: Do, brother.

MORGAN: Make it in deeds, not words.

CRITON: Morgan, inflexible Morgan, humourless Morgan, you cannot smile when you talk treason or nonsense. That is the zealot's unconscious sign of fear. Smile; we may lose our lives in this room, and you'll frown enough in Hell.

MORGAN and PARRY: Lose our lives!

CRITON: Don't be scared. We are safe nowhere. But I'd make my demonstration in the face of a cart-load of devils. I was going to say that God likes adverbs better than nouns.

MORGAN: Trash! trash! trash!

PARRY: Patience, brother. Let me see. God likes adverbs better than nouns. That's clever. What does it mean? Adverbs hum! By the way, what is an adverb?

CRITON: My demonstration means that God is better pleased with what is well and honestly done than with what is good and honest.

MORGAN: You sottish, cowardly, logic-chopping grammarian! Although you are useless to the Faith, cannot you see that you are weakening the resolution of my good brother here? Before you came he was quite willing to do away with the Lord Chancellor at least. If you continue he'll not be able to write a pamphlet: he'll start inquiring what an adverb is, and nevermore knock the popular nail on the head.

CRITON (going): I'll leave you, brothers, to your counsels. Go your own way to the devil. (Morgan and Parry hold him.)

MORGAN: No; don't go.

PARRY: Dear brother, don't go.

CRITON: You hold me lovingly. Let me go. I've better work on hand than to talk with such fools as you and risk my life with treason. Let me go, Morgan, or I'll knock you down. (He forces them back and goes out. Morgan and Parry stare at one another.)

PARRY: Yes, I—I—I—

MORGAN: Well, you are here, brother Parry. (Goes to window and looks out.) Do you hear pikes clanking on the cobbles yonder? Danger, brother!

PARRY: It sounds like it. What shall we do? Are we safe?

MORGAN: Safe enough. Let us lie low here.

PARRY: Yes, we must stop here. Sure enough, they are coming in. Keep quiet, brother.

MORGAN: They are in the house.

PARRY: Silence, brother. (Morgan goes to door, which he throws open.) What are you doing, brother?

MORGAN: Nothing, sweeting. (A Queen's officer enters. Morgan points to Parry.) There you are, Sir.

OFFICER: Only one? Where's Criton?

MORGAN: He has gone; but he's no loss, Sir; no traitor, I'm sorry to say. He is quite a gentle fellow, with no taste for assassination, but if we had him he would be better swinging. Take that traitor, Sir. He is a bloody-minded villain, ripe for any piece of work the devil can give. He said he was prepared to kill the first lord in the land. Those were his very words.

PARRY: What's this? Don't you know me, Sir? I'm Walter Pyton, agent for Her Majesty. I have Lord Orton's papers here. This man, Morgan, has been speaking all the treason. He wanted me to kill the Queen.

OFFICER: You are both liars and hypocrites by profession, and I feel dirty after having this deal with you. If you weren't the tools of a mean, bad system, I'd have you whipped for wasting our time and the Queen's money. Evidently Criton is a very honest man when you clever rogues cannot prove him a traitor. You curs, you make crime, and England imperils herself when she uses villainy in the name of justice. (He goes out.)

Interviews.

By C. E. Beechhofer.

XV.—MR. ROBERT BRIDGES.

I ASKED the Poet Laureate his opinion on the subject of compulsory Greek at the Universities, and he said that he thought the contention of its supporters was mistaken. They assert that, without compulsion, Greek would not be studied any longer: or would, at least, be so neglected as to fall out of account. If that were true, one would have to balance the advantages and the disadvantages. He said that he was convinced that the advantages of a knowledge of Greek in the higher education are so great that there is no fear of its study falling into discredit. At present the knowledge of Greek attained by an average passman after some ten years of studentship is altogether worthless; and the student himself, if he is aware of this, must heartily regret the waste of his time. If he is not aware of it, then his Greek has been worse than a failure.

Mr. Bridges is of opinion that no boy should be taught Greek until he is at least fifteen years old. At seventeen he will be alongside of the boys who began at eleven. And at fifteen it is easier to separate off the boys who are likely to pursue and profit by their Greek studies.

Mr. Bridges sharpened his point with an anecdote.

"I was once trying to persuade Professor Bywater to advocate this and other reforms. He was the only Englishman of my time who won European distinction as a Greek scholar. I could not get him to make any move: but when I said to him that I was convinced that no boy should commence Greek before he was fifteen, he replied, 'Well, I didn't myself.'"

Mr. Bridges had heard the most frivolous objections to this proposal from schoolmasters. They thought it preposterous to expect them to teach the alphabet to fifth form boys!! "Indeed," he went on to say, "it is the teachers who are most opposed to reform of classical conventions. And this attitude of mind is natural; for they recognise that a teacher cannot teach what he does not know, and a very large number of them know thoroughly only the classical grammars and texts. The main difficulty of teaching is to supply teachers, and I do not know where they are to come from. Instructors are more easily found than educators: in fact, education proper is an unsolved problem. A truly scientific method would educate and instruct at once, like the phonetic method of teaching language."

When I raised some objection, Mr. Bridges said the almost universal prejudice against phonetics is a good example of the difficulty of introducing reforms. People who have had a literary education are shocked by the appearance to the eye of English words and sentences written in phonetic symbols: and they are alarmed at the prospect of all books and newspapers taking on this form. But books would remain as they are, though their spelling is likely to be improved. He was advocating Phonetics as the one scientific way of teaching spoken language. He compared it to the sol-fa method of teaching music. That was derided and opposed at first, but is now recognised as invaluable both in saving of time, and giving the best elementary knowledge—and it follows that it is more interesting to the pupils than the old system which took them so long to understand. The merest smattering of phonetics would have rendered impossible all the ridiculous discussion about the pronunciation of Latin. Those who would pronounce Latin like English have little notion of what they are doing: and their education has ensured that they shall never find out. "I speak," he said, "as one who had to discover these things late in life for himself: and if I could have had

my early education changed in one particular, I would choose to have been taught language on the phonetic system.

"I instanced Phonetics," he continued, "as an example of prejudice against reform: but I would urge it as one of the first needs that reform should supply. The damage that children's minds suffer, from the sound-symbols being ambiguous and undefined, is enormous. Their spelling lessons are their first experience of the mental exercise of learning, and they are inhumanly confronted with something unreasonable, unintelligible and indefensibly illogical. It is as if one should feed babies with indigestible food. No wonder philosophers say that education may stupefy the mind. Honestly, I believe that a great deal of our present education is productive of stupidity. Remember how often in the lives of original men we read that they were idle or backward at school. That, perhaps, generally means that they had unusual common sense and a firm will to refuse the food offered to them, and went off to purvey for themselves."

About Reconstruction after the war, Mr. Bridges thinks that there may be a great opportunity for reform of our education and instruction, but that the problem is so vast and difficult that one can hardly be expected to see any clear course. So far as he has any views, he is inclined to think that the best hope for our National schools is that children of all classes should go to the same school. This would focus the public interest on them and bring the people's wishes and experience into contact with the regulations of the Government. At least, he would wish this to be the general practice, though in all matters he is in favour of the allowance of exceptions and the play of individual experiment; which he explained to mean that he would allow the old institutions to maintain themselves in competition when they existed under favourable conditions.

He said, "No two children are alike, and if they were all alike, even then, teaching cannot be at its best in large classes, and these facts must always be an obstacle to the ideal success of national education. And it would seem to follow that great freedom should be allowed within any national system, and that well organised schools on other lines should not be interfered with."

Also it would seem clear that any actual changes should be in the line of introducing scientific method. But he considers the personal morale and manners of the teachers who are in contact with children to be of such first importance that he despairs of finding a sufficiently equipped class. By raising their salaries one can raise the standard of intellectual acquirements, but it should be instilled into them that their personal influence on the young is the most responsible part of their calling. The tricks of drill by which an unsympathetic schoolmaster learns to keep order are useful enough, but they are over-estimated just because they are so commonly indispensable.

On the question of the introduction of science into schools, he said that one must find out what kind of science is most palatable to boys. He declared himself a heretic in these matters. "I know," he said, "how much is urged about teaching concentration and inhibition, and so on, but my own opinion is that concentration and attention should be emotional rather than disciplinary, and that all teaching of the young should rely on the interest which the learner naturally takes in his subject. I know that a good deal may be said on the other side, and I admit the necessity for concentration of mind on uncongenial subjects; but why should not the habit of concentration be acquired by children quite naturally and agreeably in the study of congenial subjects? When acquired, the habit can be applied at will to distasteful inquiries."

This, he explained, did not imply that every child

should choose what subject he would learn, but the child should think that he has chosen it. Teachers who complain of the inattention of their pupils only accuse themselves of incapacity to teach, unless, indeed, they are teaching what should not be taught: though it must be allowed that the conditions of their classes often wholly exonerate them.

He doubted if it was known what science is best to teach to the young. The great scientist, Alfred Wallace, came to be altogether opposed to the teaching of science in Primary schools, because the results were so lamentable. Some of these funny by-products are preserved in the Appendix to his autobiography, and are good reading; though merriment is dashed by the thought of the expensive machinery which had drearily toiled to produce them. Mr. Bridges did not know whether there were sufficient good, successful experiments to guide us; but his own experience was that average boys of 10 or 12 can be apt and ready towards a sympathetic scientific instructor. But a teacher with a mere text book education would not attract them, as Wallace's experience showed, and such teaching would probably be more useless than compulsory Greek.

A Modern Prose Anthology.

Edited by R. Harrison.

VII.—MR. H-L-RE B-LL-C.

"On Things Past," by H-l-re B-ll-c.

A long, a very long time ago (a great many years it is said, though some say more, and I am inclined to think so too—but of this more later), there dwelt two men (and many more, but these particularly) and one was named or named himself or was named by others (and named wrongly, I have heard, even as Mr. Angell in our own day—and this not to his credit, far from it—but in any case is known to us as) Robin Hood. I might unfold to you much of great import in this regard, and how a name may so infect the destiny and opinions of a man, that sooner—But of his companion, of whom I made mention and whose name, you must know, was Little John (chiefly, I think, because he was in nowise little but rather of great girth and big, really big, tremendous both in body and in mind and in soul too, I swear—and in all those things which befit a good man). For mistake me not. You would travel both far and wide, to Little Blowsby in Surrey where the Pewter Inn stands to this day, or perchance to the Church of St. Peter in Rome (and further, though you do so at your peril—but that is neither here nor there), and you would find no knight so gallant nor so gentle as these were.

Now, Robin Hood was the leader—though of this I am not sure, and I can find no trace in contemporary writers of any mention of the fact; but at this I am not astounded, for they were in very truth dogs and sons of dogs, lame, watery-eyed, bow-backed, book-reading ninnies without the spunk of a rat. So it might be that Little John was the leader or (and this is more probable) that there was no leader—for they were great men both, and to say that the one was greater than the other would be to say that good beer is better than good wine, or that the leaves which go to make the crown of Bacchus are greener than the turf on which we dance, sing and shout when the mood so takes us, or that the Liberal is more corrupt than the Tory and Heaven knows what other nonsense of like kind, for—and this is the simple truth—there was no man so great as either.

In any case, it so came to pass—But, wait a bit. Now, it so happened that at this time there lived also one other great man, as great indeed as the two of whom I am telling you (if you would only listen), but not so good—that is, not so right. For he held other opinions from these two, and for that he was damned,

which is a pity, for he was a great and clever man. And it was the great task and joy of these our heroes to overcome this man—who was a truly agile knight, and his name I will not hide from you, for he was surnamed Blaw, but not Baron Blaw, for he hated all Barons as I do, but chiefly those Barons who buy their accursed Baronies (much good may they do them), and in this we agree.

This same Blaw was in nowise afraid of telling Barons and all others what he thought of them, and with his quarterstaff, in the use of which he was a master, he laid right well about him. But people but smiled and shook their heads and said how droll he was and 'twas a pity he should be so droll, else he might be serious; and of his blows, they said they could not understand what he would be at, so thick-skinned were they, and stood amazed at so much energy for no apparent purpose (and all this have I got from the memoirs of the man himself, who wrote a lot and most vilely, Heaven forgive him!).

It is a great testimony to the worth of this man, that he subsisted (as I gather) almost entirely on nuts and parsley and filtered water, and yet was a great man, and thrived right amazingly on this strange diet. Yet for this was he attacked by these two of whom I am telling you, for this and for all his opinions, including those which he did not possess, but which these other two were convinced ran thick in the gutters of the earth even to its uttermost ends. And for those who stepped in it there was no hope. These men fought.

By the blood of St. Anthony, these men fought, I say—As to the manner of their fighting, that does not concern you, nor the numbers engaged (whether Christians or infidels), nor the place, nor the time, and as to the decision, end, and outcome of it all, why, it has escaped my memory. No matter. It happened as I have related; and the fame of these paragons—these fire-eaters—was handed down from father to sons, and to their sons and their sons, and was set to music by the troubadours, who sang it to Charlemagne on the eve of Roncesvalles—for they were there, the heroes!—and the echo of it all ran down the æons of time till it reached the thrones of the saints, who (as you know) enter such things in their diptych. And so to us. (I am writing of it now.)

But perhaps you do not believe me. Perhaps you have never heard of Robin Hood, nor of John called the Little, nor even of Blaw, except in ballads you have never read. Well, well! Such ignorance is of the very devil. God save your soul.

THERE AIN'T NO GOD!

There ain't no God!
'Coz, if there were,
My boy what's under foreign sod
Would be alive, and here;
Instead of which, young William Porter,
What niver 'listed when he orter,
Has got his farm,
An' braunges yonder, safe away frum harm.

He went—poor lad!
I can't forget that night!
While Porter luffed him outer sight:
Now—
He is spent. . . .
Porter's all right!

What does he care?
He's thinking of another farm,
All snug and warm:
Instead of laying in some ditch—
He's rich,
And folk'll gallop at his nod.

I say it—
Dost hear me . . . Thou?
There ain't no God!

BERNARD GILBERT.

Views and Reviews.

A PROPOSED RAILWAY GUILD.

A PERUSAL of the Report of the Royal Commission to Inquire into Railways and Transportation in Canada may be recommended. "It became necessary at the recent session of Parliament," says the Commission, "to make provision for assistance by loan to the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company and to the Canadian Northern Railway Company in order that such companies might be enabled to meet current obligations and to provide for payment of interest on outstanding securities." As the alternative to Government assistance is bankruptcy of these two companies, and probably others, with a consequent lowering of the credit (political and financial) of the Government, and the problem of transportation in Canada is already pressing, it was considered advisable to make the terms of reference comprehensive, and to call upon the Commissioners, among other matters, to express their opinion of the "re-organisation of any of the said railway systems, or the acquisition thereof by the State." After a most interesting and exhaustive inquiry, the three Commissioners presented two reports, of which the Minority Report (presented by the Chairman, Mr. Alfred Holland Smith, of the City of New York) is, briefly, a suggestion that the Government should subsidise the companies to enable them to carry on, and leave them to work out their own salvation. With that, we may bid farewell to the Minority Report.

The Majority Report is signed by Sir Henry Lumley Drayton, of the City of Ottawa, and by William Mitchell Acworth, of London, England; the latter succeeded Sir George Paish as a member of the Commission. They reject the proposal of Nationalisation, as the phrase is usually understood; they observe that railways are not a proper subject for direct Parliamentary control, and point to the fact that the most successfully State-operated railways in the world are those of Prussia, which are not subject to Parliamentary control. They recognise that railway management requires expert knowledge, and that public opinion, being public and not expert opinion, cannot engage successfully in railway management.

Their formal recommendations may best be stated in their own words.

I. That a Board of Trustees be constituted by Act of Parliament and incorporated as "The Dominion Railway Company."

II. That the ownership of the Canadian Northern Grand Trunk and Grand Trunk Pacific Railways be vested in this Company.

III. That the Government assume responsibility to the Company for the interest on the existing securities of these undertakings.

IV. That the Inter-Colonial (including the Prince Edward Island) and National Trans-Continental Railways be also handed over by the Government to the Company.

V. That the whole of these railways be operated by the Company as one system.

It will be observed that the Canadian Pacific Railway is not included in this proposal; the Commissioners reject the suggestion that the Canadian Pacific should, by lease or purchase, obtain control of the other roads and operate the whole Canadian Railway System as partner with the Government, on terms to be arranged. They also reject the suggestion that the Government should take over the whole Canadian Railway system. "We do not think that a railway monopoly is desirable, either in the hands of a company, or in the hands of a State. We are convinced that the people of Canada who have spent or guaranteed—whether wisely or not, is not now the question—hundreds of millions of dollars, largely with the object of breaking a private monopoly, would never consent to the re-establishment

of a still greater monopoly, even if the Government were a partner in the concern. We do not think that there is any necessity for the State to go further than it has already gone in the direction of Government operation. We recognise that the Government occupies in respect of the Canadian Northern and Grand Trunk Pacific roads very much the position of a mortgagee whose mortgagor is in default. But we do not think that the Government, as a Government, need enter into possession." The Canadian Pacific Railway, then, will remain as a very vigorous competitor of the Dominion Railway Company, and the public interest be better served by their competition than by a monopoly.

Accepting, therefore, the argument that the Canadian Pacific Railway and the proposed Dominion Railway Company should operate as competing and self-contained systems, it remains to consider the proposed Constitution of the Dominion Railway Company. It is proposed that the Trustees should be five in number, and that the first five should be named in the Act of Parliament constituting the Board. Trustees are to be eligible for re-nomination and re-appointment. The five Trustees fall into two classes; three of them, one of whom will be chairman, are to be men of railway experience. They are to be whole-time officers, and it is suggested that their salaries should be arranged to attract the best men. The other two Trustees should be a man of business and financial experience, and one chosen "as specially possessing the confidence of railway employees." These two Trustees are not to be expected to give their whole time, but it is proposed that "their maximum salary might be laid down in the Act, to be adjusted later when the requirements of the position become evident." All Trustees must divest themselves of all interest in Canadian railway bonds or stock, and must further satisfy the appointing authority that they have no other interest which will conflict with their duties as Trustees.

They suggest, as we have seen, that the original Trustees should be named by Parliament; they suggest also that "the three railway Trustees should retire after three, five, and seven years respectively; the order of retirement among the three being determined at the date of the Trustees' assumption of office. The two remaining Trustees [the financial and labour men] should retire after four and six years respectively; their relative position between themselves being similarly determined." But this applies only to the first Trustees; all others are to be appointed for a fixed term of seven years. They will be appointed by the Governor-General in Council, and in the case of the railway Trustees (the Expert Three), they will be nominated by those who are not retiring at that moment; the other members will be appointed from a list of three names similarly selected. If the Government does not approve the nomination, the Trustees will suggest another name; but there is no possibility under the scheme of anyone filching from the Trustees the choice of their colleagues. They will be what the Commissioners call "a permanent and self-perpetuating body," in short, an aristocracy.

But although the Commissioners propose the creation of a body which will nominally own and practically operate a unified system of trans-continental railways, they do not forget that the public interest must be secured.

We therefore propose to give to the Board of Railway Commissioners the same full judicial authority over all the actions or refusals to act [of the Dominion Railway] that the Board at present has over the private railway companies. With a Board of Management appointed on the sole ground of competence, controlled by a commission with power of impartial review, we believe the rights of every citizen to receive fair and equal treatment—and no citizen ought to desire to receive more—

will be amply protected. And at the same time the dangers of political influence will be avoided.

In addition to that, they consider the Prussian system of Railway Councils; and although they do not recommend it for immediate adoption, they think that the central idea is valuable.

These Councils are both National and Regional. The National Council in Prussia is composed of (1) official representatives of the Government Departments specially concerned with railway questions, the Ministries of Communications, Commerce, Agriculture, etc.; (2) of representatives of Chambers of Commerce, of Agriculture, of Mines, and other persons competent to speak for large sections of railway customers. The Regional Councils are of a similar constitution, but on a smaller scale as befits their local limitations. These Councils meet twice a year or oftener, and discuss a prepared agenda with the chiefs of the railway service. They are competent to deal with questions of rates and fares, facilities, extensions, improvements, and all other matters affecting the public interest. They have no executive powers whatever. They can only criticise, dissuade, or recommend. But the universal testimony of competent observers is that the system is a success; that the influence of the Councils is considerable, and the result harmony and absence of friction between the railway administration and the public. We do not think that the time is ripe for the formal organisation of a similar system in Canada. But the central idea is valuable. And we suggest that the Trustees, when they get into harness, should consider the propriety of calling a conference of representatives of merchants, manufacturers, agriculturists, mine-owners, etc., and discussing with them all such questions as involve the interests of the public as well as the railway. And we think the Canadian Pacific Railway should be invited to join the conference. If the experience proves a success, it will no doubt be repeated. And we should hope it would ultimately result in a permanent organisation.

The effect upon Labour of such a scheme should be revolutionary. At present, the railway workers of Canada are well organised, but in craft unions; and do not seem to have developed any considerable enthusiasm for the idea of industrial unions. That the Commissioners should be willing, unasked, to suggest the appointment of a Labour Trustee to what is, in effect, a demi-National Guild is obviously not a tribute to the Canadian railway workers; nor can the Canadian Press, with the exception of the Ottawa "Citizen," claim credit for it. It is, obviously not a concession to Labour opinion in Canada; it is a recognition and a prophecy of the development of Labour in England, and that development THE NEW AGE has both assisted and inspired. The problem of ownership by the State and management by the Guild has been cleverly solved by these Commissioners; and if it could not be done by theories of democratic control, it is only another proof that life is more complex than any theory, and that practical problems cannot be solved à la Siéyès.

A. E. R.

Reviews.

The United States and the War. By Gilbert Vivian Seldes. (Allen & Unwin. 2s. 6d. net.)

Things move at such a rate that books are practically obsolete before they are published. Mr. Seldes wrote to explain why America had not joined the belligerents, and she joined the belligerents before the book issued from the press. But although the book fails in its intention, it is not thereby deprived of value; it needs only to be read as the explanation of an historical situation to be as valuable as ever it was. For example, Mr. Seldes concludes one chapter with a summary that corrects those who believe that America is really the keeper of the world's conscience: "In sum, the attitude of the United States to Europe at war has been that of indifference, based on ignorance,

due to isolation and to the pre-occupation of the country with its own adventure. To that contribute false notions of society, misleading interpretations of history, and, more than these, the lack of an active idealism. It is a hard charge against a country, but, if the United States does not enter the war, it will bear its own punishment." He opposes the idea of the League of Nations, regards it as an instance of America's ignorance of European politics; and suggests instead an Anglo-Franco-American Entente as the only possible combination that America can enter. Being an American, he suffers himself from moral exaltation, talks of America saving herself while she helps to save the world, of the necessity of America to "consecrate" and "dedicate" itself anew to the democratic ideal. His moral fervour produces the effect of cynicism, for it is prefaced with the remark: "The conventions of book-making demand that 'we end on a note of hope'"; and as he has already attacked the "moral superiority" of America, the whole of the last chapter is amusing. Mr. Seldes tries to be serious by referring to Lincoln's speech at Gettysburg, but as he does not show us that the principles of that speech have any relation to the problems of European politics, we can only conclude that the reference was made to give effect to the peroration. But we have become so tired of the Americans who have told us how to settle the war without fighting that we extend a welcome to this American who tells his countrymen that they do not know what they are talking about; and the real "note of hope" on which he ends is that they will learn by experience. They seem now to be beginning their course of instruction.

Inside the German Empire in the Third Year of War. By H. B. Swope. With a Foreword by J. W. Gerard. (Constable. 5s. net.)

Mr. Gerard tells us in his foreword: "The facts and impressions contained in this book, gathered at first hand by the author, whose friendship I value, and whose professional equipment I admire, form an important contribution to contemporaneous history, and possess a referential value for the future." Mr. Swope spent three months in Germany during the latter part of 1916; and, on the whole, he presents a picture that more probably accords with the facts than do the more sensational accounts. He seems to have had no prevision that America would join the Allies, so he had no reason to exaggerate either the distress or the determination of Germany. Instead of telling us that Germany is starving, for example, he tells us that "the very system that is enabling Germany to live was the cause of the once widely believed report that the empire was starving. It was not because she was starving that the new methods were introduced; it was because she was determined not to be starved that they were instituted." He tells us that "the rations to-day allotted in Germany are based upon the crop and produce of 1915, the worst harvest the empire had had in twenty years, and the allotment is based upon a total less than the actual total of that lean year. So it will be seen that even the worst harvest, if repeated, would still leave a small margin for reserve." He admits that "trifles cause grumbling, nerves are on edge, criticism of one another is lavish. All these things, and more, that catch a traveller's mind fade into nothingness compared with the big re-action made on one in Germany, and that is an impression of fixity of intention of gaining an honourable peace or suffering destruction." He records his opinion that the success of the Liberal movement in Germany is assured, but will not take effect until after the war, "first, because it is unwise, they think, to swap horses while crossing a stream; and second, because the democratisation of the country now would be hailed by the Allies as a victory they had won, and that thought does not help the cause of German progress." The plans, he says,

"are not pointing towards a dynastic overthrow. I did not hear one word to the effect that the Hohenzollern rule must end, and there is not, as certain highly placed officials in England believe, a readiness to remove the Imperial crown from the Prussian house and give it to that of Bavaria, Saxony, or Württemberg." It is interesting to discover that months before President Wilson distinguished the German Government from the German people, Dr. Helfferich, and others, distinguished the American people from the American President, believed that the American public "wished a greater friendliness to Germany and German methods than Wilson has shown." This is now practically admitted by Americans who tell us that President Wilson has had to educate the American public to the acceptance of his programme. He writes a chapter on "The Hobgoblin of German Dumping," and says that there are no visible signs of any preparations of such a plan, and says that "the empire to-day is far more concerned with the great difficulties of economic readjustment after the war than she is with plans for external trade conquests." He writes about "Captive Belgium" with much less sympathy than one would expect from an American; admits, indeed, that he was disappointed by the Belgians, and says that "it is evident that there is justice in the German assertion that the Belgians would be better off if they would do more for themselves." Captive France, on the other hand, arouses him to enthusiasm; "the spirit of the French is one of unbroken pride; there is no bending of the neck, no passivity, no yielding to their temporary fate. . . . In the cities of 'German France' the old men and the women—all of them—work. They tend their flocks, they till their fields, they open their shops, and with that thrift which characterises the French they make all the money they can so that later they may help their country recuperate from the ravages of the war. In contradistinction to Belgium, there are no young men—they are all fighting for the Motherland." Of Poland, he gives a deplorable account, tells us that "while the talk of 'free' Poland goes on, and effective action is deferred to await the moment most advantageous to the bargainers, the unfortunate pawns in this game of barter are dying miserably by their thousands." Feed the Poles, or there will be none to free, is his conclusion. He has chapters on Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and the Neutrals, and concludes a very interesting book with some stray notes.

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. By James Joyce. (The Egoist, Ltd. 6s.)

If this book had been written by Dostoevsky, it would have been a masterpiece; and we invite Mr. Joyce to read that famous thirteenth chapter of *Corinthians* and apply to himself the teaching. For his wilful cleverness, his determination to produce cinematographic effects instead of a literary portrait, are due entirely to a lack of charity. He fears to suffer, and will not, therefore, put himself in the place of his hero; he will record with wonderful fidelity, and frequently with remarkable dramatic skill, what happened around or to Stephen Dedalus, but as it is all objectively viewed and objectively rendered, the character has no continuum, no personality. Even the introspective passages have the same character of objectivity; Stephen only observes the thoughts that come to him, only suffers the impact of external emotions, but never do his experiences reveal him to himself or to the reader. There are passages in this book comparable with the best in English literature; the scene wherein Mr. Dedalus carves the Christmas turkey is perfectly rendered, the Jesuit sermons on Hell are vivid intellectual tortures, Stephen's first experience in a brothel, and the whole history of his sexual obsession are given with pitiless accuracy. But Mr. Joyce never

answers the reader's: "Why?": he keeps on the circumference of his hero's mind, and never dives to the centre of his soul. So this portrait seems to be a mere catalogue of unrelated states; there is everything in it that becomes a man, but it never does become the man, Stephen Dedalus. Samuel hewed Agag to pieces, but the pieces were not Agag; and the fragments here offered of the experience of Stephen Dedalus are no substitute for a "portrait of the artist as a young man." It is a composition that does not hang together, a creation into which the creator has forgotten to breathe the breath of life, and, therefore, Stephen Dedalus never becomes a living soul. He never "shows forth" anything but a furtive lust; his occasional exercises in theories of æsthetics have an interest that is not personal, his mind has no apparent relation to his experience. Yet if it fails as a personal portrait, the value of the book as a portrait of young Ireland, Catholic Ireland, cannot be over-estimated. Beware of the men who have no souls, is the warning conveyed to England by this book; they are not even consumed with a holy hatred of those who are opposed to them, contempt, even, is too violent for them, but they conceal an essential dissimilarity under a superficial resemblance of technical proficiency, and are incalculable in their divergence of purpose.

Ideals True and False. By Florence Edgar Hobson. (Headley Bros. 1s. net.)

Mrs. Hobson uses all the clichés of "progress" to explain a very feminine truism. She describes this age as an age of "speed and greed," accuses the upper classes of being slothful and the lower classes of being envious, abuses University education, Smart Society, "road-hogs," without inventing a phrase of her own. The "true" ideals seem all to be based on "the principle of love," which Mrs. Hobson tells us is enunciated in the New Testament; from that principle she derives the simple life, sexual hygiene, and pacific politics. The function of women in international affairs is, she thinks, to quote: "How long, O Lord, how long?" and not to "allow their men to continue without remonstrance the destruction of each other and of our beautiful world"; the women must run about wringing their hands and emitting clichés. Perhaps that is why she calls women "the saner sex." She concludes with a chapter: "Must The War Go On?" and asserts that "there is nothing that can save the world—but a change of heart"; which is as trite an injunction as every other in this book.

Socialism for Pacifists. By A. Fenner Brockway. (National Labour Press. 6d.)

Mr. Fenner Brockway's Socialism is reactionary. He states the "Militarist Ideal" in the terms of its vices, and calls the opposing virtues "The Socialist Ideal." In other words, his Socialism is only Militarism and Capitalism minus the objections to them. This is, of course, the method of melodrama, and has little bearing on practical politics. He commits Socialism to the one principle of election, he assumes a spiritual revolution which will result in such community of spirit that there will be no differences that are incapable of peaceful settlement. But even a homogeneous spirit will find a heterogeneous expression through an articulated social structure that must be more complex than a mere polling-booth. He proceeds to show the causes of war that attach exclusively to Militarism and Capitalism, such as trade and financial rivalry, private property in armament manufacture, the exploitation of subject peoples, all of which Socialism will abolish with the cliché of co-operation. He concludes with the Manifesto of the I.L.P., issued August 11, 1914, dealing with the present war, and also the Report of the I.L.P. to the Executive of the Internationalist Socialist Bureau, October, 1916, both of them elaborately futile expressions of sentiment.

Pastiche.

A NIGHT VISION.

She flutters thro' the empty street
(Eerie and frail and wan),
A mothlike creature, all in white,
Wooing the spectral flowers of night
To feed remorse upon.

She flits along the silent street
(Eerie and wan and frail),
She seems the shadow of a sin
Seeking a soul to enter in,
Ere dawn breaks cold and pale.

FREDERICK L. MITCHELL.

A DIALOGUE.

How can I comfort others, when my self
Doth weep in mists of spectral, haunted gray?
There is no help without; alone thy self
Thy self alone must sacrifice and slay.
Oh, how shall I, so shiftless, dare to pray?
What is so shiftless but thy shifting self?
And how shall I trudge on such weary way?
What is there weary but that craven self?
My bonds are loosening, and there lifts a cloud
Of deadly numbness, fading from my heart:
What lightens like a dayspring from above?
Child, shake the folds from thine enchanted shroud
With all thy science, and with all thine art:
Remorse's keenest spears do thrust in love.

J. A. M. A.

Dear girl, by what delightful chance,
Or what surprising swift design,
Did we meet, daring, in a glance?
Dear girl, was it indeed pure chance
That brought us near to old Romance,
When your bright eyes met mine?
Dear girl, I wonder was it chance,
Or was it some god's deep design?

My Isabella, when she smiles,
Charms the grey winter to grey June;
And my cold heart she so beguiles—
My Isabella, with her smiles—
That summer's in! Tho' between whiles
The hours drag like a long dull tune,
Yet Isabella, when she smiles,
Turns heavy winter to gay June.

C. B. P.

Preston Barracks, Brighton.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

MR. GUMILEFF'S INTERVIEW.

Sir,—I do not think Mr. Gumileff's views should be allowed to pass without some comment. His remarks on French and Russian poetry I am not capable of criticising, except to suggest that the French should leave poetry alone. But I should like to say something both on his general outlook and on his conception of English poetry.

First, then, the tendency he notes for economy in words is due to hurry, distraction, and laziness; laziness, especially, fermenting in an imagination ill-trained and bemused in this iron age. It is not always the artist who is most to blame. The poet to-day needs a perfect armoury of defence and offence, should he propose to practise his art with any real thoroughness. No poet wishes to say poetry. On the contrary, the purer his imagination the nobler and richer is his style. I think a careful examination of Keats' "Ode on a Grecian Urn" will show what I mean. To strive for economy of words is no less vicious than to overload one's style. It exhibits the error of Callimachus, who said that a great book is a great evil. The greatest book that I know is the "Mahabharata," and it is also the wealthiest and the most luxuriant in thought, imagination, and narrative.

Now, turning to English poetry, it is unfortunate that none of Mr. Gumileff's examples should be a poet.

Mr. G. K. Chesterton is a competent and often cheerful stringer of rhymes. Mr. Yeats is reminiscent of no one so much as weaver Bottom—"find out moonshine." "A. E.," when he essays verse, is at once ponderous and passionless. English lyrical creation does not find its highest expression in ballad and folk-lore. We have a notable collection of border-ballads, it is true, but they are only a backwater. The highest expression of the English lyric is in love; and the true stream of English poetry flows through Milton, who crowned his predecessors, to Keats, who might have crowned Milton, had he lived.

Vers libre has won no rights in England. Rhyme is good in lyric, and elegiac and the didactic couplet of Pope, evil in epic and tragedy. Vers libre is the outcome of sloth and preciosity.

A poetic drama will not renew itself in England, at any rate, until the economic position has been adjusted to a proper balance. What may be done for the present is to turn our music-hall revues into satirical comedies after the manner of Aristophanes. Perhaps Mr. Margrie will oblige.

Didactic poetry is not dead; although such as vaunt a sense of humour (the right phrase is self-conceit) may perhaps have grown deaf.

Mystical poetry and drama are very closely allied, as may be seen from a study of the Greek tragedians and our own Elizabethans. Under the parentage of Dostoevsky, Russia should, perhaps, be able to achieve tragedy.

At some hazard to myself (for I have never heard of him before), I will finish with the conjecture that Mr. Gumileff is not himself a poet.

J. A. M. A.

Memoranda.

(From last week's NEW AGE.)

The democratisation of Germany is the condition of a democratic peace.

It is ridiculous to imagine that diplomacy is less in need of organisation than war.

We can conceive the Press as an able seconder of diplomacy in the task of democratising Germany.

The choice is between a truce with Prussia and a peace with Germany.

The barnacles of peace still stick to the offices of war.—"Notes of the Week."

Not what the German Socialists have done is so much our concern as what and why they have left so much undone. We need a collection of the documents that were never written, the manifestoes that were never issued, and the speeches that were never made.

It is only when, in addition to imperialist aims, a will to war exists that war of necessity accompanies imperialism.

The "isolation" of Germany is a German legend rather than an historical fact.—R. M.

On the road of this life, happiness and virtue can go hand-in-hand only when the weather is fair.—RAMIRO DE MAEZTU.

If I am at present expressing any idea to you who read, it is because it is our idea, not because it is my idea.—KENNETH RICHMOND.

Is the printing press destroying the faculties that it was intended to stimulate?

The human form covers a multitude of diverse creatures.

We need a fresh definition of humanity.

Blake may have got the tenses of his visions mixed, and confused what is to come with what has been.—"Readers and Writers."

Superficiality is bound to engulf a generation who abandon leisure.—EDWARD MOORE.

There is no salvation in size.

Mr. Lowes Dickinson is not really a pacifist, he is a legalist; he will allow everybody to fight if they fight when he tells them and for his ideas.—A. E. R.

PRESS CUTTINGS.

Lord H. Cecil (Oxford University, U.) thought the hon. member who had just sat down had greatly exaggerated the force of the consideration that what he was really proposing to do was to impose a restrictive penalty upon persons who had done nothing worse than to avail themselves of an exemption which Parliament had offered to them. To tell a conscientious objector that he would be exempted if a tribunal found that he was sincere and then to turn round and tell him that he was the basest of mankind and unfit for the franchise would be to transgress the principles of legislation and of justice. The State could only act wisely in regard to opinion by not going into the reasonableness of any opinion whatever, but by allowing liberty of opinion, because it was in the interest of truth that liberty of opinion should be allowed. (Hear, hear.) He held that view not simply because of his respect for the religious opinions of other people, but because of his own religious convictions also. It was an indisputable part of Christian belief that if a person sincerely thought a thing was wrong then it was wrong to him. He was entirely out of sympathy with the conscientious objectors, but if they thought it would be doing a wrong thing to fight in the war he did not want his country to descend to the wickedness of forcing people to do what they thought was wrong, or of punishing them because they refused to do what they thought was wrong. There were a great many people who cared about religion, but cared much more profoundly about their country. Those people had embarked upon the path down which Germany had gone. (Hear, hear.) To say that the safety of the republic was the supreme law was profoundly untrue. If the safety of the republic was the supreme law, then the sinking of the Lusitania or the bombing of women and children was right. Not the safety of the republic, but the Divine law was the supreme law; and it was because conscientious objectors most perversely but sincerely adhered to that higher law that it belonged to the credit of the country to respect their convictions. Really sincere and conscientious people, not indeed in their judgment, but in their fidelity, were an example to them all. Let them not refuse the franchise to such people when they were giving it, for example, to persons who had been in rebellion in Ireland against the authority of the British Crown. He earnestly hoped, not for the sake of conscientious objectors, but for the honour and credit of that House, for the sake of the country of which they were citizens, because he would rather die than see abandoned the faith he held so dear, that the amendment would be rejected, and that they would adhere, now and for ever, to the old doctrine that much as they loved their country, they loved something better, and, when appeal was made to that, their answer should be clear, firm, and without hesitation.—"Times" Report.

To the Editor of the "Times."

Sir,—The word "profiteering" is applied indiscriminately to two distinct processes:—(1) Making money in a favourable market for which the seller is not responsible; (2) manipulating the market and artificially raising prices in order to make money. The latter is a cause of high prices, the former a consequence. There is a third sense given to the word by the public in the capacity of shoppers; whenever a shopkeeper charges any price which is higher than they expect or care to pay, they now call it profiteering, though he may be losing money. It is a way of expressing annoyance, and it swells the general volume of irritation, but has no other importance. The confusion between the other two meanings is serious. The speakers and writers who daily denounce "profiteering" constantly mix them up, and it is useless to expect anything else of them. But when the Government set out avowedly to stop "profiteering" they should know exactly what they are aiming at, for which a clear conception of the meaning of the word is necessary. The distinction formulated above is not merely verbal; it entails moral,

legal, and practical differences. The second sort of "profiteering" is criminal; it can be peremptorily stopped and heavily punished without doing any harm at all. The first is not criminal, and interference is apt to entail the serious consequence of drying up supplies. I do not say that there should be no interference, but unless extreme care is taken it is sure to do more harm than good.

Of course, the expert advisers of the Government understand this very well, but the public do not; and when large promises are made in response to popular demands there is a risk of showy but misdirected and mischievous action. That risk increases with the expectations raised, and already the public have been encouraged to expect impossibilities from the new food control. I claim the right to utter a warning because nine months ago you permitted me in the "Times" to foretell the situation that has since developed and to point out how to avoid it. What I fear now is that the Government may plunge more deeply into the bog in an attempt to fulfil exaggerated expectations. To enter into further explanations would make too heavy a demand on your space, and I must forbear.

A. SHADWELL.

An immense work of social reconstruction has become unavoidable. It can no more be brushed away as a Utopia. People feel the need of reconstruction, and everyone can already distinguish its main lines. And it is high time for the workers to hesitate no more; to take this work in hand without waiting for the State or the upper classes to do it for them. Life itself has indicated the main lines of reconstruction:—

The production of all that is necessary for the nation as well as the distribution of the produced wealth must be organised in the direct interest of all. It is no more a matter of struggling for adding to the wages a few shillings, which usually are soon swallowed by all sorts of exploiting intermediaries. The workers, the producers, must become the managers of the producing concerns. They must settle the aims and the means of production, and society must recognise their right of disposing of the capital that is needed for that. As soon as the war has come to an end you will see yourselves compelled, comrades and friends, to set to work in order to accomplish that immense task. The history of mankind imposes it upon you; you are bound to accept it.—PRINCE P. KROPOTKIN.

The new Labour movement has gone beyond bread-and-butter problems. . . . It is working for something other than increased wages, shortened hours, or improved sanitary conditions. It wants to control its own destiny. It is working for a share in management. . . . The worker begins to suspect that there will be less liberty for him under mere State control. . . . As it is self-direction that he wants, he looks for it to direct co-operation with his own mates. He is harking back to the self-governed workshop, or at any rate to the self-governed industry. He wants to substitute Industrial Unionism for Trade Unionism, and hankers after a Guild which is to supersede the Trade Union proper altogether by amalgamating employer and employed.—"Manchester Guardian."

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