

THE NEW AGE

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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

THERE is plenty of evidence that the ferment of democracy is at work in Germany; and that we have only as yet begun to see its effects. Without attaching too much importance to the news that is allowed to be exported, much of it is too significant to be ignored. The movement that began with the German Minority Socialists and extended, after their visit to Stockholm, to the Majority Socialists as well, has now reached the more orthodox parties of the German Reichstag, and thence has invaded the Council of State itself. Everything is now in the melting-pot in Germany; and it is highly improbable that the new Chancellor, who is a Junker and a reactionary, and, it is said, the nominee of the Crown Prince, will be able to restore things to their former state. It is true that even if we accept the programme of the German Minority Socialists as the programme of revolutionary Germany (how strange, by the way, the phrase sounds, yet there is to-day a meaning in it), we shall not find that it contains anything constitutionally revolutionary; and from this point of view the "Times" is correct in stating that there is still a deep gulf between the democracy of Germany and the democracies of the rest of the world. But, on the other hand, we must remember not only the difficulties of the censorship in Germany, which still remains in the fist of the Militarists, but the much more important circumstance that the declared ends of the German Minority Socialists are unattainable except by the means of a constitutional revolution. The Junkers themselves, if not our own Press, know this very well; and in anticipation of the implicit demand, have set about consolidating reaction around the person of the Crown Prince. And it is not for us to be less cognisant of the democratic demand of Germany than it is for them to be apprehensive of it. It is true, again, that to all appearance the revolution, even if it should be made, will have as its first object, not the moral reformation of Germany, but, in the words of "Vorwärts," Germany's "success in the war." But on this it may be remembered that a false philosophy cannot be destroyed in a day; and that in any event, since a

German success is materially impossible, German democracy will surely learn to look elsewhere for success than to war. The world may therefore hope that come what may in Germany now, the first condition of a democratic peace, namely, the democratisation of Germany, is in train.

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There is no doubt, however, that the Allies can hasten the process if they are so minded. Already, be it observed, it has been remarked in the Austrian journals that the present "crisis" in Germany is due to Mr. Lloyd George's offer of a just peace with a democratised Germany. And how much more effective would a common declaration on the part of the Allies be, if it should repeat the promise of Mr. Lloyd George. Advantage, we trust, will be taken of the fact that the Allies, including Russia and America, are to meet early in August, to announce plainly their resolution to treat only with a constitutional Germany, but to treat with a constitutional Germany justly and with confidence. And if to these assurances of the Allied Governments there could be added the assurances of good-will and good faith of the parliaments and socialist parties of the Allied nations, we should not despair of saving the world a fourth winter of war. Let us be precise in a matter that concerns the lives of a million men. What are we saying? It is, in the first place, to affirm that there exists now in Germany a state of mind more open to reason than any that has hitherto prevailed. In the second place, it is to urge that the Allied Governments, now on the point of meeting for the purpose of unifying a front inclusive of both New Russia and America, should seize the occasion to emphasise and to elaborate the distinction between the Prussian system and the German people first made by Mr. Wilson and afterwards turned to such good account by Mr. Lloyd George. In the third place, it is to urge that the parliaments in each of the Allied countries should by special resolution confirm the declarations of their Governments relative to the future of a democratised and parliamentarised Germany. Finally, it is to recommend the assembly of an International Socialist Conference with the object of counter-signing the undertakings of the Allied nations with the

signature of the Socialist movement. We believe that if these steps were taken, not only might the war be brought speedily to an end, but a permanent peace might ensue such as is probable upon no other terms.

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The Paris "Le Temps" and several journals in our own country imagine themselves to be very acute in warning the world against a sham democratisation of Germany. How do we know, they say, that the wily Prussians may not be assuming a democratic resemblance as a means to their own protection? It may be so, we do not deny; but remembering that these same journals warned us, and have been proved wrong in it, that the Stockholm Conference was a "trap" for the Allies deliberately set by the Prussian Government; recollecting, moreover, the high improbability of compromise with democracy on the part of Prussian Junkers, of whom subtlety is the last quality to be predicted—it appears to us that the apprehensions of our timid Press are groundless. There are also, it must be remarked, particular signs by which a genuine democracy can be distinguished. (We use the word, of course, in its political sense.) And the chief of them is the responsibility of an Executive to a popularly elected Chamber. If, therefore, we say, Prussian simulation of democracy should be carried to the extent of imitating this particular sign and of setting up in Germany a Government responsible to and sanctioned by a popularly elected Assembly, the "trap" may be intended for the Allies, but it is Prussia that will have fallen into it. There are other signs, no doubt, of considerable if of relatively less immediate importance, signs, for instance, of a change of heart in the popular parties of Germany. To begin with, we should expect of a democratic régime in Germany, and particularly if it were controlled by the Socialist element, something like a revolution in the national outlook upon foreign affairs and a completely changed conception of foreign policy. This would be in accordance with the view of Engels, who used to adjure the German Socialists that on the day of their triumph they would need to restore to their neighbours the territories (notably Alsace-Lorraine), which the German Empire had plundered from them. Atonement for the past misdeeds of Prussian militarism would, in fact, be imperative on German democracy. Then, too, we should expect of a genuine German democracy submission to the principles of right and fair play and neighbourliness, and the consequent repudiation of the claims and methods of mere force. Force on the side of Right the world would allow Germany to continue to employ; but Force as the determinant of Right is precisely the error into which the Empire has fallen, and from which, therefore, German democracy must deliver itself. Finally, we should expect that a German democracy would put itself on a level with other democracies and recognise in all temporal matters the practical finality of the judgment of the world. Admittedly it is a rough test of justice; and it can be impugned upon theoretical grounds. But, in the main, there is nothing better; and, in fact, it is a court of judgment that lends itself to progressive improvement. Once procure that every democracy in a world wholly composed of democracies shall implicitly refer its external conduct to the judgment, not of any, but of all the remaining democracies, the prospect of its good citizenship becomes practically certain. The League of Nations under these circumstances would need to be little more than a League of Honour. All this, we admit, is travelling for the moment beyond our evidence, which is scarcely, at the time of writing, sufficient to establish the first step of it, namely, the formal democratisation of Germany. In another sense, however, these spiritual changes are, we believe, implicit even in the formal democratisation of Germany; and, in any case, a constitutional revolution in Ger-

many will be an event not second in importance to the Revolution in Russia. May it be swift in coming! And may it be afterwards said that the Allies did not delay it by a day; but, on the contrary, brought it nearer by years!

* * *

It was only natural that the recent air-raid upon London with all its attendant circumstances should have provoked a discussion that still shows no signs of coming to an end. The subject is, indeed, inexhaustible in its general aspect; and in its particular aspect it calls for an immediate policy. Mr. Lloyd George's method upon this occasion, as upon so many before, was the employment of the well-known "fork" or dilemma. To the civilians who demanded that London should be defended, he put the question whether they wished to rob the soldiers at the front. As if that alternative were the only alternative open to us! As a matter of fact, and from our own experience of all the raids made upon London, if the true alternatives were to be presented in that form, the practically unanimous choice of the civilians would be to keep our troops provided at any risks to ourselves. And Mr. Lloyd George knows this as well as we do. But equally, as a matter of fact, it is not the case that the true alternative to the defence of civilians is the neglect of the troops. The national and commonsense demand is for the defence of both. It did not suit Mr. Lloyd George, however, to admit that both the country and the Army can and should be—could and should have been—defended, for that would be to admit executive and administrative inefficiency. Better from his point of view that the public should be made to appear selfish and to be demanding protection at the cost of the Army. In this manoeuvre, unfortunately, the House of Commons by acquiescing in a secret session aided and abetted him, for nothing has been allowed to be published that in any way relieves the public of the implied charge of selfish cowardice. We are therefore to remain silent though unsatisfied.

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Upon the larger question of the moral legitimacy of killing civilians, Lord Montagu has written and spoken inconsiderately, but he has been far surpassed by Mr. Bernard Shaw in a letter in the current issue of the "Nation." In Mr. Shaw's view, not only is it perfectly consistent with morality for an army to make war upon a civilian population, but it is even "the way to win any war," which, as yet, our military commanders have not clearly grasped. The whole object, he contends, of an army of defence is the prevention of the slaughtering of the civilian population; and it therefore follows that the first object of an army of attack is to get at the civilians over the heads of their military defence. It is a novel doctrine, which is only to say that it is Mr. Shaw's; for Mr. Shaw must be novel or nothing. It chimes in, moreover, very harmoniously with the Prussian terrorist theory (and practice) the avowed object of which is by attacking civilians to compel them to withdraw their troops. But that it has any other justification than a highly debatable expediency—very taking, no doubt, to men like Mr. Shaw, whom war so horrifies that they will resort to worse horrors to put an end to it—we doubt. The two assumptions upon which Mr. Shaw and the Prussians (for different ends, of course) proceed in common are both, in fact, false. They assume that any means that can be employed to effect their ends (victory in the Prussian case, the abolition of war in Mr. Shaw's case) are morally legitimate; in other words, that Right is Utility; and they assume likewise that terrorism is such a means. But not only are they wrong in the major proposition, since Right and Utility are different concepts only *sometimes* in harmony; but they are wrong in the minor proposition, since it is only *sometimes* that terrorism really succeeds. To argue that all means of

obtaining your ends are legitimate is to deny the existence of any other principle of legitimacy than utility, that is, of expediency; and to argue that terrorism is a universal means is to fly in the face of the evidence even of the present war. For our part, regarding neither victory in this war nor the abolition of all war as above every other consideration, we shall continue to believe with the world that war upon civilians is not war, but murder. It is true that, as Mr. Shaw says, it is of no use to squeal or to call for reprisals or to denounce the enemy as murderers. Our business is to defend ourselves. But because we quite properly defend ourselves against such attacks and refrain from squealing, it is wrong to conclude that we thereby admit their legitimacy. We dispute it in the only way left to us.

* * *

It is obvious that the Government is shirking the practical inferences to be drawn from the Mesopotamian Report prepared by a Commission of its own selection. Here we have a Report, amply documented, entirely free from party bias, and, humanly speaking, absolutely fair, yet which, because it requires disciplinary action to be taken against men in high places, is to be ignored and passed over by the very Government that directed its preparation. "Under no circumstances," said Sir F. E. Smith, "would the Government sanction punitive action on the result of the Report" alone. If there was to be punitive action at all, it should only be after a Judicial Inquiry had been held, and after the Judicial Inquiry still another sort of Inquiry, and then another; in short, an endless series. We really do not see to what other conclusion the public can come than that offenders in high places are beyond the reach of discipline—we will not say of punishment, for there is no question of it. So far as the public is concerned, the issues are very plain. A Report is prepared by a Commission of representative men with all the material evidence before them that convicts of gross inefficiency a number of men some of whom are servants and others of whom are or were Ministers of the Crown. It is surely not necessary to be "an ill-informed and passionate mob" clamouring for the hounding out of public life of men of unimpeachable efficiency to regard the Report as substantially just and to require its inferences to be carried into effect. Either, in fact, we are to charge the Commission with criminal malice—and Mr. Balfour, it will be observed, scarcely hesitated even at this—or we are to assume the general fairness of their Report and to charge certain Ministers and State-servants with culpable inefficiency. And which of these courses we are likely to take in our minds we can leave our readers to decide for themselves. For ourselves, we can have no doubt about it whatever. We could more easily believe that every word of the Report is true than that a single statement by the men now on their defence is anything more than plausible.

* * *

The difficulty of applying disciplinary action to the persons involved in the case arises, however, from the admixture of Ministers with servants of the Crown. Against servants of the Crown, whether civil or military, there is the remedy of dismissal or retirement at the discretion of the Ministers of the day; and if it were the case in the present matter that only servants of the Crown were implicated, the action to be taken would be simple. But against Ministers what remedy have we, now that impeachment has gone out of fashion, and they have not all, like Mr. Austen Chamberlain, the honour to resign? We confess that we do not see what can be done in the matter save to defeat them at the next election. The present case, too, is further complicated by the fact that, for the most part, the servants and the Ministers of the Crown who are together implicated in the inefficiency appear to have arranged to

stick by each other. It is as if each party had agreed that neither should be "punished" if not both; and that, in fact, nobody should be. Again, therefore, the public is in a difficulty. We might, on the one hand, be satisfied with the regulation "punishment" of the Crown servants—by the means, that is, of retirement; but the Ministers forbid it. We might, on the other hand, be content with the resignation of the chief political persons; but they refuse it. What is then to be done? A string of more or less desperate remedies presents itself: to censure the Commission, and to destroy as worthless the evidence it has collected and the conclusions to which it has come; to continue as if nothing had happened, and never to mention again the blessed word Mesopotamia; to dismiss all the Crown servants involved, and to leave the involved Ministers to follow, or not, to follow, the example of Mr. Chamberlain; to impeach the responsible Ministers; to close the House of Commons as an obsolete body proven powerless to carry out its only task, that of controlling the Crown's Executive. All of these, as we say, are somewhat desperate measures; but they are all of them theoretically possible. Our choice among them is for dismissal and enforced resignation, at no matter what pains.

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Mr. Balfour would have been better advised to say nothing than to manufacture such a defence as he attempted to make of Lord Hardinge in particular. Lord Hardinge, it seems, offered his resignation of his present office upon two occasions recently, but, on each occasion, Mr. Balfour refused to accept it 'on the broad ground that the country requires the services of all its citizens in time of war.' The ground is, however, too broad even for Mr. Balfour to occupy with a personal defence; for, in the first place, the principle would exempt from "punishment" every criminal (not to say the thousands of conscientious objectors!) in the land: and, in the second place, the question must be put whether the services of any citizen must needs be retained in a post for which he has been demonstrated to be unfitted. Must a General, for instance, always be employed as a General, or even in the Army at all? Must an administrator, like Lord Hardinge, be always employed as an administrator? Must a Minister be always a Minister? The proposition is preposterous; and it only derives whatever appearance of sense it possesses from the fact that, preposterous as it is, it is practically axiomatic in Government circles. Mr. Balfour was, therefore, in no sense more than indiscreet in avowing a rule which is commonly acted upon; for it is the fact, as he inadvertently revealed it, that the rule of the governing clique (which includes Ministers and high officers of the Crown) is that nothing save death disqualifies any of its members for any office suitable, not to their fitness but to their rank. This is even carried to the length of requiring that not only shall every man of "Government" rank be never disqualified for office, but that, unless he forfeits the respect of the clique, he shall never be out of office in one form or another. All for State-employment in the highest ranks; and State-employment in the highest rank for all—that is the rule which Mr. Balfour by implication admitted to exist among the governing clique to which he himself belongs. But we need not be Jacobins to dispute it, or anything more, indeed, than democrats of a very moderate conviction. It is commonly enough questioned by men of precisely this order whether democracy is capable of efficiency, whether democracy is compatible with discipline. The reply is that democracy is both capable of efficiency and compatible with discipline; but that neither efficiency nor discipline is compatible with the pseudo-aristocracy, the oligarchy, defended by Mr. Balfour. The sooner democracy breaks up the governing clique, the sooner merit will come by its own.

In the course of his halting apology Mr. Balfour excused the unpreparedness of the Government on the ground that if the Government had demanded the necessary taxes Ministers "would have been turned out of office." What reason this is, even if it were true, for neglecting to safeguard the public, we do not know. Resignation, we should have thought, is always possible, and it is usually honourable. And when the public is of such a temper that it will not supply its Executive with the means of carrying out the national work, the honourable course for statesmen is to resign, and to keep on resigning, until the public is better instructed. The assumption made by Mr. Balfour is, however, even if true, within the power of statesmen to remedy. In the first place, it is not very often that it is the public that objects; it is usually, as Mr. Balfour knows perfectly well, one or other of the commercial interests. In the second place, the reason for the objection when it is popular, is invariably, we should say, one of two: it is the refusal of a Government to take the public into its confidence, or it is the attempt of the Government to cast the burden of the proposed expenditure upon the class least able to bear it. These circumstances provoke the resistance to expenditures which Mr. Balfour makes an excuse for refraining from them. But, in truth, they are excuses and nothing more. Mark, however, how beautifully these politicians agree together. Almost at the same time that Mr. Balfour was admitting the unpreparedness of the Government and throwing the blame upon the public, Lord Haldane was protesting that the Government had been prepared for the war beyond even the demands of our present Allies, the French. "The French General Staff," he said, "advised the Government that if we could put a hundred thousand men within fifteen days on the eastern frontier of France we should have made such a contribution to the military power of France as would probably enable her to withstand any attack that could be made on her while our enormous Fleet was operating at sea." In the case of Mr. Balfour, the excuse for our costly early failures is that the Government was not properly prepared, the reason being that the public would not provide the necessary money. In the account, however, given by Lord Haldane, we were as fully prepared as the Government thought necessary; only, unfortunately, the Government's forecast and the actual facts turned out not to coincide. What are we to do with politicians who are never wrong though all goes wrong? With an admitted inefficiency which, however, has no responsible agency? To return to the Mesopotamian Report, we have in the Report itself an exposure of inefficiency and incompetence, the equal of which we had imagined impossible in a modern society. Thousands of men lost their lives under the most horrible circumstances by it. But from the speeches of the parties concerned, and of their advocates and colleagues, we are to learn that, in fact, all the human agencies are guiltless. It cannot be so. Either the Report is untrue, or some of the parties are to blame; and in the latter and more probable event, we sincerely hope that discussion of the form will not end in overlooking the need of "punishment."

* * *

A gloomy view may well be taken, after the East Clare election, of the prospects of the Convention as a means of bringing peace to Ireland. The rapidity and the completeness of the shifting of the centre of political gravity to the Left, which we foresaw would follow from the events of last Easter twelvemonth, have nevertheless taken the majority of Englishmen (and many Irishmen, too, for that matter) by surprise. But Ireland is a country of surprises; and in nothing more than in politics are surprises the delight of Ireland. On the face of things as revealed in the East Clare election, it would seem that the former demand

for Home Rule within the Empire has now been displaced by a demand on the part of the rising generation for complete independence and a native republican form of government. In other words, the price that England is now being called upon to pay for the "loyalty" of Ulster is an Irish Republic! Matters, however, have not yet come to this pass in actuality; and we should deprecate on this account both pessimism and any talk of coercion. It is undoubtedly true that the popular cry in Ireland at this moment is for an independent Republic; and it is no less true in our opinion that the cry will continue and become intensified as election follows election and the peace conference for the future settlement of the world draws near. On the other hand, there are opposing elements even within the Sinn Fein movement itself. In the first place, the origin of the demand is itself somewhat superficial, being no more deeply rooted than in the circumstances of the moment and in the absence of any positive and pleasing alternative. Why should not Ireland be in the prevailing fashion of independent nationality and demand her "rights" at a World Conference with other would-be nations? And again, Ireland, like Nature, abhors a vacuum; and since for the time being and in the absence of positive statesmanship Ireland is without a defined future, what else is there for an imaginative people to suggest but a full-blooded Republic? In the second place, we cannot discover in the Sinn Fein movement the depth of political thought necessary to the foundation of an independent nation. A nation cannot be created out of feeling, however intense; it is a work of art like any other, and demands qualities of thought and character which are anything but commonly exhibited in the Sinn Fein movement. But this is to accuse it of shallowness and to predict for it, given proper handling, a comparatively early demise. The means to this end are obvious. What is needed is a counter-proposal to Republicanism which shall be at once practical, striking, and immediate. It will be useless for the Convention to recommend the partition of Ireland in any form or under any disguise whatever. A united Ireland is the very least that can be offered with any chance of withdrawing attention from Sinn Fein. It will be likewise useless to bring in even complete Home Rule on the advice of the Convention and by the consent of the British Parliament without *first* requiring the consent of the Irish people. Finally, it will be useless to delay to do something until the war is over; what is to be done must be done at once. We recommend that the Convention should meet and refer its decisions to a specially elected Irish constituent assembly for ratification; and that at this latter meeting the final question of the complete independence or the responsible dependence of Ireland should be thrashed out. We have little doubt of what the result would be. Ireland at heart is not as red as she is painted.

CLOUDS.

Oh, let me lie where I can see
Those towering galleons cross the sky,
Moving with gentle majesty
To havens hidden from man's eye.

On summer's evening calmly bright
God's tiny fisher-boats are seen,
I watch their silver keels till Night
Engulfs in shade their lovely sheen.

'Twere bliss to ride that magic sea,
Watching bright birds like fishes dart,
Facing the Sun's fair symmetry,
Forming of paradise a part:
Whilst in the immeasurable deep
Mankind remains, to laugh or weep.

T. A. COLLINS

The Farmer.

ANOTHER "GREAT DELUSION."

By Sea crow.

PROBABLY not within living memory has the British Farmer been so much in the limelight as during the past few months. From the "wings" of his rural retreat, he has been hauled on to the "stage" of the nation, and there discussed, praised, instructed, harangued, sympathised with, and appealed to, by Parliament, Press, and People.

Every department of Government has evinced an interest in him. The Board of Agriculture, in its fatherly way, has been tendering him advice every day, and dreaming of him every night. The War Office has persisted in maintaining close, if somewhat inharmonious, relations with him (and the farmer has found salvation only at the tribunals). The Food Controller, fearing for the existence of his office, if there is no home-grown food to "control," has urged Giles violently on; whilst the Director of National Service has promised the means of propulsion. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has not by any means forgotten him; and even the Admiralty (ably supported by the Premier himself) has not been "all at sea" in its call to speed the plough.

Politicians in general have been shouting the praises of the farmer; and, at the same time, supplicating his assistance; whilst the Fourth Estate, not to be outdone, has for weeks been proclaiming his patriotic attitude in face of untold grievances, and advocating the very tenderest treatment only.

Not only has the agriculturist been "snowed under" with printed matter gratuitously sent him, but he has been overwhelmed and wearied to distraction by the unsolicited attentions of a fussy multitude.

With the pæans of praise still ringing in his ears, he now would fain retire to the seclusion of his fields and hedgerows, happy in the knowledge that his reputation as a patriot and loyal subject of the Crown had not only not suffered, but had actually risen to a much higher level!

Since all the great advertising agencies of the country have been busily engaged in sounding the praises of the farmer, the uninitiated public has naturally grown to regard him as the very embodiment of patriotism, and a pattern for all good citizens to follow.

Would that this prevailing idea were the correct one, for then, indeed, we might with some confidence look forward to our country re-asserting its old self in the world of agriculture, and of restoring to us that "Merrie Englande" of which we have read.

But such cherished hopes may be banished while yet they are young, for the whole thing is a myth—an extraordinary fallacy which has taken possession of thousands of people—a "great delusion"!

If the greatness of our country has been largely due to the industry of its farmers, then the strain has considerably deteriorated. If national pre-eminence is to be dependent on agriculture, then God help England!

[N.B.—To avoid any misunderstanding, it should be here mentioned that the remarks throughout this article refer only to the English farmer, and, more especially, to the larger ones. Beyond knowing that the Scotsman—showing exceptional enterprise, energy, and technical knowledge in the intensive cultivation of every available square inch of land—has gained for himself a position pre-eminent in the world of agriculture; and that the Irishman—content with small returns (and large areas of derelict land!)—occupies an unenviable position at the other end of the list; beyond being aware of these facts, I am not sufficiently acquainted with the industry outside England to offer criticism thereon.]

All over the country can be seen the rolling billows

of grass-land that once were "under plough," and every year adds to their acreage. The '80's and '90's are referred to as the periods when the transition was most marked, prior to which it is admitted that the farmer really did enjoy good times!

To a very large extent the farmer himself is to blame for the present lamentable state of affairs. When, after years of easy-going prosperity, he finally awoke to find that enterprising foreign and colonial farmers were forestalling him in his own markets, did he at once throw off his inertia and tackle the problem? No; he just looked around him, and, finding that stock-raising would not only bring a fair profit but be far less troublesome into the bargain, he chose this line of least resistance—and the disastrous effect of his negative attitude is to-day being felt in every home of the kingdom.

He, of course, will deny this charge most strenuously and explain to you in the old typical "grousing" way that the curse of British agriculture has been the selfishness and indifference of the large landowners and the ignorance of Governments in general.

Undoubtedly many landlords shockingly abuse the responsibilities of their positions, and act very unfairly by their tenants, with the result that the latter are often deterred from doing their best with the farms. And, again, the large stretches of waste and "luxury" land to be seen, unfortunately, throughout the country will always provide the tenant farmer with an excuse—not altogether an unjustifiable excuse—for not increasing his own particular area of arable land. Other sore grievances of his are the depredations to his crops by deer, game, and vermin "preserved" for the sport of the leisured classes; and also the frequently anomalous and unreasonable nature of the terms of his agreement. It is a notorious fact that some landlords refuse to allow their land to be ploughed up, even though, as in most cases, the land previously grew corn! Just now, however, a farmer is happily relieved of the consequences of a breach of his agreement if, by breaking up pasture, he is following directions received under the Defence of the Realm Regulations.

But the landlord question has of late years been constantly before the public, and cannot be further dealt with in this article, the object of which is to make known a few facts about the tenant-farmer himself.

The proper place in which to seek his true character is surely the neighbourhood in which he lives. The country-townsmen will not tell you very much because being dependent for his living, to a very large extent, on the agricultural community, he has to be more or less discreet in his talk; but go to soil-stained Hodge in his corduroys—he is generally free from 10 p.m. to 4 a.m.—and he, perhaps, will be induced to enlighten you.

The present crisis demands equality of sacrifice, which, if unobtainable otherwise, must be enforced by law.

Now, the only section of farmers who have responded in any way commensurate with their abilities to the appeal for more cornland is that section least able to take the risk—the smallholders—and all honour to them. They heard the country's call, and forthwith endeavoured to do what they could to meet the want, even though it meant (as in many cases) hiring plough and horses to do it. They didn't all start to point to some big neighbour and say, "When he ploughs up that bit of land yonder, it will be time enough for me to begin." The example came from the smallholder; the larger man hasn't followed.

One is justified in asking whether gambling with the food of the nation is to be any longer permitted, or whether the farmer is to be made to fall into line with the rest of his countrymen, and bear a fair share of the national burden.

Mentally, the farmer sees no other horizon than that which bounds his own farm. Within those bounds he can provide himself with nearly all the essential, as well as many non-essential, foods—meal, flour, bread, meat, poultry, rabbits, game, vegetables, fruit, milk, butter, cheese, eggs, cider, etc., and the farmhouse "table" will show any astonished visitor that Giles doesn't stint himself! Such being his state of self-support, he is incapable of appreciating the wants of less-fortunate people, and thus the scarcity of supplies to-day is largely due to his hoarding of farm-produce for the purpose of commanding even higher prices than at present prevail.

There is the potato scandal as an example of this wretched scheming. Tons and tons of potatoes were held back by growers for the sake of the extra £1 a ton! It was nothing to them that long queues of anxious people should spend hours in all kinds of weather awaiting the opportunity to buy a few tubers, and then often being disappointed. Was it nothing more than a coincidence that exceptionally severe frosts came and destroyed huge quantities of this hoarded food?

Whilst that gallant band of heroes at Gallipoli were fighting like demons, and, alas, falling like autumn leaves, a farmer whom I met in the train confessed quite unblushingly during the course of conversation—a conversation, needless to say, entirely "shop," for in public places, especially, farmers delight in shouting their favourite subject, irrespective of the feelings of anybody else present—that personally he was not over-anxious to see the Dardanelles opened for a while! That event would, of course, have released the huge stocks of Russian wheat and adversely influenced the home markets! To-day the farmer has the face to accept 90s. a quarter for his produce, and bread is 1s. a loaf!

Again, just recently the Board of Agriculture have been advocating by means of lectures, etc., the extension and development of the cheesemaking industry. It was pointed out at a meeting recently held in my neighbourhood that it would prove an advantage to the country at the present time if rather more cheese and less butter were made. The adaptability of female labour for this work was emphasised, and expert advice was promised to anybody interested. The farmers present evinced little interest in the patriotic side of the question—reference to which only seemed to bore them—but the financial possibilities of the scheme encouraged much discussion. The lecturer's inability to promise anything more than moderate profits naturally militated against the success of the undertaking.

Now look at the peculiar system of labour, and of other matters akin to it.

Away across the fields, adjoining some cowstalls, or, maybe, stables, stands a small, comfortless, dilapidated cottage wherein resides Hodge. All the year round, Sunday, very often, as well as weekday, he is "up before the lark in the morning" and working hard until the going down of the sun. Of course he must be earning big wages by slaving like this. You notice that he is maintaining a wife and four youngsters, and this evidence strengthens the impression. True, the midday "spread" in the cottage contrasts rather unfavourably with that in the big house up yonder, but then, it may be, that working people prefer lard to butter, or that they believe in only bread, grease, and insipid tea for meals. Perhaps the reason is because the breadwinner, in addition to his rent-free cottage, receives only fourteen shillings a week for his labour! Fourteen shillings a week for a citizen of the richest country in the world!

Needless to say, an occasional rabbit, hare, or bird of the air would undoubtedly prove a most welcome change of diet to Hodge, even if it did not, indeed, constitute a very special treat, and he could hardly

be blamed, you would think, for taking one of the hundreds running wild about the farm, and which were sent for mankind in general. Yet he would be committing a dreadful offence, and his master (well named, indeed) would take good care to see that it was fully atoned for before the magistrates.

Fourteen shillings a week! Yes, and even this has taken years to reach; it used to be 10s., 9s., and still less, and the employer is not at all ashamed to recall those days.

Was it any wonder that the country youth flocked to munition works and to other decently paid jobs? The farmer at first pretended to ignore the movement, but when the shortage of labour began to make itself felt, he realised that the situation could be saved only by the offer of rather more attractive wages. The revelation was a bitter blow to him: All his antiquated standards would have to be revised! He had never contemplated meeting the awful spectre, yet now, here it was, risen suddenly right before him. Reluctantly—very reluctantly—he called his serfs around him, and in tones of great condescension, made it known that it was his benevolent intention to increase each man's pay to the prodigious extent of fully 2s. or 3s. a week! It is not known whether the beneficiaries collapsed under the effect of this remarkable announcement, but, as regards the farmer himself, it is reasonable to suppose that he has never slept peacefully since. No spirit of justice or generosity, he it noted, prompted this sudden act on his part. Nothing but sheer necessity and self-interest.

Even the revised meagre scale of pay could not lessen the joy felt by Hodge at the Government's recent welcome announcement of a minimum wage of 25s. a week—a figure that had never for a single moment entered into his realms of possibility. Do not let it be supposed, however, that the farmer has the slightest intention of shouldering any part of this burden!

Never by any chance does Hodge enjoy a holiday in the real sense of the word—there are no early closing days for agricultural workers, for they, apparently, "are not as other men are." Should he succeed in obtaining a day off, his pocket suffers to the extent of at least a day's wages, which is tantamount to temporary dismissal. Yet the farmer himself may be seen perhaps as often as three times a week attending neighbouring markets, ostensibly with the intention of doing business, but actually to meet his friends and make an enjoyable outing of it.

Some people might wonder why any man should be fool enough to continue to work under such conditions as have been outlined, but therein lies the kernel of the whole question. It is due, in three words, to force of circumstances.

(To be concluded.)

Liberty and Morality

By Ramiro de Maeztu.

AGAINST my criticism of the Liberal principle it has been said that duty is founded on Liberty, since an action is only good when it has been freely willed. But in reply to this theory I maintain that we do our duty when we execute the best possible action in any given circumstances; and that the goodness or the badness of the action is independent of the will of the agent. The action is good or bad irrespective of our liking or disliking to perform it; of the approval or disapproval of our judgment; and irrespective of having been performed by a blind spontaneous impulse, by deliberate choice, or by external compulsion.

By what method can he prove this assertion?

"Method consists." Descartes said in "Discours de la Methode," "in reducing step by step obscure and involved propositions in those that are simpler, and then, starting from the intuitive apprehensions of those that are absolutely simple, attempting to ascend to a knowledge of all the others by exactly similar steps." Descartes owes the greater part of his fame to his ontological argument—"I think, therefore I am"—in which he based truth on the ego. This argument is incomplete; for I do not merely think, but I think something, and this something in general is for us at least as self-evident as the ego. The positive merit of Descartes is to have maintained that the ultimate criterion of the knowledge of truth for men is the self-evident intuition. And nowadays we may add that when our judgment refers to the sensible world, the ultimate criterion is the intuition of the sensible, when it refers to the non-sensible world (e.g., the infinitesimal world of mathematics), then it is the intuition of the intellective, and when to the moral world it is the intuition of the moral; and so on.

Against this criterion arises prejudice. All prejudice is based on the belief that we possess already a veridical system of interpreting facts and tendencies; and that if evidence conflicts with our system, we ought to prefer the maintenance of our system to the acceptance of the evidence. This prejudice is characteristic of almost all intellectual men in modern countries. They are so much in love with their system that they have closed to themselves the springs of evidence. They do not realise that closed systems are only possible for our consciousness after an arbitrary act of the will has ostracised a priori all the rebellious evidences.

An analysis of our proposition will clear up the point. We began by saying that a good action may have been performed either with liking or with disliking. We call it sacrifice when a good action, freely executed, is performed with dislike. The possibility of sacrifice is denied by every system that asserts that in a conflict of desires men are necessarily determined in their action by that desire that most completely satisfies their liking. Determinists of this kind will not hesitate to maintain that Jesus liked the Cross, and Socrates the hemlock. Mr. Bernard Shaw has said that the three million volunteers joined the Army because they liked war. And Mr. Bertrand Russell, without being a determinist of this kind, has maintained that they were driven to the war by a blind spontaneous impulse.

These examples demonstrate the difficulties of dialectics with men so attached to their systems that they do not admit the evidence which would cast a doubt on them. Nothing is more evident than the fact that among the volunteers who joined the Army some did so because they liked war, some from an adventurous impulse, some from the example set by the aristocratic classes, etc.; but also many, hundreds of thousands, went to the war simply because they thought it their duty to serve a cause which they believed to be just. And that this obvious interpretation is true we may confirm by the evidence of our own experience, because every man knows that many times he acts from habit, many times from impulse, many from ambition, many from liking, but sometimes he has acted on the appeal of an objective duty, even against his habits, his impulses, his ambitions, and his likes.

But the fact that many men joined, as Mr. Shaw and Mr. Bertrand Russell assert, from love of a fight and from the impulse of adventure also shows that men sometimes do their duty from motives different from the motive of duty itself. For the action is the same in both cases: in the case of the man who enlisted to

rid the world of the menace of a universal oppression, and in the case of the man who enlisted from the love of fighting. If the evidence of those who joined the Army with the feeling of accomplishing a hateful duty shows the possibility of sacrifice against all the theories to the contrary, the evidence of those who joined the Army for pleasure or on blind impulse shows us the possibility of performing duty from pleasure or impulse, that is, without motives. And if against this multiple interpretation of human conduct we are told that men *only* proceed at bottom on considerations of pleasure, or on considerations of duty, or on impulse without considerations, we shall reply: "You are certain, but you do not prove it. You are sacrificing the evidence to the unity of your intellectual system. Your intellectual pride has blinded your eyes. Let us pray to God that He may open them."

Let us continue with our analysis. An action may be good or bad independently of the approval or disapproval of our judgment. Torquemada burns heretics; his action is bad. But Torquemada performs it in the conviction that it is good. Bismarck founds German unity on a militarist basis; the action was bad, because German unity might have been established on a basis of justice and agreement, instead of upon sheer force. But Bismarck, who was intensely religious, and a man of lofty motives, could not believe in the efficiency of any other methods than his own. Constantine the Great, an extremely ambitious man of action, who had no other religion, in his rare moments of self-communion, but fatalism*—the religion of Napoleon also—promulgated the Edict of Milan conferring complete tolerance on Christians; the Edict was morally good, although the intentions of Constantine were purely selfish. If I were writing this article as many books are written, with the main intention of showing the cleverness of the writer, and the article were good, no other proof would be needed of the independence of the goodness of the action from the goodness of its motive.

There is, of course, a theory against this truism—the theory that asserts (I quote a great Spanish author) that "morality does not consist in the specific content of an action but in the relation of actions with the spiritual disposition of the agent." In this theory the moral relation is, therefore, that of the action with the motive, and the juridical relation is that of the action with its rational utility.

But this theory cannot be true, for it is contradicted by the fact that we spend a great part of our lives in judging the morality of actions executed by other persons, and only in very few cases are we able to see anything of the "spiritual disposition" of those persons, as our insight can never be complete. Even when we are judging of our own actions there are some essential elements of our "spiritual disposition" which usually escape our inspection. And if we do not know ourselves, how can we know the "spiritual disposition" of others? We are told that in judging the morality of an action we are judging the morality of the person who has executed it, but in truth we can only judge, and in fact we usually judge, the goodness or badness of the action itself; that is to say, we are judging precisely what is understood by its "rational utility," and this is the ethical, not the juridical, judgment.

Intimate friends, brothers, and great novelists (for instance, Dostoevsky, in "Crime and Punishment") attempt sometimes to tear down the veil of indivi-

* The consciousness of a man of action is almost entirely absorbed in the objects of his ambition. He only falls back upon himself when he fails. And what does he see in his failures? The vision of the things escaping and running away from him. Upon this vision is based fatalism.

duality that hides from our eyes the "spiritual disposition" of other persons and even of our own personality, but as the "spiritual disposition" is composed of the totality of the motives which inspire an action, it is obvious that only a judge gifted with eyes that see the totality of motives can adequately judge of "spiritual disposition," and that this judge can be no other than He who reads in the hearts of men. Thus we arrive at the conclusion that the judgment of the "spiritual disposition" is not the ethical judgment, but the judgment of God.

Only to God is given the capacity of judging the totality of motives. We men judge of each particular action by relating it to the ethical categories of the good, the bad, or the indifferent, and this is the ethical judgment. The juridical judgment consists in relating an action to the positive laws that authorise or forbid the class of actions to which the judged action belongs. The juridical relation is a relation of class in both its aspects, when it appraises the legitimacy or illegitimacy of the action, and when it fixes the degree of the responsibility of the agent. And there is still room for several other kinds of judgment, as, for instance, when we suppose a utilitarian finality and judge an action by its success or failure, or by its ease or difficulty. Thence arises the utilitarian, economic, or technical judgment.

But if it is true that the goodness or badness of an action is independent of the approval or disapproval of its agent, it is also true that an action may be equally good when it is executed by a spontaneous impulse, or when it is done from deliberate choice or under external compulsion. I do not mean that a society is desirable in which all men, or even a few, find themselves condemned to act entirely under external compulsion, or that a society is desirable, either, in which every action is the result of the deliberate choice of the individual. Such a society, in fact, involves more probabilities of deception in our choice, on account of the limitation of the human individual judgment, than another society, the members of which avail themselves of the results of past experiences, and not only of their individual lights. I cannot conceive of any other perfect society than one in which men always do the good by a spontaneous impulse, or by irresistible instinct. I fancy that the hosts of angels and archangels in heaven form a society of this kind, and that freedom of choice is only second best when compared with good impulse. Only in a very limited measure is the nurture of good impulses possible on earth; but we do also, nevertheless, attempt to cultivate them. Almost all institutions, governments, churches, guilds, etc., tend to cultivate good impulse, at least, indirectly. Nothing else than the formation of good habits is understood by "training." And a good action of generosity or truthfulness, for instance, is not less good when it arises spontaneously and by habit, than when it arises from deliberate choice. But it is also not less good when it obeys external compulsion. The difference lies in the fact that in the latter case there are two different actions: the good action, which is good, and the external compulsion, which is bad, in so far as it imposes upon the subject the privation of a good, namely, liberty, which we have acknowledged to be a good, because it is an element of happiness. Compulsion can only be recommended in those cases in which the amount of good obtained thereby, is greater than the amount of bad implied in the compulsion. What finally matters is the fact that an action done under compulsion can also be good, and this assertion is in accordance with the experience of all societies, for all societies are ruled by laws, and all laws imply compulsion, directly or indirectly.

But now another theory rises against the evidence: the theory that considers the development of personality as the ultimate and supreme end of social life. It must be considered.

"Black Justice."

MEN of middle age will easily recall that clever sketch called "Black Justice," which, as enacted by three satirical rogues with black faces, proved so great an attraction at the London Halls towards the end of the Victorian era. Under the guise of a mock trial conducted by negroes, the weak points of British judicial procedure were held up to ridicule, and a series of shrewd hits scored at the expense of the manners and customs of all kinds of the legal fraternity. The first question put by the judge on taking his seat was "Say—been any fines lately?" and "after hearing counsel" to the effect that there were "lots of 'em," he added "Hand 'em over—I'm dry." The attendant policeman was then dispatched for a bucket of beer. That was a generation ago, and it might well be thought that such travesties of justice were out of date, and that nothing of the kind could possibly occur in these days.

A brief examination of the working of the Native Affairs Acts will speedily convince optimists that much remains to be done before it can be said that "Black Justice" has ceased to exist, and, as a matter of fact, the constant rumours of native unrest and sporadic uprisings are due to the irritation caused by just that kind of proceeding. Though gifted with the patience of Job, injustice rankles in black men's minds with as great virulence as in those of their white overlords, and when, in a final appeal to the white man's Court, they encounter yet more injustice, it is no wonder if they occasionally overstep the bounds of prudence, however hopeless their efforts at redress may be. The end of the matter is that the Union Forces are called out, and the incipient "rebellion" has to be suppressed with more or less bloodshed and waste of money, but some day there will be such a conflagration as will compel the intervention of the British Government, and from that date perhaps the days of "Black Justice" will be numbered.

The laws relating to natives are made by farmers—for the benefit of farmers—assisted by mine magnates—for the benefit of the mining industry. Between the two, the native finds himself in the position of the gentleman who discovered that his sphere of action was limited on one side by the deep sea and on the other by the Devil. There is, of course, under the British flag no slavery, but there is "forced labour," which is a good imitation of it, and in the laudable desire to inculcate the whole duty of labour, it will be seen that the British Government can go to very great lengths before the national conscience calls a halt. That Government has permitted the South African Government to provide itself with two or three cleft sticks, in which the natives are held as if in a vice: the only liberty they still have is to squeal—and nobody pays any attention to that.

The three cleft sticks are the Poll-tax, the Squatters' Rent and the Pass Law. Under the first, every native on reaching the age of 18 becomes liable to pay £2 per annum. As the monthly wage for rough labour does not average more than £2, it will be seen that (payments on account not being accepted) Government levies a month's wages at one stroke. (White men earning from £20 to £50 a month and upwards would rise en masse against the extortion, if Government dared to levy a tax of similar proportion from

them.) When the native takes a second wife (or more) the Poll-tax is raised to £4. A receipt is issued, which the native has to carry on his person, so as to be able to produce it on demand at any moment. At the expiration of the half-year, every native, not having a receipt for the current year, is liable to arrest for default, and will find himself brought before the Sub-Native Commissioner's Court, and fined in proportion to the accumulation of "arrears." In most cases, genuine poverty is the reason for non-payment, so the native elects to go to gaol, after which an extension of a couple of months is granted him to raise the amount overdue. Considering the hard lives led by most natives and the wide-spread poverty prevailing among them, the punctuality with which large numbers of them pay up their heavy impost is most remarkable, and highly meritorious. They are, as a rule, conspicuously honest, and display great intelligence in mastering and complying with the complicated details of the legal requirements exacted from them.

The second cleft stick (Squatters' Law) is designed to produce still more grist to the Government mill: all male natives of 18 years of age, squatting on Government ground, have to pay Crown rent at £1 a head: if they squat on a private farm, their case is much worse: though Government forgoes half of the poll-tax, they either pay from three to four times the Crown rent rate, or the farmer exacts three months' labour on his farm in lieu of rent, which means that they give services of the minimum value of £6 per head, instead of £1—the Crown rent rate. This labour is exacted at the season when it is of most value to the farmer, and does not, therefore, fall in with the native's plans for cultivation: he must cultivate his own patch in his overtime, when and how he can. Like his brother in the mines, he has a labour ticket, which is (or should be) signed every day: Boer farmers are notorious for their pastoral simplicity and freedom from the vice of verneukery, so that it never—or "hardly ever"—happens that the farmer is dissatisfied with the day's work and refuses to sign the ticket; still, it does happen that the length of service in lieu of rent frequently extends to four, five, six, or more months. The native has no remedy, because he cannot quit the farm without the owner's written permission, and it is provided by law that no native may trek from a private farm to Government ground, but must squat on another private farm. The farmers have learned the value of co-operation, and when a native applies to a neighbouring farmer, he finds the whole district closed against him. If he revolts and applies to the Sub-Native Commissioner, he meets with cold comfort, because it would not pay the Commissioner to fall out with the farmers, who might combine to engineer him out of his office. Supposing all goes well, and he and his sons, with all their wives and children, have worked to the farmer's satisfaction, then, as farmers never part with money, permission is granted him to go and work elsewhere, and in the time remaining to him earn enough to pay his poll-tax. When he arrives at a mine, he finds the same ticket system in vogue, and as mine-owners are no less renowned for straight dealing than farmers, he finds that there is no Sunday work, but, singularly enough, his "month" has to consist of 30 working days, by which process he only gets paid for 10 months for a year's work. On returning to his kraal, he may find that the farmer has given him notice to quit, which is equivalent to a sentence of banishment, as no other farmer will take him: if he gives trouble, he will find himself evicted by force, and, in case of need, the Commissioner will send down and burn his hut: he then very likely ends by losing the value of all his work, together with the unreaped portion of his crops, though the law runs to the contrary. Such are some of the manifold benefits which the white man's injunction to "learn to

labour truly" confer on him, till the conviction dawns on him at last that he is not likely to find peace until he is in his grave.

There remains the third cleft stick—the Pass Law. No native can move more than a couple of miles from his location without taking out a special pass, which is available for ten days only: if he wishes to (a) absent himself for a longer time, or (b) proceed beyond the limits of his district, he is compelled to apply for a travelling pass, which costs him 1s., and is available for one month—(capable of extension to three months). When he leaves home to look for work, he has also to take out a 1s. pass, which must appear a most inexplicable anomaly to him, as white men are always impressing on him the duty of finding work, and yet fine him a 1s. when he goes in pursuit of it. It must also be remembered that up country pass offices are few and far between, so that a boy often has to walk from 20 to 40 miles before he can obtain a pass: this is also the case when he wishes to pay tax or rent: every time he has to visit the Commissioner's office it costs him at least a day's labour. The simplicity of farmers has enabled them to get it provided by law that no native squatting on their farms can obtain a pass to go outside his district for any purpose whatever without their written permission, which is withheld unless the native has completed his yearly period of service in lieu of rent. By these beneficent provisions, it will be seen that freedom of movement is prohibited, and that the natives are as effectually chained to the soil as if they wore leg-irons. The three cleft sticks also enable Government to squeeze a most substantial and rapidly increasing revenue from native pockets, of which statistics show that 19 per cent. is spent on maintaining a host of white officials (to administer the Acts), plus an army of native police (to chase and arrest defaulters), and as much as 1 per cent. locally on things that may be called improvements, while 80 per cent. is swallowed up by other departments of State. Though not yet aware of the exact figures, natives perceive quite clearly that out of the heavy impost laid upon them, practically nothing is spent for their benefit, nor are they blind to the glaring injustice resulting from the simple farmer's system of "service in lieu of rent," or the liberal-minded mine-owner's "month of 30 working days."

There is no redress: Native Commissioners (supposed to hold the balance evenly between the white man and the native) are in reality nothing but super-tax collectors, and act openly hand-in-glove with the farmers and the mining interest. Though they draw the handsome stipend of £1,000 a year (including perquisites), they are sometimes not above doing a little highly profitable recruiting business—even from the judgment-seat—for their own benefit. It is not even unknown for a Sub-Native Commissioner, sitting as judge, to inflict a hefty fine, and himself find the native the money to pay it, taking twice or more times the value of the amount advanced in cattle, or other produce, thereby identifying himself most completely with the lowest type of the recruiting profession. Such truly abominable instances of "Black Justice," together with the heinous practice of wholesale flogging and the acceptance of "presents," are not overlooked, or winked at, by Government so long as the Commissioners prove themselves to be efficient tax-collectors; but if they grow slack in that, or err in protecting the interest of natives, they soon find themselves relegated to a back seat. General Botha is never tired of assuring deputations how dear is the native interest to his heart: perhaps he means their "compound-interest," but, at any rate, it is small wonder if, to their unsophisticated minds, there is little difference between their status and that of slavery pure and simple.

AFRICANUS.

Drama.

By John Francis Hope.

If another Isaac Disraeli should ever collect Curiosities of Drama, Henry James' "The Outcry," recently produced by the Stage Society, will deserve a place in it. It is called a comedy, but it might as well be called the nebular hypothesis, or the meticulous mystery of high life. People certainly walk the stage, and talk about their souls in the under-secretarial style beloved of Henry James; indeed, if he had supplied them with an elaborate system of cross-references to each other's arguments, the illusion would have been complete. "Referring to your eleventh rejoinder, clause four, subsection two, concerning the activity of the right ventricle of my heart, I beg to inform you that it still beats firmly for you, and assure you of my continued affection, esteem, and regard." They nearly said such things; if they had been real, they would have said them, and I suspect that, whatever their appearance in the drawing-room, they must have taken copious shorthand notes of the conversation as soon as they left the room. These people must have kept diaries, for they were always quoting them; and Henry James' task was that allotted to Shakespeare by my colleague, "R. H. C.," the conversion of their idiosyncrasies of style into his own idiom; for the style is not the man, it is Henry James.

But as the play is called a comedy, it tries to correct some folly; there is much "outcry," but there is also a little wool. Hazlitt, I believe, cared not at all who owned a picture so long as he was permitted to enjoy it; but to Henry James, possession was at least nine points of enjoyment, and he was aghast at the folly of owners who permitted such treasures to depart from their possession. The culture of England, the grace of our women, the nobility of our men, all depended on the possession of a number of well-authenticated masterpieces of Italian and English painting; we should not be able to govern Ireland, or to manage the Mesopotamian campaign, or to marry our art critics into the peerage, if these priceless possessions had a price put upon them, and were purchased by rich Americans. The glory of England is derived from its Gainsboroughs, the majesty of our Monarchy and of the Mæcenasses of the peerage results from the possession of an adequate number of Morettos or Mantovanos, whichever is the more priceless. The Old Masters are the Old Guard of England; and with them will depart everything that has made England what she is, including five o'clock tea and the fine flavour of port. Horror of horrors, Lord Theign might even smoke a pipe!

On this exalted plane, the play is constructed; the serpent in the Paradise is the purchaser. How these priceless treasures came into the possession of Lord Theign, we are not told; but if we may judge by the contempt lavished on purchasers throughout the play, we must conclude that they were originally obtained by theft. Perhaps Napoleon stole the Moretto during his Italian campaign, and bribed with it the great grandfather of Lord Theign to betray his country; anyhow, we must be sure that it did not come into the family honestly, for Lord Theign's hearty contempt of honest bargain and sale excludes the supposition. There was the Moretto, and there it would have remained, ennobling the nobility by its presence and yielding its "ancient and fish-like smell" to the pedigree of its possessor, if it had not been discovered by two men who wished to be ennobled, one by possessing the

peer's picture, the other by possessing the peer's daughter. Everybody in the play either was, or wanted to become, as antique as the picture; Lord Theign's Old Masters were as admirable as his New Mistresses were deplorable, and were much more valuable. No one would ever have offered a hundred thousand for Lady Sandgate, but that price was bid for the Mantovano.

But try as he might to dignify the Old Masters, Henry James could not dignify the outcry. It was no more than a journalistic "stunt," which served to make the reputation of Hugh Crimble as an art critic; it was a triumph of criticism, not of creation. There is pathos in the thought of Corot weeping over the work he was compelled to sell; there is nothing, not even comedy, in Hugh Crimble's frantic protests against the transfer of possession of dead men's works. If the Old Masters possess the civilising influence claimed for them, it is the best of all reasons for transferring them to America; indeed, we might enlist them in the service of Europe, and exhibit them publicly in Prussia. Here would be another chance for the Hugh Crimbles of the Press; Our Own Correspondents would write: "I have just spent a beautiful hour with an awfully decent Junker, who has become quite amenable to reason since I explained to him that the portrait of his grandmother is not a Marcella, but a priceless Martini-Henry. Culture is replacing Kultur in Germany, and we should get awfully decent terms from these fellows when we make our beautiful peace with them. They possess some of the most priceless treasures of the world, none of which they have created themselves; and if they can be induced by public clamour to keep their treasures in Germany, the whole world will profit by their decision. Please send me a del Sarto to make them softer."

What little sense could be got from the play was put into it by the actors. They were entangled again and again in the circumlocutions and parentheses of Henry James; and I judged the average length of their sentences to be one kilometre. But they bore up bravely; these angels of the Schoolmen looked for the Euclidean point of the dialogue, and danced upon it. There was room for them; for if the point had no magnitude, they had no substance, not so much as would constitute a metaphysical Nifelheim. They formed what Browning called "a twilight piece"; they were compounded of the phosphorescent glow of a decadent ideal, the ideal that possession, and not creation, is the reality of culture. If we were as easily convinced as Lady Grace was, Miss Ellen O'Malley would have convinced us that a dear lady will always yield to expert evidence, that the proper way for a journalist to propose to a lady of title is to manifest a passion for the proper attribution of a picture. She played with such sincerity and skill that it seemed natural for her to be driven from home in defence of Hugh Crimble's hypothesis; and with the help of Mr. Albert Raynor, as the Earl of Theign, she developed a new type of melodrama. The stern father offering to keep his picture if his daughter will promise never to see the art critic again, and the scornful rejection of the proposal by the indignant admirer of Old Masters (properly attributed), was a "priceless" scene in a sense different from that intended by Henry James; the actors, having to choose between the utter failure of the play and a success due to their own efforts, chose the latter so decidedly that the horror they expressed at the purchase of Old Masters could not have been exceeded. Lord John, suspected of obtaining a commission on sales negotiated by him, was spoken of as though he were a criminal; while Lady Sandgate, who wanted to sell her Reynolds, lied about it as though it were the unpardonable sin. Henry James was a better comedian than he knew.

Readers and Writers.

A DELECTABLE task awaits a favoured man, that of collating, extracting and presenting in a single treatise all the valuable elements contained in the hundred and one books upon literary style and composition. As my readers know, I have a ravenous appetite for books of this kind; and still I have by no means read all that have been published even recently. No, not by a score that I could name, among them having been until last week, if you will believe me, Stevenson's "Art of Writing." (Chatto and Windus. 2s. net). Having now read it, however, I am able to say that it certainly contains, along with a number of surprising misunderstandings, one or two fragmentary observations fit for the Final Treatise of my imagination. For instance, upon Style in its craft-aspect Stevenson said what in my judgment is both original and true, namely, that it is the one essential quality of writing in which deliberate self-improvement is always possible. Other essential qualities of writing are, as it were, gifts of nature and experience; but the perfection of a personal style is a work of art, or, if I may play on the phrase, the art of work. From this point of view, or, rather, with this criterion, we ought to be able to apply a scientific stylometry to literature in general, and to classify periods both in respect of schools and of individuals with the accuracy of connoisseurs. Shakespeare, for instance—but I must not touch on that subject for another week or two; you are tired of it.

* * *

Stevenson had a false modesty upon the subject of literary analysis which did his admirable curiosity no honour. Even while he was engaged in it, and enjoying the exercise thoroughly, he pretended to feel like a vandal pulling a rose to pieces to discover the secret of its beauty. The exercise is, however, comparable to nothing of the kind, nor is it even comparable to another analysis to which Stevenson likened it, that of a child pulling a music-box to pieces. In these cases, as you will observe, the rose and the box are destroyed in the process; but in the former case the wonder and the beauty of literature remain, and are, in fact, enhanced in our realisation of them by the very process of analysis, or pulling literature to pieces. If it were, indeed, the case that after a careful analysis a poem or an essay ceased to be beautiful for us, richly would our analysis have rewarded us; for the refinement of our sense of beauty is essential to the appreciation of excellent work. But upon many occasions in English literature—praise be to famous men—the more you analyse it the more mysteriously beautiful it becomes. The process is then rather like anatomising the body in fear of destroying the soul, but only to discover that the soul is thereby isolated beyond us. As all that can be anatomised is precisely not life, so all that can really be analysed is precisely not literature; for literature stands to writing as life stands to body. Let us analyse away, then, as hard as we please, and with a good conscience. We shall discover many secrets by its means, but we shall never destroy but only isolate the mystery of literature.

* * *

In his account of the nature of prose Stevenson lamentably failed to be anything more than negative and superficial. Apparently, his only conception of the rhythm of prose was that it should not be the rhythm of verse. "It may be anything," he says, "but it must not be verse." Curiously enough, upon the very page upon which Stevenson says this of prose, he himself falls into blank verse unconsciously:

but for that very reason word is linked
suggest no measure but the one in hand
one following another will produce.

And on turning over the same prose essay I find him lapsing into blank verse on, at least, another score of occasions. So much for precept and example. But Stevenson was surely wrong in regarding prose as merely not-verse; and, again, when he says that "the rule of rhythm in prose is not so intricate" as the rule in verse. It is not regular, of course; and it is, therefore, not so obvious. In fact, Stevenson was right when he said that the rhythm of prose should never be as obvious as the rhythm of verse. But that it is less intricate on this account is the very reverse of the truth; it is far more intricate. Having for many years written no verse myself, I am perhaps a little jealous for the fair fame of prose. I resent the insinuation of the verse-makers that verse is more difficult, more honourable, or more beautiful than prose. In my judgment, a perfect prose is the last word in literature, since it contains every kind of rhythm to be found in verse, and other rhythms as well, and all in such a rich variety and seeming irregularity that while no rhythm is insistent every rhythm is heard. Verse is a solo, a melody; it is, if you like, something even more elaborate, a harmony of chords, a sonata, a composition for the organ; but it is always, to my mind, played upon a single instrument. Prose, on the other hand, is an orchestra, consisting not only of all the instruments on which verse can be played, but of instruments unanswerable to verse. Where in verse will you find the foot of more than, at most, four syllables? And even these quadrupeds (the antispast, choriamb, di-iamb, dispondee, etc.), can rarely be made to dance in a measure. But in prose, not only have we the use of the two-, the three-, and the four-syllabled feet, but the five- (the dochmiac) and the six-syllabled as well. The craft of prose is the employment of these rhythms without the appearance of rhythm. Their very variety makes it possible to disguise their individual existence. They mix and mingle in such rapid succession that the reader can never be aware of one more than of another. It is the charm of the rhythm of prose that it steals upon the senses without detection. To say, therefore, that the rhythm of prose is less intricate than the rhythm of verse is the triumph of prose over criticism. Prose laughs at Stevenson while he says it; and, in revenge, trips him up with his blank lines to prove how much more easily verse may be written than prose. I wish Stevenson were alive to hear what prose thinks of him. He was an honest craftsman, and I think he would have enjoyed being corrected for his improvement.

* * *

Someone has drawn my attention to Letter XIV of Ruskin's "Time and Tide," in which a good many of the ideas and ideals associated with "National Guilds" were, I am told, anticipated. It is so, I am glad to say. The two or three concluding pages of this Letter in my edition of "Time and Tide" might be, and I hope will be, re-printed in these columns without provoking any of my economist colleagues to more than a friendly comment. But Ruskin is not a writer to be taken up for a single passage, and to be then put down again. Having read the Letter referred to, I turned backwards and forwards and read every Letter of the series. What a man! What a writer! And to think that so many thousands of copies of his books have been circulated in this country, and we are still what we are! If I enter, therefore, as I must, one or two criticisms of Ruskin as a writer, it is in no sense with the intention of relieving the English-reading public of the charge of neglect. It is not the fault of Ruskin that the world is so little the better for his instruction. Had we been as good pupils as Ruskin was a teacher, as few faults could be found in us as I am disposed to find in Ruskin. And they are, indeed, few. The first, of course, is just that self-consciousness of writing prose which I have just mentioned. You feel all the time that Ruskin is

writing carefully; and the obviousness of his correctitude is a little distracting. Has anybody, I wonder, forgotten Ruskin's writing in Ruskin's meaning? Another fault is his monomania on the subject of art. It is, indeed, the origin of the former. "Art," he said—and his works proved that he really thought it—"art is the expression of the highest state of the human spirit." But it is not so; and I can, therefore, understand why Ruskin has not quite the universal appeal his earnestness deserves. Art is no more the highest state of the human spirit than Truth and Virtue and Love. They are all absolutes or ultimates; and in them is no hierarchy, but they are democrats to an idea. I pause at my own phrase—the democracy of the absolute values. Because Ruskin was no metaphysician and hence placed one absolute before another in value, was he necessarily in his practical thought the aristocrat; and is this the reason of his alienation from modern thought? It sets me thinking. There is meat on the bone.

R. H. C.

Provincialism the Enemy.

II.

Provincialism: an ignorance of the customs of other peoples, a desire to control the acts of other people.

NOTHING "matters" till some fool starts resorting to force. To prevent that initial insanity is the goal, and always has been, of intelligent political effort.

The provincialism of Darius led him to desire the subjugation of the Greeks, and his ignorance of the Greeks led him to think they would put up with him. There is no "getting back to the beginning" of the matter. The fundamental "philosophical" error or shortcoming is in Christianity itself. I think the world can well dispense with the Christian religion, and certainly with all paid and banded together ministers of religion. But I think also that "Christ," as presented in the New Testament (real or fictitious personage, it is no matter), is a most profound philosophic genius, and one credible in the stated surroundings; an intuitive, inexperienced man, dying before middle age. The things unthought of in his philosophy are precisely the things that would be unthought in the philosophy of a provincial genius, a man of a subject nation. The whole sense of social order is absent.

The things neglected are precisely the things so well thought in the philosophy of Confucius, a minister high in the State, and living to his full age, and also a man of great genius.

There is no disagreement. There is a difference in emphasis. Confucius' emphasis is on conduct. "Fraternal deference" is his phrase. If a man have "fraternal deference" his character and his opinions will not be a nuisance to his friends and a peril to the community.

It is a statesman's way of thinking. The thought is for the community. Confucius' constant emphasis is on the value of personality, on the outlines of personality, on the man's right to preserve the outlines of his personality, and of his duty not to interfere with the personalities of others.

The irresponsible Galilean is profounder: "As a man thinketh in his heart," "What shall it profit to gain the world and lose your own soul." A man of decent character will not injure his neighbours. That is all very well. But there are no safeguards.

And Christianity has become the slogan of every oppression, of every iniquity. From saving your own soul, you progress to thinking it your duty or right to save other people's souls, and to burn them if they object to your method of doing it.

The profound intuitions are too incoherent in their expression, too much mixed with irrelevancies, the ironies misunderstood and mistranslated by cheats. The provincial has not guarded against provincialism. He has been the seed of fanatics. I doubt if Confucius has ever been the seed of fanatics. After his death his country was cursed with Buddhism, which is very much the same as part of the pest which spread over mediæval Europe, clothed in the lamb's wool of Christ. It showed in China many resembling symptoms. But this had nothing to do with Confucius, "the first man who did not receive a divine inspiration."

Christ's cross was not so much on Calvary as in His lamentable lack of foresight. Had He possessed this faculty we might imagine His having dictated to His disciples some such text as "Thou shalt not 'save' thy neighbour's soul by any patent panacea or kultur. And especially thou shalt not 'save' it against his will."

In such case the passage would either have been deleted by His "followers," or the Church of Rome would have founded itself on Mohammed. The contest for "rights," democracy, etc., in the West, has been little concerned with personality. If personality has been thought of, it was taken for granted. Tyranny had to be got rid of. So little time has passed since "slavery" was abolished, that one need not greatly despond; that is, slavery to an individual owner.

I think the work of the subtlest thinkers for the last thirty years has been a tentative exploration for means to prevent slavery to a "State" or a "democracy," or some such corporation, though this exploration has not been "organised," or "systematised," or coherent, or even very articulate in its utterance.

Undoubtedly, we must have something at least as good as socialism. The whole body of the Allies is presumably united in demanding something at least as good as socialism. The only demand for something definitely and uncompromisingly worse than socialism, worse than democracy, more anthropoid, comes from the Central Powers.

The arts, explorative, "creative," the "real arts," literature, are always too far ahead of any general consciousness to be of the slightest contemporary use. A coal strike, with 2,000,000 orderly strikers happens *half a century after the artistic act, half a century after the "creator's," or discoverer's concept of labour in orderly organisation.*

When, in the foregoing paragraph, I talk about the few subtle thinkers, I talk of those whose undogmatic speculations will be the bases of "parties" some time after present "political" issues, and "social" issues have been settled.

While half the world is struggling to maintain certain rights which every thinking man has long recognised as just, a few, a very few "unpractical," or, rather, unexecutive men have been trying to "carry the matter further"; to prevent a new form of tyranny succeeding in the place of an old form.

Modern thought is trying to kill not merely slavery but the desire to enslave; the desire to maintain an enslavement. This concept is a long way ahead of any actuality, it is a long way ahead of any working economic system that any of our contemporaries will be able to devise or to operate. But the desire for cannibalism is very largely extinct, and in the realm of reason there is nothing to prevent the conception of other barbaric ideas and desires entering equal extinction.

The desire to coerce the acts of another is evil. Every ethical thought is of slow growth; it has taken at least thirty years to suggest the thought that the desire to coerce the acts of others is evil. The thought belongs to only a few hundreds of people. Humanity is hardly out of the thought that you may have inquisitions and burn people at stakes.

To come back to where I started this brief series of essays: The bulk of the work in Henry James' novels is precisely an analysis of, and thence a protest against, all sorts of petty tyrannies and petty coercions, at close range. And this protest is knit into and made part of his analysis of the habits of mind of three nations at least. And Galdos, Flaubert, Turgenev, despite any proclamations about artistic detachment or any theories of writing, are all absorbed in this struggle. It is a struggle against provincialism, a struggle for the rights of personality; and the weapon of these authors has largely been a presentation of human variety. The German university system has been the antagonist, i.e., off the plane of force and of politics, and in the "intellectual field."

Narrowing the discussion to university educations, for the moment; meeting the philological boasts of efficiency and of "results produced," there is a perfectly good antidote, there is no need of any powers of invention or of careful devising. A Germany of happier era provided the term "Wanderjahr," and the humanist ideals of the Renaissance are sounder than any that have been evolved in an attempt to raise "monuments" of scholarship; of hammering the student into a piece of mechanism for the accretion of details, and of habituating men to consider themselves as bits of mechanism for one use or another: in contrast to considering first what use they are in being.

The bulk of scholarship has gone under completely; the fascinations of technical and mechanical education have been extremely seductive (I mean definitely the study of machines, the association with engines of all sorts, the inebriety of mechanical efficiency, in all the excitement of its very rapid evolution).

The social theorist, springing, alas, a good deal from Germany, has not been careful enough to emphasize that no man is merely a unit. He "knows" the fact well enough, perhaps. But the error of his propagandist literature is that it does not sufficiently dwell on this matter.

Tyranny is always a matter of course. Only as a "matter of course," as a thing that "has been," as a "custom" can it exist. It exists unnoticed, or commended. When I say that these novelists have worked against it, I do not mean they have worked in platitude, their writing has been a delineation as tyranny of many things that had passed for "custom" or "duty." They alone have refrained from creating catchwords, phrases for the magnetising and mechanising of men.

Shaw slips into the kultur error (I think it is in some preface or other), where he speaks of a man being no use until you put an idea inside him. The idea that man should be used "like a spindle," instead of existing "like a tree or a calf" is very insidious. These two analogies do not present a dilemma. There is no reason why we should accept either Smiles or Rousseau, or utilitarianism, on any plane, or utopic stagnation. But if we did away with analogies and false dilemmas, "causes" and mob orators would have a very poor time.

EZRA POUND.

GLOOM.

Oh, loneliness, how joyous and how dread!
Each thought within his cell doth dozing lie.
There is no motion. Naught but lethargy,
A form stupendous, couched with pendant head
Bemused in brooding dreams of shadows dead,
Dull, filthy spectres that stagnate and die.
Oh, loneliness, that such despondency
Such deathful snare within thy sway should spread!
Up, man! and arm thy mind, thy hardihood.
Nay, work, and slay thy self with eagerness.
There is no choice save that 'twixt bad and good.
Wouldst thou with lumbering satyrs in duress
Decline once more in anguish unannealed?
Repay thy debt, ere goodness be repealed!

J. A. M. A.

We Moderns.

By Edward Moore.

EXPERIMENTING IN LIFE.—The aim of the aesthetes was without enduring Tragedy to enjoy Beauty. To that end they devised their creed of experimentation in Life: they wished to know all the joys of the soul and of the senses without inconvenience to themselves. Perceiving that Love and Beauty bring suffering in their train, they decided to *take the initiative* against them, in words, to "experience" them. All they experienced, however, was—their experiences. That, indeed, was all they desired: their "experimenting in Life" was escaping from Life. Without the courage to accept Life with the Dionysians or to renounce it with the ascetics, they hit upon the plan of stealing a march upon it. Well, it was certainly not upon Life that they stole a march!

CRITERIONS.—It is not expedient to choose on *every* occasion the higher rather than the lower, for one may not be able to endure too much living on the heights. If will and capacity were always equal! Then, it is true, there would not be any difficulty; but Life is Life, after all—that is, our will is greater than our capacity. On the other hand, it is not well to develop equally all our faculties—the formula of the Humanist—for among them there is a hierarchy, and some are more worthy of development than others. What course is left? To act always in the interest of what is highest in us, and when we partake of a lower pleasure to regard it as a form of sleep, of necessary forgetting? For even the mind must slumber occasionally if it is to remain healthy.

INTELLECTUAL PRUDENCE.—Among athletes there is a thing known as over-training: if it is persisted in it wrecks the body. A similar phenomenon is to be found among thinkers: thought too severe and protracted may ruin the mind. Was this the explanation of Nietzsche's downfall? Certainly, his intellectual health was that of the athlete who remains vigorous by virtue of a never-sleeping discipline, who maintains his balance by a continuous effort. This is perhaps the highest, the most exquisite form of health, but it is at the same time the most dangerous—a little more, a little less, and the engine of thought is destroyed. It is important that the thinker should discover exactly how far he may discipline himself, and how far permit indulgence. What in the ordinary man—conscious of no *secondary* raison d'être—is performed without fuss by the instincts, must by him be *thought out*—a task of great peril.

A DILEMMA.—To be a man is easy: to be a purpose is more difficult; but, on the whole—easy. In the first instance, one has but to exist; in the second, to act. But to unite man and purpose in the same person—to be a type—is both difficult and precarious. For that a balance is imperative: "being" and "doing" must be prevented from injuring each other: action must become rhythm, and rest, a form of energy. To be in doing, to do in being—that is the task of the future man. The danger of our being mere man is that mankind may remain forever stationary, without a goal. The danger of our being mere purpose is that our humanity may altogether drop out and nothing but the purpose be left. And would not that defeat the purpose?

DECADENCE AND HEALTH.—It is in the decadent periods that the most triumphantly healthy men—one or two—appear. The corrupt Italy of the Renaissance gave birth to Leonardo; the Europe of Gautier, Baudelaire, and Wilde produced Nietzsche. In decadent eras both disease and health become more self-conscious; they are cultivated, enhanced and refined. It has been said that the best way to remain healthy is not to think of health. But lack of self-consciousness

speaks here. Perhaps the Middle Ages were as diseased as our own—only they did not know it! Is decadence nothing more than the symptom of a self-conscious age? And is "objectivity" the antidote? Well, we might believe this if we could renounce our faith that mankind will yet become healthy—if we could become optimists in the present-day sense!

APROPOS GAUTIER.—He had just read "Mlle. de Maupin," "What seduction there is still for Man in the senses!" he exclaimed. "How much more of an animal than of a spirit he must be to be charmed and enslaved by this book!" Yet, what ground had he to conclude that because the sensual intoxicates Man, therefore Man is more sensual than spiritual? For we are most fatally attracted by what is most alien to us.

DANGERS OF THE SPIRITUAL.—If you are swept off your feet by a strongly sensuous book, it is probably a sign that you have become too highly spiritualised. For a sensualist would simply have enjoyed it, while feeling, perhaps, a little bored and dissatisfied. It was only a religious anchorite who could have lost his soul to M. Anatole France's Thäïs. For the salvation of Man it is more than ever imperative that a reconciliation should be effected between the spirit and the senses. Until it is, the highest men—the most spiritual—will be in the very greatest peril, and will almost inevitably be wrecked or frustrated. It is for the good of the soul that this reconciliation must now be sought.

AGAIN.—From the diabolisation of the senses innumerable evils have flowed; physical and mental disease, disgust with the world, cruelty towards everything natural. But, worst of all, it has made sensuality a greater danger than it was ever before. In the anchorite, seeking to live entirely in the spirit, and ignoring or chastising the body, sensuality was driven into the very soul, and there was magnified a hundred-fold. To the thinker avoiding the senses as much as possible—for he had been taught to distrust them—sensuality, in the moments when he was brought face to face with it, had acquired a unique seductiveness, and had become a problem and a danger. If he yielded, it was perilous in a degree unknown to the average sensual man; if he resisted, a good half of his spiritual energy was wasted in keeping the senses at bay. In either case, the thinker suffered. So that now it is the spirit that has become the champion of the senses, but for the good of the spirit.

GOD AND ANIMAL.—Until the marriage of the soul and the senses has been accomplished, Man cannot manifest himself in any new type. What has been the history of humanity during the last two thousand years? The history of humanity, that is, as distinct from the history of communities. A record of anti-thetic tyrannies, the spiritual alternating with the sensual; an uncertain tussle between God and animal, now one uppermost, now the other; not a tragedy—for in Tragedy there is significance—but a gloomy farce. And this farce must continue so long as the spirit contemns sense as evil in itself—for neither of them can be abolished! Whether we like it or not, the senses, so long as they are oppressed and defamed, will continue to break out in terrible insurrections of sensuality and excess, until, tired and satiated, they return again under the tyranny of the spirit—at the appointed time, however, to revolt once more. From this double cul de sac Man can be freed only by a reconciliation between the two. When this happens, however, it will be the beginning of a higher era in the history of humanity: Man will then become spiritual in a new sense. Spirit will then affirm Life, instead of, as now, slandering it; existence will become joyful and tragic; for to live in accordance with Life itself—voluntarily to approve struggle, suffering and change—is the most difficult and heroic of lives. The softening of the

rigour of existence, its reduction and weakening by asceticism, humility, "sin," is the easier path; narrow is the way that leads to Nihilism! The error of Heine was that he prophesied a happier future from the reconciliation of the body and the soul: his belief in the efficacy of happiness was excessive. But this reconciliation is, nevertheless, of importance for nothing else than its spiritual significance: by means of it Man is freed from his labyrinth, and can at last move forward—he becomes more tragic.

ULTIMATE PESSIMISM.—To the most modern Man must have come at some time the thought, What if this thing spirit be essentially the enemy of the senses? What if, like the vampire, it can live only by drinking blood? What if the conflict between spirit and "life" is and must forever be an implacable and destructive one? He is then for a moment a Christian, but with an added bitterness which few Christians have known. For if his thought be true, then the weakening and final nullification of Life must be our object.

To prove that the spirit and the senses are not eternally irreconcilable enemies is still a task. Those who believe they are, do so as an act of faith: their opponents are in the same case. We should never cease to read spirit into Life-affirming things, such as pride, heroism, and love, and to magnify and exalt these aspects of the spirit.

A Modern Prose Anthology.

Edited by R. Harrison.

VIII.—MR. J-HN G-LSW-RTHY.

"An Adventure." By John Galsworthy.

It was a hot stuffy day in July; not a breeze stirred the air, and walking down the slummy, dirt-ridden little back street in Islington, Flurrington thought suddenly of the country with its cool, fresh winds and more particularly of the country house he had just left, with its cool corridors and fountains. A child screamed suddenly from a neighbouring house. Then a bird began to chirp, perched on a scrubby little tree, a forlorn little exile. Flurrington watched it till it fluttered away behind some chimney-stacks. A cat, hiding behind the tree, watched it hungrily. "Life . . ." he murmured wearily, "this is life. . . ."

A dog ran out of an alley-way. Flurrington nearly tripped over it; he was suffering in imagination all the unimaginable pains of the bird, if caught by the cat. Inadvertently, he trod on a worm. "Pain . . ." he cried; "life—all life is suffering, and one can do nothing—nothing." A little boy was sitting in the gutter, sucking toffee. Flurrington gave him a penny. "Here," he said, "here is a penny;" and he tried to smile pleasantly, imagining all the happiness the urchin would obtain from his penny. But the thought came to him: "The penny will be spent, and all this preventible suffering will continue."

He was overcome by a sickening feeling of nausea. The urchin put the penny in his pocket and returned stoically to his toffee.

The air was hotter and stuffier than before. Life, grim and unmoved, hovered over the little spectacle. "Life . . ." murmured Flurrington wearily, "this is life. . . ." He scribbled some verses on his shirt-cuff:

"We make others suffer,
Others make us suffer;
We were born to suffer,
What does it matter?"

"No good," he thought; "too callous. I will go home and write a play."

"Life," a Drama in Five Acts, by John Galsworthy.
Persons of the play.

JOHN HEAVYMAN, an M.P. and big industrial boss.

MRS. HEAVYMAN, his wife.

FRANK FLURRINGTON, a philanthropic idealist and adventurer.

BULGER, a Labour agitator.

It is unnecessary to enumerate the other characters, as they are not of any individual importance, and as it will in any case be quite impossible to distinguish one from another. Suffice it to say that they are all M.P.'s, their wives and daughters, capitalists, wage-earners, philanthropists and men of property.

Act. I. Scene I. A committee-room.

A door opens into a hall outside. Another door opens into another hall. The characters are all seated at a table in the centre of the stage, with their backs to the audience. At the head of the table is JOHN HEAVYMAN, an old, sleepy-looking man, with a bald head. There is a glass of water by his side. Next him is seated STRUMMER, a little man with a moth-eaten face and wiry moustache; etc., etc.

FRAMLIN (*he speaks in a high-pitched voice*): What's the use?

HEAVYMAN (*speaking for the first time*): The use, eh?

FRAMLIN: Yes, the use.

(HEAVYMAN says something that no one hears.)

FRAMLIN: The only thing is to have them in and have it out.

HEAVYMAN: No!

FLURRINGTON: Allow me, gentlemen. These men are your brothers. We are all brothers, all men. Now, gentlemen, we live in a remarkable age, highly tempered, highly civilised, and the sight of human suffering, even—I may add—the sight of animal and vegetable suffering disturbs us in a very strange way, even when we have no immediate interest in—

(HEAVYMAN leans back in his chair and shuts his eyes. The audience goes to sleep.)

Act 5, Scene 10. ("Last scene of all!")

Same scene. Same characters, but much older.

BULGER is also there, and several workmen. Audience still peacefully sleeping.

BULGER: I honour you! I give in!

HEAVYMAN: I give in, too. (*They shake hands, Exit, arm in arm.*)

FRAMLIN: Thank heaven, that's settled!

WORKMEN (*in chorus*): Thank heaven!

FLURRINGTON: I give in! I don't know what I want, strife, life. . . . It's all a ghastly muddle. I give in!

FRAMLIN: Then, that's all right. (*The curtain falls, but rises again almost immediately. Enter two scene-shifters.*)

1ST SCENE-SHIFTER: I tell you wot, Bill, that's a blime good play. Wotsay, Bill?

2ND DITTO: (*fervently*): Play? You bet! (*Suddenly conscious of the audience.*) Blimey, Bill, look! (*They both look.*) Blimey! Hypnotised! Wot a play! Wot was it abaht, Bill?

1ST DITTO (*vaguely*): Abaht, abaht. . . . (*Loudly and fiercely to the audience*) abaht life, that's wot it was abaht—life! (*The curtain drops with a bang.*)

The audience wakes up with a start and applauds vociferously. The curtain rises again, revealing an empty stage. The audience applauds. The curtain falls. Exit audience, gesticulating, threatening to destroy the wage—. That is to say, exit middle-class audience, yawning and murmuring: "Such a good play! So like life! So peaceful! So Galsworthian! What a blessing we have these Reppytory theatres!"

Notes on Economic Terms.

STATUS. A legally enforceable claim to position: in other words, a right sanctioned by law. Assuming Society to be composed of categories, strata, or groups of individuals, membership of one of these groups defines the status or "station" of the individual. Status, in short, is the station in society occupied by the person or class in question. In the economic classification, status is defined by economic ability; and since, as has been shown elsewhere, the economic ability or power of self-maintenance possessed by the proletariat is nil (in the absence, at any rate, of a labour-monopoly of the Trade Union), the proletariat, economically considered, have a status definitely inferior to the status of the capitalist classes. Politically, on the other hand, the status of the two classes is the same. Both classes, that is to say, are equally enfranchised politically. The economic status being different, however; and the economic status being, moreover, determinant of political power; the equality of political status is useless in the absence of an equality of economic status. The condition, in fact, of real as distinct from nominal political equality is economic equality. But economic equality is only possible by the raising of the present status of the proletariat from that of a commodity to that of a partner in industry. When Labour may not be legally hired any more for wages or for salary, its present status as a commodity is raised and merged in the status of partnership.

CHARTER. A written grant of rights made legally enforceable by the State: a legal endowment of privileges. The historic example is that of the Great Charter of John which conferred on the people of England (excluding, however, the class of the serfs, numbering four-fifths of the whole population!) certain privileges thereafter called rights. Other examples are provided by the professions—medical, legal, clerical, accountancy, etc.—each of which possesses privileges conferred by Charter and therefore sanctioned by law, entitling them to greater or less degrees of autonomy. A charter for Labour would be an act of the State that should confer upon Trade Unions privileges corresponding to the present privileges of the professions: the privilege, for example, of defining membership, of fixing fees for service, hours and conditions of work, etc.

NATIONALISATION. To the production of commodities (that is, to Industry in general) two factors are necessary: (a) Capital or Tools; (b) Labour. Capitalism consists in the private ownership of Capital; and, by virtue of this ownership, in the consequent control of Labour. Nationalisation is now proposed as a means of superseding the private ownership of Capital and replacing it by State-ownership. But the question arises whether this transfer of the ownership of Capital from private individuals to the State must carry with it the control of Labour, which private individuals have hitherto possessed. If it should do so, the system then inaugurated under the name of Nationalisation is really State-Capitalism, since it implies the assumption by the State of all the present powers of private Capitalism. Nationalisation, however, is not of necessity State-Capitalism: for we can distinguish between the nationalisation of the ownership of Capital; and the control of Labour. The control of Labour, in short, may be elsewhere than in the hands of the State even when the State owns (or has nationalised) Capital. Such a division of function as would leave to the State the ownership of Capital, while conferring by Charter on Labour the control of Labour, would result in a form of Nationalisation which is not State-Capitalism (or Collectivism). A National Guild is an organisation within an industry for the control of Labour by Labour, with the owner-

ship of the capital vested in the State by nationalisation.

STATE CAPITALISM. When the State both owns the Capital or Tools of industry and controls (or employs) the Labour to work it, the system is properly named State-Capitalism, since it differs from private Capitalism only in this: that instead of many capitalists—employers—there is but one, namely, the State. The test, however, is the existence of Profit; in other words, the surplus of the selling price of the output over the cost in Labour of the production. In the case of the Army and Navy, the Civil Service, etc., since no profits are made, but the services are for use only, it is not State-Capitalism that prevails, but State-service. But in the case of the Post Office, the Mines and Railways, etc., since over and above the services rendered, *profits* are aimed at, the system under which they are run is certainly State-Capitalism.

COMMUNISM. Has both a Utopian and an economic meaning. In Utopia, Communism implies the community of goods and services without distinction of personal merit or desert; but everybody produces what he pleases and consumes what he likes. It assumes the existence in any given society of a normal desire on the part of its members to produce at least as much as they consume. Freedom for the natural play of human instincts is anticipated to result in a just and friendly distribution both of the labours of production and the enjoyment of consumption. In economics, Communism has a more restricted meaning; and refers to services performed by the community (under the direction of the State) which are partaken of by the members of the community freely and without payment. The service of the roads and streets, for example, is communal, since the citizen may use them as often as he pleases without being charged in proportion. Street lighting, scavenging, military, police and naval protection are likewise common services, differing from such collective services as the Post Office, tramways, etc., by the fact that the latter are restricted by payments ad hoc while the former are "free."

MELIORISM. The making better of something already existing, for example, a system of production or of distribution. Meliorism differs from Revolution which, instead of making better, proposes to make *afresh*. As applied to modern problems, Meliorism is the name given to every kind of effort designed to make the existing system of Capitalism run more smoothly; and is opposed to Revolution or Economic Radicalism whose object is not necessarily the opposite, namely, to make the existing system run *less* smoothly, but the substitution for the existing system of a different system altogether. Examples are numerous in every field. Take the political questions in Ireland or India as a type of them. Measures designed to make the present system of government easier, less oppressive and more acceptable to the native populations are meliorist. The agitation in each of these countries for Home Rule is, on the other hand, revolutionary, since it proposes, not the betterment of the existing system, but a new system altogether. In economics, meliorism consists in devising improvements calculated to render Capitalism at once more effective and less onerous; in other words, in propping up Capitalism. But the object of Revolution is to substitute for Capitalism the control of Labour by Labour. The former we may call Relative Meliorism, and the latter Absolute Meliorism.

LAND VALUES. A valuation is an estimate of the selling-price of any commodity. Land differs in no respect as a commodity from other commodities; and land-values are, therefore, only land-valuations or estimates of the selling-price of land. It is contended by the advocates of the Single-tax—a tax, namely, upon land-valuations—that a unique distinction belongs to land, in that, in the case of land its estimated selling-

price or "valuation" increases without any exertion on the part of its owner and by the action of society alone. And this "increment" of valuation or estimated selling-price, being due, they say, to society, is properly subject to a social tax equal in amount to the increment itself. There is no such distinction, however, to be made. All commodities are liable to fluctuations in selling-price due to causes over which their owners have no direct control. To-day a picture by Velasquez may be "worth" in the market a thousand pounds; to-morrow it may be worth ten thousand pounds. Its "value," of course, remains the same; but its valuation or estimated selling-price may be suddenly increased by unearned increment. Moreover, until a commodity has actually been sold, its valuation is speculative. To tax land, therefore, on its annual valuation or estimate of its selling-price is to tax a speculation.

UNEMPLOYMENT. The state of a labourer who, having nothing else than his labour to sell, cannot sell his labour. Unemployment in general arises when the supply of labour exceeds the demand. Upon such occasions, the demand for Labour being satisfied, there remains over a surplus of supply which nobody wants; and this surplus, being a supply without a demand, is left unemployed.

FINANCE. The Money industry. As producing, exchanging, buying and selling of Cotton constitutes the Cotton industry, the production, exchange, buying and selling of Money constitutes the Money industry or Finance. What is Money? A legal claim upon commodities, actual or prospective. Finance thus deals with claims upon commodities; in other words, with title-deeds to commodities. The creation and exchange of these title-deeds is the function of Finance.

Views and Reviews.

JUDGMENT BY ANALOGY.

THE debate on the Report of the Mesopotamian Commission has many points of interest. It would be easy to write disquisitions on the inefficiency of bureaucratic government, or on the dangers attaching to judgment by popular clamour; it would be equally easy to demonstrate that our so-called democracy is, under the guidance of a sensational Press, developing into an ochlocracy. But at the moment, it is the analogy with the proposed system of international mediation for the prevention of war that most interests me. The issue was obviously non-justiciable, and could not therefore be dealt with by a judicial Court; but the Commission, with its powers of inquiry and report, corresponded so closely with the suggested Council of Conciliation that its failure to secure a general acceptance of its judgment or recommendations indicates that the Council of Conciliation would be no more successful in a case that aroused strong feeling. In only one respect does the Commission differ from the suggested Council of Conciliation; it is presumed that the Council will publish the evidence in full, while the Commission, as everyone knows, published only extracts of the evidence. But the publication of all the evidence would not materially alter the feeling of people who do not read Blue-books; and the Press, because it could only make selections, would be charged with garbling the evidence just as the Commissioners have been charged. It is not less necessary for the judge to know than for the witness to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; and as the question of war turns at last upon conflicts of feeling, and the people, by the nature of the case, can never become seised of all the facts, the "democratisation" of international policy is not likely to be any more successful in preserving the peace than any other system.

Apart from the feeling of the people (and the people

only feel that someone ought to be made to suffer for what the wounded suffered during that retreat), the most important feature of the analogy is its complete reversal of the pacifist argument for a Council of Conciliation to deal with non-justiciable cases. For the argument, as usually stated, is that the chief value of such a Council would be that it would allow time for feeling to subside, and that, by the time that the report was published, public opinion would be able to deal judicially with it, and the culprit be clearly indicated. But in this case, it is exactly the publication of the Report that has roused public feeling; and the attempt of the lawyers to apply the principle of the "cooling-off" clauses of the American arbitration agreements is probably the most exasperating to public opinion. The Council of Conciliation would not be a more judicial body than the Commission was, it would not adhere to the rules of evidence more closely than did the Commission; the very lawyers who suggest its establishment would be the first to attack its methods and its findings, and it is quite evident that the principle of the "cooling-off" clause would not be the political febrifuge that its authors declare. The public, in its attempts to keep cool, will always work itself into a fever; and the crisis, as the debate shows, will be reached not before, but after, the inquiry has been made.

If the Council of Conciliation has no more power of enforcing its judgment than has the Commission (and I have never seen a proposal that it should have such power), we can see what the result of its efforts will be. It may indicate the party in fault, but there is no guarantee that its judgment will be accepted; on the contrary, the debate begins on that very point. The persons affected obviously have a right to be heard in their own defence, and would not accept anything less impartial than a judicial verdict; but precisely because the case is non-justiciable, no charge can be formulated, and no judicial verdict can be secured. But there is no guarantee that the Council would be able to indicate the person or the country in fault; imagine, for example, a quarrel between Russia and Greece concerning the possession of Constantinople. Each could allege an historical claim and a commercial claim to possession; and even if the Council pressed the international solution of the difficulty, it could not put either Russia or Greece in the wrong. If they went to war in defiance of the Council's solution, the impossibility of raising Europe against both belligerents would be manifest. Where there is no crime, there can be no culprit; and where there is no culprit, there can be no condemnation.

The famous Clause 18 in Viscount Bryce's scheme, which would legalise breach of treaty in the event of the Council's recommendations and the "cooling off" clauses being disregarded, is obviously impracticable when we see with what loyalty the politicians implicated in the Mesopotamian affair support each other. It is safe to say that no treaty of alliance that corresponded with the present interest of the respective countries would ever be repudiated in deference to the judgment of an International Court, or Council of Conciliation; rather would the Court, or Council, be impugned, its finding disputed, and the whole procedure brushed aside as being irrelevant or obstructive to the main issue. Loyalty is a living thing; and no treaty will be broken in the letter if it has not already been broken in the spirit. If a Royal Commission cannot induce politicians to forsake each other, a Council of Conciliation will not be able to absolve nations from loyalty to their treaty partners.

The analogy is, to my mind, so complete that the failure of the Mesopotamian Commission to secure general approval of its findings puts the whole scheme for International Conciliation out of court. Public opinion is incapable of dealing with complicated or

technical matters; its moral sense alone is presumed to be infallible, and all public discussion of international politics tends to become an appeal for a verdict of right or wrong. But the verdict, even if it could be obtained, would be irrelevant; for technical questions do not fall into moral categories. It is simply absurd to say that Sir John Nixon was either right or wrong in pushing on to Bagdad; and it would be no more sensible to declare that a country which refused the good offices of the Council of Conciliation, or refused to accept its finding, was in the wrong. To simplify international into moral questions is to falsify them; and even if we regard them as legal questions, the doctrine: "Where there is no legal remedy, there is no legal wrong": puts non-justiciable issues into the category of things to be decided by other means. There are, as St. Paul declared, things against which there is no law; and although he confined his list to the fruits of the Spirit, questions of technical proficiency and judgment, no less than those of national honour or interest, are equally immune. If working according to a well-established constitutional procedure, concerning a matter of administration in the British Empire, we can reach no clearer conclusion than was reached in this debate, a Council of Conciliation, dealing with more vital and complex matters, by methods of its own invention, cannot hope to render any more efficient service to the cause of the peaceful government of the world.

A. E. R.

Reviews.

The Wit and Wisdom of Lloyd George. Compiled by Dan Rider. (Grant Richards. 1s. net.)

The man who conversed with a reputedly clever talker, and after half an hour complained that he had not heard one clever remark, was met with the retort: "Do you think you'd know it?" We wonder whether Mr. Dan Rider would know the wit and wisdom of Mr. Lloyd George if he were to hear it. What, for instance, are we to make of this: "Coal is the most terrible of enemies, and the most potent of friends"? That is neither wit nor wisdom, it is simply untrue. "When the Celt has a nail in his boot he takes it out." Is that wisdom or wit? Mr. Lloyd George might as well tell us that when a Welshman has his hat on, his head is covered; also, that two and two are four in Wales. And was it quite wise to say: "The seas are ours, and they will remain ours"? According to the Bible, which Mr. Lloyd George sometimes quotes with approval, the Lord has a prior claim; and International Law will not countenance our title to possession of the seas. "We have got a home market, but we want the markets of the world as well. The home market would be a poorer market if we had not the world market as well." That probably means something in Welsh, and it was a mistake to translate it. "The last thing in the world John Bull wants is to be molly coddled"; we always thought it was burial. "Old age is now an anticipation of honourable ease"; presumably the honourable ease comes after old age. "The work-house has become the chimney corner"; it must be a mighty big chimney. "The spectre has become an angel"; really, five shillings a week at the age of seventy has a most miraculous effect. "Conscience—God's greatest gift to the human mind, the propeller and the rudder of human progress." Presumably that is why the conscientious objectors are in Dartmoor Gaol. "It is easier to judge of a war twenty years after it is over than at the time." We shall not lie awake at night pondering that saying; indeed, the whole book is a collection of such oppressive commonplaces that we wonder whether Mr. Lloyd George has ever said a witty thing, or ever phrased a wise one, or whether Mr. Dan Rider would print it. The free verse

into which some of the remarks fall, according to Mr. Rider, is worse than the prose;

Poor old mailed fist!

Its knuckles are getting a little bruised.

Poor shining armour!

The shine is being knocked out of it.

Italy at War. By Herbert Vivian. (Dent. 6s. net.)

Mr. Vivian tells us much about Italy, but very little about the war. He quotes some soldiers' letters, and anecdotes of various personages and regiments; gives us some extraordinarily good photographs of soldiers in the Alps, and devotes the rest of his book to an itinerary among the Italian people. He went to Genoa, and learned the dialect, and suffered the cooking; travelled third-class to Milan, and saw the Cathedral; went to Turin, and "had to dine off biscuits and beer"; went to Venice, and saw the sandbags in St. Mark's; went to Elba, and slept in the same room with fleas, and examined the books of Napoleon; went to Rome, and the Campagna, and discovered that "the alleged Roman fever is only a form of the influenza that threatens everybody everywhere"; went to Naples and Capri, and wherever he went, he ate and drank and flung ire about, sampled the public-houses, post-offices, trains, even the lotteries, and wrote chapters on each of these institutions. He refers frequently to "the Huns," and knows so much about the Papacy that "after careful reflection, I have come to the conclusion that the public interest is best served by making no reference whatever to its position and influence during the war." He proves his patriotism by denouncing Baedeker.

The Hope for Society. Essays on "Social Reconstruction after the War." By various writers. (Bell. 3s. net.)

These essays were delivered as lectures to the Inter-denominational Summer School at Swanwick in June, 1916. The Bishop of Oxford spoke on "The Hope for Society" (which is, of course, Christianity), Mr. J. A. Hobson dealt with "The Financial and Industrial Position after the War," and "Austerity, Art, and Joy" had as advocate Mr. Clutton Brock. "Trade Union Regulations" were explained from the employer's point of view by Sir Hugh Bell, and from the Trade Union point of view by that not too well-known Trade Union leader, the Rev. Dr. A. J. Carlyle. Mr. J. St. G. Heath talked of "The New Social Conscience as to Use of Income"; and the "woman question" was treated from two points of view, the practical and the rhetorical, by Miss Margaret Bondfield and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence respectively. Miss Bondfield's essay is a powerful indictment of the treatment of women by the Ministry of Munitions, and is one of the best essays in the book. "The Development of the Agricultural Side of English Life" was well expounded by Mr. Christopher Turnor, and "The Land Question after the War" was explained by Mr. C. Roden Buxton. Of course, Mr. Philip Kerr explained "The Meaning and Purpose of the British Commonwealth," and Mr. Ernest Barker became quite pious in his prophecy of the "Social Relations of Men after the War." All the speakers were handicapped by the fact that the war was not ended, and some of them, notably the agriculturists, were very pessimistic. Apart from their appeals to democratic sentiments, from their assertion of a spiritual revival, the lectures deal with actual difficulties and do not expound a common policy. The changes of political constitution that have occurred since these lectures were delivered, the simple fact that with every month longer that the war lasts the emergency legislation loses its temporary character and becomes habitual, the subtle change of mind effected by subjecting five millions of men to military discipline, all these considerations tend to prohibit any satisfactory prophecy of what will happen after the war. Much, too, will depend on the terms of the treaty of peace;

and all that anyone can be expected to do satisfactorily is to state the actual case of the particular subject that interests him. That is what these speakers do, and no attempt was made to reconcile their different points of view. They all agree only in this, that they all want to do the best for the country, and are by no means certain that they can do it.

Trade Fallacies. By Arthur Kitson. (P. S. King. 5s. net.)

Mr. Kitson here reprints a series of articles contributed by him to "Land and Water" during the last two years. His propaganda for the reform of our banking and currency system has been so powerfully supported by events since the war began that the necessity for reform is more urgent than ever. His main argument is that the basis of bank credit should be the national credit, and that the nation itself, through the Government, should own the monopoly of national credit. If it had done so at the beginning of the war, we should not have been doomed to pay the whole War Loan in interest in twenty years, and still to owe the whole Loan. But apart from that, there is no possibility of a development of trade after the war unless the banking system is reformed (strangely enough, to resemble the German system), and the metallic basis of our currency and credit abolished. "No extension of trade is possible under present conditions except through the increase of bank loans. Supposing that these loans are granted, and the enterprise, skill, and industry of our people are rewarded by a great increase in trade. What certainty have they that they will be permitted to keep this trade? And what is to limit the trade increase? The answers are (1) that since trade depends upon the credit allowed by the banks, which, in turn, depends upon the amount of the gold reserves, there is absolutely no certainty. (2) That the limit is gauged neither by the enterprise of our people nor the extent of the markets open for British goods, but by the same accidents, events, and conditions which make all our industrial operations so uncertain, viz., the imports and exports of gold. Now London is the only free gold market in the world. Supposing, therefore, that after the war Germany or the United States, or both, determine to wage a relentless commercial war for the world's markets. Not only will they attack by endeavouring to undersell us, but they will try to cripple us in our most vulnerable spot, viz., our gold market. By withdrawing gold from London, they can compel our banks to reduce their loans to British merchants, and our efforts at capturing German trade will be fruitless. And the only weapon of self-defence our bankers have is the bank-rate! . . . Increased trade demands increased banking facilities—increased loans—but the moment credit is increased to meet this demand, the gold reserves are strained, the bank rate is raised, loans are called in, the brake is applied to the wheels of industry, production is checked, employees are discharged, enterprise is discouraged, and the extra demand for money and credit, which prosperous times require, is choked off! In short, our financial system destroys prosperity, and reduces trade to the amount of gold available. So that the mechanism of exchange, instead of facilitating trade at all times, actually checks it. It first stimulates industry, and then destroys it. The gold basis has become both the life and death of trade." Mr. Kitson sketches a National banking system, using a currency based on the national credit (like Treasury notes), a reform of the coinage to a decimal coinage (10 farthings = one penny, 10 pennies = 1 shilling, 10 shillings = 1 George), the abolition of our absurdly complicated weights and measures and the adoption of a decimal system, and a number of other reforms of procedure which will help to make easier the sale of British products abroad. On the Labour question, his suggestion is that Labour,

Capital, and the State should be "united in the ownership, management and control of industry," apparently in the form of a board of directors of each establishment. The suggestion is not elaborated, and, as it stands, it offers no possibility of co-ordinating establishments, or of securing a necessary minimum of conditions.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

THE R.A.M.C.

Sir,—In the early days of the war a letter appeared in your correspondence columns, coming from a major in the R.A.M.C., putting forward the suggestion that men who had conscientious objections to fighting or were uncertain as to the justification for war could at least do valuable and humane service to suffering humanity, without endangering their principles, by joining the Royal Army Medical Corps. He outlined, if I remember rightly, the international character of the Corps, giving details of the Geneva Convention.

There were many, doubtless, who saw the force of his argument, and who, being anxious to reduce, were it only by a fraction, the loss of life and limbs, joined this regiment.

May I ask you, in view of this, to give publicity to some other facts concerning the Corps and the men who joined under some such inspiration?

At the R.A.M.C. Depot, Blackpool, men who are category A are being transferred to infantry, despite the conscientious objections to combatancy which many of them hold.

In reply to a question in the House, put by Mr. T. E. Harvey, M.P., it was stated that, unless the men had documentary evidence of their convictions among their papers, they were available for transfer, and it seems that they have no right of appeal.

As the men in question volunteered for service in the R.A.M.C. long before "calling up" or conscription had come into being, and no statement of religious or ethical opinions in this matter were demanded, of course the mass of them have no evidence of this kind.

Yet in the name of fairplay surely something should be done on their behalf, otherwise the only course open to these men, whose services have already proved valuable in hospitals and on the field—thoroughly trained men in all branches of R.A.M.C. work—is to refuse any order which violates the principles of the Geneva Convention under which they accepted service, and to endure what punishment the Government may decide to inflict, and tyrannous underlings intensify. Conscientious workers, who are a benefit to those with whom they come in contact, will thus be made a nuisance and useless to the country.

In view of the recent exposure of the insufficient medical service in Mesopotamia, and similar complaints one hears elsewhere from the wounded, this robbing the Corps of its healthy men, capable of enduring the hardest conditions of the service, seems particularly unwise.

Meanwhile, untrained men, now called up, who are also objectors, but who at this late date have an opportunity of proving their convictions before a tribunal, are enrolled daily.

R.A.M.C.

VIEWES AND INTERVIEWS.

Sir,—"J. A. M. A." conjectures, at some hazard to himself (for he has never heard of Mr. Gumileff before), that Mr. Gumileff is not himself a poet. I feel I am put in the position of having to produce my authority for seeking Mr. Gumileff's opinions. Unfortunately, "J. A. M. A.'s" meaning is a little obscured by an earlier part of his letter. He says there that neither Mr. Chesterton, nor Mr. Yeats, nor "A. E." is a poet, meaning by this that they are not "real poets." If "J. A. M. A.'s" conjecture about Mr. Gumileff veils a subtlety of this kind, there is, of course, nothing more to be said, since this is hardly the occasion to pass judgment on Mr. Gumileff's work. But I will assume that "J. A. M. A." overlooked his previous sentences, and really wonders who Mr. Gumileff is. It must be answered that Mr. Gumileff is well known in Russia and in translating circles abroad as a leader of the younger school of contemporary Russian verse, and also as an influential critic of literature and art.

C. E. BECHHOFFER.

Memoranda.

(From last week's NEW AGE.)

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.

The world's response to a great moral event like the democratisation of Germany would be an immense liberation of goodwill.

Our reprisals upon Germany should be an increasing criticism of the War-Cabinet.

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.

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

Salary brings self-satisfaction, but only responsibility brings status, which is the satisfaction of society.—"Notes of the Week."

A German revolution that is real can change the face of the world as nothing else can.—GEORGE D. HERRON.

Provincialism is more than an ignorance; it is ignorance plus a lust after uniformity.

The whole method of German and American higher education is evil because it holds up an ideal of "scholarship," not an ideal of humanity.—EZRA POUND.

One cannot talk for long about education, or about anything else of importance, without declaring a philosophy.

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.

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.

Unconscious humbug is the fine flower of an education imposed upon children, not worked out in collaboration with them.

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.—KENNETH RICHMOND.

No literary revolution is ever likely to be worked by any of Mr. Arnold Bennett's opinions.

Nobody knows how many writers Mr. Bennett has made whom God certainly never intended to write at all!

Rationalism itself is only one of the minor dogmas of a universe whose very foundations are dogmatic.

It takes more than one writer to make a writer.—R. H. C.

Action is not inquisitive; it domineers opinion. England imperils herself when she uses villainy in the name of justice.—"Triboulet."

Instructors are more easily found than educators. A great deal of our present education is productive of stupidity.

The best hope for our National Schools is that children of all classes should go to the same school.

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.—"Interviews."

Beware of the men who have no souls.—"Reviews."

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

PRESS CUTTINGS.

The second condition which I think the country is entitled to ask from the Government is that they will not permit the burdens of the country to be increased by what is called "profiteering." (Cheers.) Although I have been criticised for using that word, I believe on the whole it is rather a good one. It is profit-eering as distinguished from profiting. Profiting is fair recompense for services rendered, either in production or distribution; profiteering is an extravagant recompense given for services rendered. I believe that unfair in peace. In war it is an outrage (cheers), and that is why we have taken action to restrict the profits of shipping—which I think were a perfect scandal in the first two years of the war—and profits in mines, and we propose to deal very drastically with unfair profiteering in food. (Cheers.)—MR. LLOYD GEORGE.

"Vorwärts" to-day says: "The German Empire is on the way to a peaceful revolution. Many people are trying to hinder it, but it is on the way. What has become necessary may take days, weeks, or months to be completed, or it may come at one blow. When completed, it will be counted among the greatest events of history, and will completely change the world situation. Those who are trying to prevent this change are acting criminally against the interests of their country. Time is to-day not only money, but blood.

"A majority has been found in the German Reichstag to give the German people that freedom and that peace which they need. If the present crisis does not lead to decisive positive events, it would very soon be repeated in a much sharper form and under much more unpleasant circumstances. To spare the German nation, this is the duty of all who are conscious of their responsibility.

"What is necessary is a change of system. The new system cannot be other than a democratic Parliamentary system for our home affairs, united with a firm foreign policy based on a readiness for peace. The development of affairs is steering towards the form of a Parliamentary Government of National Defence. It will bring us that peace which we need in order to live as a free nation among free nations. That object once recognised, we must steer straight for it with our whole force and without hesitation."

The purposes and powers of these Councils and Committees are set out, and they are very wide. They mark a notable advance, and they give the workers a new status and a new dignity. They provide for a real and not a sham co-operation. They open the door for new and still greater developments by the gradual and tentative method which has ever been one of the characteristics of the British race. There is no violent cataclysm, no sudden break, but a gradual remoulding of industry under the inspiration of a co-operative aim and a national idea. I consider the report one of the most fruitful documents yet issued, and I am not ashamed to pay a tribute to the small band of men who have popularised the Guild idea both in the NEW AGE and elsewhere. They do not yet see the full fruition of their ideas, but they have done much to stimulate thought and provide plans of which the Committee have to some extent availed themselves.—MR. WARDLE, in the "Railway Review."

The aim of the peoples that are our enemies is—democracy; the right of every race that is ripe for independent existence to decide its own lot; honest, and not merely pretended, reduction of the burden of armaments; a system of arbitration to which all who are suspect of guilty responsibility, whether great or small, for the outbreak of war must submit, and the accomplishment of whose judgments all States admitted to the league of civilised peoples would have to guarantee; a state of things which would arm the law against the arrogance of violence, which would threaten with death

those who risked an attack, which would remove from the will of a mortal man and put upon the community of peoples the decision between peace and war, and which would hedge in the sovereignty of all Empires by the admission of an international right of control about as narrowly as the Socialism already recognised by the State has hedged in the sovereign rights of the individual.

If Germany sees the great signs of the times illuminating this aim from above, peace—since agreement about every other point would easily be possible—is attainable to-morrow. If a state of things for which millions of men are yearning seems to Germany a disgrace, she must go on fighting until one group is victorious and the other sinks into impotence. That is the reality, as it appears to the eyes of the fearless student, when the phrases used in both camps have been removed. He who wants to paint the face of reality because he cannot bear to look upon it must go down into the darkness. Only the people's will can be responsible, but before it makes its choice the spirit of statesmanship must illuminate its paths.—HERR HARDEN (Trans. "Times").

Continually disappointed at the failures of the Reformists, the Parliamentarians, and of all whom it has deputed to put things right for it, the working class is making up its mind to do things for itself—in other words, to effect the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. That is what the Social Revolution means—the assumption of authority and the direction of affairs by the working class. That class no longer trusts the governing class, neither Liberals nor Tories, neither Trade Union officials nor Social Reformers, neither Lawyers nor Theorists. It wants no more middle-class plasters and patent medicines, whether prepared by the "Round Table" bureaucrats or by the National Guildsmen. It resents now, and will resent more and more in the future, this instruction, preaching, and cultivation of its mind and imagination by all those who are outside its own ranks.

Let the middle-class sympathisers, the intellectuals, the "salaried," and those working-class Socialists who have drawn their ideas and education from bourgeois sources—and some of whom talk as if the workers must always take these from the products of the middle-class schools and colleges—know that this is going to be a proletarian affair, and that those of us who come from the bourgeois, whilst able to assist, may not and cannot inspire and direct the Social Revolution.

The proletariat is not going to be content with wages *minima*, however high; with that social copartnership known as Guild Socialism; with the democratisation of the State—the consumer's safeguard for protection against himself, the producer; with all these formulæ of reconstruction which bear the ineffaceable trade-mark of capitalist class culture. It is going, through Workers' and Soldiers' Councils, or through some other medium, now or in the not far distant future, to make an end, not only of the capitalist system of industry, but also of the capitalist system of social organisation known as the State, and of the capitalist system of ideas, education, etc.—in fact, of the capitalist system of civilisation.—J. T. WALTON NEWBOLD, in "The Call."

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