FOREIGN AFFAIRS

NOTES OF THE WEEK

We are constantly being invited to contemplate the division of opinion in Russia and to conclude from the Babel the folly of a democratic revolution. The antidote, however, is the spectacle of autocratic Germany in which opinion is no less divided into a thousand fragments and there appears to be no single settled policy or principle whatever. Close upon the heels of the German Socialists’ refusal to attend the Stockholm Conference, if the question of the responsibility for the war were to be raised, we have the Kaiser occupying half of his reply to the Pope’s Note, and this half the first half, with precisely this question of responsibility. What, in other words, is beneath the dignity of the German Majority Socialists is thought to be policy in the Kaiser himself. But this is the most inconsiderable of the signs of intellectual chaos in Germany. It is safe to say that there are as many groups of opinion in Germany as in Russia, that no single one of the groups, save perhaps the German Minority Socialists, is founded upon any unaltering principle, and that all Germany is in a ferment of opportunism waiting upon events. From this state of mind it is clearly unseasonable to expect any definite policy. One day it is the pan-Germans who appear to be in possession of the nation; the next day it is the Liberal section; on still another day of the week it is the pan-Germans who appear to be in possession; and so it goes on. Everything is in flux; nobody knows what a day will bring forth; and it is just as possible that one school will ultimately emerge triumphant as another. In the meanwhile the world opposed to Germany must equally be prepared to remain in a state of suspense, though not, we must observe, in a state necessarily of diplomatic or any other kind of inaction. While the patient is tossing in fever upon its bed and we are in doubt whether the turn will ever come, we must needs suspend our judgment; but there is no reason for suspending our musings.

Unfortunately, it so happens that divided in opinion as Germany is, the Allies appear to be not much less so upon many vital matters. This appearance of not being sure of the proper policy to apply to Germany we would gladly believe an appearance only. But there are too many signs that it is real. The notes recently issued, the speeches recently made by members of the War Cabinet, the conflict of views represented in the various presses of the Allied and semi-Allied countries are all evidence that if there is a confusion of counsel in Germany there is also confusion among the Allies. Why is it that the Allies have not yet published their reply to the Pope’s Message? Why do they not set by the side of Germany’s evasive reply a straightforward statement of our terms? To what extent have our Allies’ aims been re-formulated in consequence of those two tremendous and unexpected events, the Russian Revolution and the adhesion to the Allies of the American Republic? Above all, what is the reason that America still declines to identify herself with the main body of the Allies? Doubtless, as we have suggested, there are answers to these questions and there are likewise explanations to be found for the incoherence of the German policy; but incoherence is no effective weapon against incoherence; and it ought to be by exactly our coherence, explicitness and singleness of policy that the Allies are to be distinguished from our German enemies. The materials for such a policy, moreover, are by no means wanting. It is true, of course, that in balancing one particular solution against another particular solution difficulty in coming to a decision is certain to be encountered. For instance, who off-hand could decide the relative advantages of a declared policy of economic war, the exclusion of Germany from any colonial possessions, and a hundred similar problems? Our point, however, is that it is not necessary for the Allies to agree upon these questions; on the contrary, their detailed discussion is at this moment irrelevant and premature. Plainly, they are all contingent, in the first place, upon the issue of the war; and, in the second place, we may be quite certain that the Peace Conference at which they are bound to be discussed will settle them otherwise than as they are likely to be theoretically settled to-day. We therefore deprecate altogether, save as instructive exercises in popular geography, the current symposia on the detailed settlement; and ask instead that serious attention should be paid to the problem upon which they all hang: what is to be the future of
Germany? For there is no denying that this is the question of questions; and that, whether explicitly or implicitly, every particular solution assumes one or other reply to it. But what is the proper reply? What is to be the future of Germany? The Allies have agreed among themselves that the future of Germany must be a democratic future and that they will remain at war until Germany has democratized herself; we cannot see any value in the discussions contingent upon that agreement. The retention of the Prussian system implies, there is no doubt, the restoration of the status quo, but in an aggravated form. But the democratization of Germany, and this alone, would enable the world to make a fresh start.

For the lack of this agreement we are leaving unused the political weapon which in our judgment will be quite as necessary to the conclusion of the war as the military and economic weapons. Consider, in fact, what our situation is. Up to the present moment we have relied upon military and economic pressure as our sole means of bringing Germany into a reasonable frame of mind; and we are proposing to continue it and to increase it. Very good, we have nothing to say against these means, except to remark that not only are they slow in producing decisive results but they are not by any means sure to produce the result we are in search of, namely, a change of heart in Germany itself. These means, therefore, we would say, are not to be neglected; but they must at the same time be supplemented by means a little nearer the plane of German mentality; in short, by a political propaganda as definite in aim, as organised in its conduct, and as vigorously pursued as the military and economic propagandas themselves. Germany, it is certain, has not neglected this weapon, as the tons of literature produced for home and neutral (and Allied) consumption prove. Nor, to give the Allies their due, have we ourselves neglected this weapon in the field of the neutral nations. But where, as we have often pointed out, this political propaganda might be of the greatest effect, namely, in Germany itself, and particularly upon the democratic sections of Germany, we have, it appears to us, utterly neglected it. A modern war, however, differs from all previous wars in being, as well as a military and economic contest, a contest of opinions. To the military and economic propaganda we should therefore add a form of propaganda similar in many respects to an electioneering campaign. It is true that the constituency whose suffrages we seek is less accessible to political propaganda than an ordinary political constituency; we cannot flood Germany with a scheme upon which there is (or was) a definite in aim, as organised in its conduct, and as vigorously pursued as the military and economic propagandas themselves. Germany, it is certain, has not neglected this weapon, as the tons of literature produced for home and neutral (and Allied) consumption prove. Nor, to give the Allies their due, have we ourselves neglected this weapon in the field of the neutral nations. But where, as we have often pointed out, this political propaganda might be of the greatest effect, namely, in Germany itself, and particularly upon the democratic sections of Germany, we have, it appears to us, utterly neglected it. A modern war, however, differs from all previous wars in being, as well as a military and economic contest, a contest of opinions. To the military and economic propaganda we should therefore add a form of propaganda similar in many respects to an electioneering campaign. It is true that the constituency whose suffrages we seek is less accessible to political propaganda than an ordinary political constituency; we cannot flood Germany with such a plan endorsed, the Castle dogs should not even bark. Having, however, not only barked but bitten, and bitten with a poisoned tooth, there is only one course for us to take—unto their crime—it is to recall every Castle official who can be proved to have connived before or after in the death of Thomas Ashe. Unless something of this kind is done, the Castle, we fear, will have triumphed over the Convention and strangled it in the cradle.

There are many things to be said in comment upon the series of articles just published by the "Times" on the subject of the Revolutionary Labour Movement; and we hope to say them in succeeding issues. For the present, however, we shall confine ourselves to their outstanding features. The first of these undoubtedly is the exaggeration the writer has given to the revolutionary movement itself. It is not by any means our wish to deny that a revolutionary feeling is abroad nor that it is increasing in intensity and in quantity; but we deny that it has as yet either the character or the dimensions assigned to it by the writer in the "Times." Of the contrary, it is at present so small as not only to be negligible but, still more important, as to make negligible the "antidote," which the "Times" writer is good enough to say is National Guilds. What then shall be said of the remedy recommended by the writer—namely, the forcible suppression of the next strike—but that it is a Nasmyth hammer to crush an egg? The writer arrives at his exaggerated estimate by confusing with the revolutionary movement other movements of mere opinion and crime. He refers, for instance, to the revolutionary movement not only the recent sequence of strikes in South Wales and elsewhere, but proposals such as that for the conception of wealth. Nothing could at the same moment flatter and misrepresent the revolutionary movement more completely; for, in fact, to "the young men and women" of whom the writer is thinking (and who must have been pulling his leg a great deal) neither the series of strikes nor the proposal to confiscate wealth owe more than ineffectual encouragement. Each of them, in fact, has a causation which would have escaped there had no revolutionary movement to which to ascribe them.

The second feature to remark in the articles is their amiable ignorance of the facts of Labour economics as well as of the facts of the Labour situation. The
writer has, it is obvious, an axe to grind in the form of the policy above referred to—the policy of the forcible repression of the next strike; and to this end he makes an arbitrary division of the nation and draws a caricature of Labour's economic theory in order the better to appareil the extreme and for the measure he intends to recommend. Everybody not prejudiced by a foregone conclusion must be aware, for instance, that the recent series of strikes have had their origin in the simple fact that the profiteers declined at the outset of the war to stop profiteering. Our own readers, at any rate, will remember that we recorded the repeated offers of Labour in the early days of the war to forego any increase of wages if the capitalists would forego any increase of profits. That the capitalists everywhere refused to abate their chances of profit, that prices rose in consequence, and that in sheer self-defence Labour was compelled to demand higher wages with the further effect of raising prices, was the vicious circle which had its moral origins with the capitalists and not with Labour. Yet our writer is now proposing to penalise Labour for it! To encourage the Government to make the attempt he invents, as we have said, an arbitrary distinction between what he calls the Nation and Labour. The Nation, he says, consists of that half of the population which is "individualist" in character (a rare quality to make a nation of!) while Labour consists of the Socialist half. No economic distinction separates them, but wage-earners are to be found in one camp or the other indiscriminately. We need not say that the distinction is as silly as it is arbitrary. There are no such two nations within the nation as the writer professes to discover—halves of different sentiment and mentality. What, on the other hand, there are in the nation are two economic groups, the group of the capitalists or tool-owners and the group of the proletariat or tool-users; and it is these two groups that are slowly but surely becoming differentiated in sentiment and mentality.

The history of the war has shown that material and economic differences are always likely, in the present state of civilisation, to prevail over sentimental affinity. This, of course, is a further reason for bringing economics into harmony with sentiment. At the outbreak of the war, as our writer honestly admits, his two nations were scarcely to be discovered at all; in other words, there was no revolutionary Labour movement, but there was a union sacree of sentiment. With the refusal of the war profiteers to keep their prices at the outbreak of the war, however, the economic difference was introduced like the thin end of the wedge; and every fresh development of profiteering has simply hammered the wedge in deeper, until at this moment the two economic divisions of society, in spite of their common sentiment, threaten to fall apart. It is no use the "Times" writer laying the blame upon Labour after having admitted, as he does, that the initiative of this disruption was taken by Capital. Thereby he confesses that though Capital is in his judgment to blame yet Labour must incur the responsibility as if, in fact, Labour and not Capital had taken the initiative in weaving the vicious circle. He is in moral self-contradiction with himself. It is likewise of no use to urge the Government to attempt to close the breach by the violent suppression of one of Labour's active reactive groups. So long as profiteering continues on the side of Capital, so long, by one means or another, will Labour react on the other side, try as the Government may to prevent it. The only means of closing the breach in our economic system to the uniting sentiments of justice and patriotism, and to reconstruct our industry upon them, this, as the "Times" writer admits, is the true antidote, and we wish he had paid it the consideration he says it deserves.

Foreign Affairs.
By S. Verd. d.

ARGENTINA has broken off relations with Germany. Considering the attitude spontaneously taken up by the Kaiser towards Count Luxburg, and the almost equally unfavourable attitude of the Swedish Government, it is difficult to see that any other course could have been adopted without loss of dignity. The Government of Peru has presented an ultimatum to Germany intimating that if a satisfactory reply to the Peruvian Note regarding the sinking of the "Lorton" is not received within eight days of September 27 diplomatic relations will be severed. Costa Rica has announced that, "for the future," it has broken with Germany. Of the remaining Latin-American Republics, Bolivia, Brazil, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, and Nicaragua have already terminated their diplomatic relations with Germany; Cuba and Panama have declared war on Germany; Salvador has broken off relations and offered armed assistance to the United States; and the Dominican Republic, which is under the military administration of the United States, may be taken as acting with her protector. Apart from these definite actions, all the Latin-American Republics have declared their sympathies with the Allied cause as interpreted by President Wilson.

There are two ways of considering this unmistakable attitude of the Central and South American Republics; that is to say, it may concern us from the moral or the economic point of view. As an expression of moral judgment it is wholly condemned of the Prussian system. With the exception of the Austrians, the Hungarians, and the Bulgars—the latter, by the way, with a strong infusion of Turkish blood and intellectually the most backward of Balkan peoples—the white nations of the world, and most of the coloured races, too, are emphatically on the side of democracy. Nor should it be forgotten in this connection that the Austrians have for several months been showing restiveness, that their new Emperor has, so far as we can judge, sincerely striven to make himself popular by supporting the democratic forces in his dominions, and that the Magyars are interested in the maintenance of the Central Empires. Unfortunately, it is when we come to consider the economic point of view suggested by the attitude of the South American Republics that we discover precisely why these reactionary elements—which are still the ruling elements, though they feel no position shaken—are able to maintain themselves in the face of the moral judgment of the world. In this country there are two small but pernicious schools of politicians and business men who are anxious to defeat Germany—for Germany's Allies hardly enter into their calculations—by the threat or the use of economic weapons. One section—the Jingo—bases itself on the Paris resolutions and never ceases to urge that Germany shall be, in effect, economically boycotted even after the peace treaties are signed. The other school—the pacifist—holds that economics ought to be used merely as a threat, the assumption being that if Germany is menace with the loss of raw material, exclusion from ports, and so on, the commercial classes will, in their alarm, urge the jinger classes to make peace on a democratic basis.
What bears the most eloquent possible witness to the lamentable lack of political judgment in this country at the present time is the obvious fact that neither of these schools has seen or imagined the logical conclusion of its dangerous programme. It should surely be pelliculately clear to the most hopefully pacifist intelligence that the present rulers of Germany are not to be deterred by threats of an economic boycott after the war, any more than they are likely to become cowed into mercy by economic threats. Pacifist and jingo meet as extremes in this one respect, namely, that they are unwittingly doing all in their power to prolong the war. The Germans must be considered as experts in the art of the economic weapon; and it is to be feared that the whole economic question has not already been considered in all its possible bearings. It is true that the German Empire has large South American interests; it is true that in many South American countries immense stores of raw material were being accumulated on German account for use after the war. But it is equally true that when the war became prolonged, and it was seen to be likely that the United States would enter on the side of the Allies, the German Government at once took steps to prepare for an economic war. Indeed, from its inception in 1915, bring home to the German ruling and commercial classes the fact that they would have to look elsewhere for their raw material? Certainly everything possible was done to take advantage of neutral countries; undoubtedly the combined enemies of the Allied countries have suffered from lack of raw material and foodstuffs. But what is their attitude likely to be if they are threatened economically for an indefinite period, or even if they are threatened economically for the purpose of bringing them back to the way we believe, to reason? Let it not be forgotten that the Germans, as the acknowledged leaders of the opposing combination, are prepared to cut their losses in South America in order to consolidate their present gains in Europe and in the Near East. It is not enough to say that they are being driven out of Belgium. They are far from being driven out of Alsace-Lorraine, where they draw annually twenty million tons of iron ore and nearly four million tons of coal. They are in complete possession, not only of Poland, with its immense textile manufactures and rich mineral wealth, but also of countries which are known to be potentially rich in raw materials, but are as yet hardly exploited at all—Serbia, for example, and Asia Minor.

Is it, then, too much to ask that both the pacifist and jingo schools of the "economic weapon" shall be careful what they are about? Germany is a more than usual vain nation, as we ought all by this time to be aware; her troops have fought well; her military leaders have shown that they can rise to the occasion. It is need not, therefore, be imagined that her commercial leaders will give up for a mere threat the actual and potential wealth which her military leaders have placed in their hands for exploitation during the last three years. A country in possession of the Rumanian coalfields, those in Galicia is not likely to afford to renounce her possible concessions in Mexico or Colombia; Poland is an excellent substitute for the Argentine in the matter of crops; and so far as cotton and copper are concerned Asia Minor is still to be developed. It is not likely that the area, so long as it remains within the dominion of the Germans, will be left in a state where it may come to know as Estonia or Livonia or the Ukraine—all either in German possession or ready to fall into its hands—and we must realise that the mere threat of an economic boycott, temporary or permanent, is enough to make every German devote himself to the retention of these wealth-producing areas. Let it not be imagined that even Belgium has been diplomatically renounced by the Berlin authorities; and that even if Belgium were given back the enemy is in possession of almost inex- calculable territory within easy range of his interior lines of railway communication, which would enable him, if he retained it, to snap his fingers, diplomatically and economically, at the rest of the world.

That economic weapon, so simple when one talks about it lightly, will simply not work. The facts I have mentioned are enough to damn it for ever; for there is only one way to salvation. That way lies through the democratisation of Germany; and if Naumann's Mid-Europe propaganda is only one of the most important endeavours to put these plans into action, there is yet another reason why it is impossible to cut Germany off from the rest of the world as one might talk of sawing away the branch of a tree. In the years before the war Germany was supplying the nations of the world in general with very nearly one-fourth of their iron and steel products, with more than one-fourth of their coke, with one-fifth of their coal; with most of their dyestuffs; and with nearly all their chemicals involved in the production of potash. It is ridiculous to suggest that the world can simply and easily deny itself these German products. There are certain chemicals, certain dyes, certain essential electrical goods, of which Germany has still the monopoly; and with that monopoly she can and will bargain no matter how sweeping the Allies' victory may be. It is our duty to see that Germany has no object in using her bargaining powers further; it is our duty to show her people that an Allied victory means, for the first time, that the German nation will be free to develop itself, economically as well as politically, on individual lines as distinct from the appalling state tyranny in educational and economic matters which has hitherto prevailed. If we cannot show them, in advance, that an Allied victory means fair treatment for the potential democratic elements of the German Empire, how can we expect the German Government, no matter by whom appointed, to enter into frank negotiation with us?

Let me repeat it: you cannot wage an economic war on Germany without rendering the occupation of the enemy more bitter, more prolonged, and, it must be said, less unjustified than it is now. President Wilson has assured the Germans over and over again that he distinguishes between them and their Government; and he will be no party to their economic mishandling. Lord Robert Cecil has echoed his words; M. Painlevé has implicitly repudiated the French school which has been demanding, for economic reasons, territory up to the left bank of the Rhine. The British jingo, represented by the "Morning Post," have failed to realise their position; for even Carmelite House has abandoned the economic war a catastrophe upon which it at one time insisted. It is, therefore, not a little irritating that the hands of these economic extremists should have been unexpectedly strengthened by such good Liberals as one presumes to be connected with the "Nation" and the "Daily News." It is, I say again, as bad to try to bring Germany to reason by an economic bait as it is to try to induce cowardice among her leaders by the threat of a boycott. Neither threatening nor wheedling of this kind will induce the rulers of Germany to modify their plans in the least; but these plans would undoubtedly be modified by the return of a democratic government to power in the Reichstag. Before that can happen Germany must participate in the democratic feelings of the rest of humanity; and it is impossible to engender such feelings by economic menaces.
Towards National Guilds.

In many of the discussions concerning industrial reconstruction the writers are reckoning without their hosts. These are the returning troops. Upon the psychology of the returning troops will depend, however, the practicability or impracticability of the schemes now being considered for them in their absence. It is true, of course, that we are not the only people to be forewarned of this contingency. Already, in all probability, the brains of the governing classes are at work devising means of breaking the back of the sudden return from national to private employment of millions of men. And their proposals, no doubt, will be something as follows. If, they argue, we can return the troops by degrees, we can reckon on their absorption by degrees into the old capitalist system; at no time will there be a sufficient number of men of the same length of service looking for employment to create a real disturbance; hence it is our policy to lengthen out the period of demobilization and to demobilize only as fast as the system can safely absorb them. This policy, we may say, is as practical as it is probable; and it has the further advantage of appearing to divide the circumstances that are likely to prevail. For, in the first place, demobilization from all the ends of the earth cannot in any case be simultaneous; and, in the second place, a gradual demobilization may be advisable in the interests of the prolonged peace settlement. Altogether, therefore, we ought to assume that demobilization will, in fact, a long process: and to discount any hopes that might be based on the sudden re-transportation of soldiers into wage-servants.

The advantage to capital and to the capitalist system need not, however, be either very great or permanent. Admitting that the re-absorption of the soldiers will tend less, if it is gradual, to the immediate overthrow of capitalism—the gain of time will not be sufficient really to establish capitalism as it was before the war. With every fresh draft of returned men the capitalist system will not only have to accommodate itself in order to preserve its balance—a difficult administrative task, which will need to be carried out while industry in general will be making simultaneously increased demands—but every fresh draft will tend to re-awaken in the already absorbed the feelings with which they returned. However wine is mixed with water, and however slowly the addition is made, the wine becomes stronger as the water becomes weaker; and in the case of the dilution of the wage-system with men hitherto accustomed to national service the effect of the dilution increases at whatever rate the addition is made. We may therefore expect that while, perhaps, a graduated demobilisation will ensure the maintenance of the wage-system for as long as the demobilisation lasts, it cannot prevent, in the end, the full effect of the return of all these troops into industry. In more precise terms, we may expect that after two or three years of peace the loss of the troops will have begun its work; and it is from that moment that the wage-system will really begin to feel the effects of the war.

There are two main classes of opinion regarding the temper in which the troops will return; and both are naturally speculative. One class expects to find the troops returning with an inclination towards a quiet life at all costs. They will have suffered so many hardships, they have so exhausted their powers of resistance, that if only they are permitted to live quietly and without too much insecurity they will accept the wage-system and even oppose any movement for its abolition. The other class expects, on the contrary, that the temper of the returning troops will be revolutionary. They argue that men who have sacrificed so much for their country will demand a price for their sufferings; and that the soldiers who have fought for civilisation will insist upon enjoying it when they have won. In any case, they argue, we may expect that the army returning will create industrial troubles on a considerable scale and ending, in all probability, in an economic revolution. We are not sure for ourselves that either school is right in its opinion. We are not convinced that either opinion is right. For the present it appears most probable to us that the temper of the returning troops will be determined by two several circumstances, neither of which can be defined with any exactitude at the present moment. They are the manner of the conclusion of the war, and the national mood in which the returning troops are met. Everything, we say, depends upon these two factors.

Regarding the first circumstances (upon which to a great extent the second also depends) let us take what is at once the probable and the most favourable hypothesis: namely, that the Allies are militarily victorious and that Prussian militarism is knocked down and out. The triumph of our soldiers in that event would not be sufficient to give every one of them pride for life. That the labor of millions, postmen, railwaymen and clerks of a few years ago should have shown themselves capable of beating the best trained troops in the world would be a reflection to sustain self-respect throughout a life of labour. Every workman who has been engaged in any sphere of the war would feel not only that he had carried a marshal's baton in his knapsack but that he was fit to wield it. The troops, in a word, would return from a military victory over Prussianism in a temper to conquer the world. The effect of the same conclusion would be somewhat similar in the nation. By just so much as the war will have been long and difficult, a complete victory will be stimulant; and by just so much as it will be undoubtedly the army that will have won it for us, the nation will be disposed to deny the troops nothing. These two factors will therefore be single in their operation. On the one hand, the peace, having been victorious, will be disposed to ask or to take a great deal of new social liberty; and, on the other hand, the general public in its jubilation will be disposed to give it them. With these two factors working to a common end, a revolutionary movement can scarcely fail to be initiated and to be carried a considerable distance. How far it will go depends upon the idea it carries with it, for revolutions come to rest in their intellectual centre of gravity.

We see, then, that any present forecast of the reconstruction of industry after the war must be the fast link in a chain of hypotheses, the first of which is the conclusion of the war itself. Given, we say, a victorious conclusion, the workmen will return in an optimistic and revolutionary temper. (Revolution, by the way, are never made by depressed and disappointed men—they only riot or react.) Given their return in this temper, public opinion would reinforce them in it, and between them the revolutionary movement would be speeded up. Given such a revolutionary movement, it would go as far as its ideas could carry it. In the meanwhile, there is nothing to be done but to wait and to continue to propagate the ideas of National Guilds. We may on this account expect that the temper of the returning troops will be revolutionary. They argue that men who have
The National Party.

There has been quite a boom in National Parties lately, but up to the present they have made a disappointingly poor show at the polls. The John Bull League, in its quest for a Business Government, does not seem to have taken the preliminary step of engag- ing a Business election agent, and running a Business candidate. We had high hopes at one time of Lord Willoughby de Broke, but he seemed content with having raised the standard of rebellion on the walls of his baronial castle, without selling forth to attack the enemy in the constituencies. Then there was Mr. Claud Johnson. If we remember aright, a real Business man who launched a world-shaking movement in the sympathetic columns of the "Daily Mail." Lord Northcliffe does not often lack a loser, yet the public had no sooner begun to rally round Mr. Johnson than he forsook us in a truly businesslike spirit, to accept service under the unbusinesslike government of Mr. Asquith. Next came Flight-Commander Pemberton-Billing, the only one so far who has been businesslike enough to win a seat in the House of Commons.

These repeated disappointments have inevitably left the public a little cold to the gallant adventure of Lord Duncannon and Brigadier-General Page-Croft, who, up to now, have shown no sign of emulating Mr. Billing's feat. On the contrary, within a very short time after his public renunciation of the Unionist Party, General Page-Croft went down to his constituency and received a unanimous vote of confidence from the Unionist Association of Bournemouth. The mere fact that the latest National Party was mothered by our esteemed contemporary the "Morning Post" must have caused some suspicious minds to ask whether it was not more likely to prove a party of the Right Rather than of the Centre; and a rebellion that does not cost Mr. Page-Croft a single Conservative vote is hardly likely to gain him a single Liberal or Labour one.

The programme of the newest National Party does not seem to breathe that passionate interest in the welfare of the masses, who form at least a part of the nation, which does breathe in the pages of "Sybil," and never died out altogether in the heart of Disraeli. The prominence given to a grievance of the Peerage shows a strange lack of the sense of political proportion, which is natural in the representative of velladom-by-the-sea, but would be fatal to a candidate for a mining constituency. We must doubt if the average voter can be excited to the point of forsaking his Party moorings by the display of Mr. Duncannon, between the seat in the House of Lords bought by Mr. Snook, and the seat in the House of Commons paid for by Brigadier-General Crook; and it is apparently as much an object with the National Party to close the "Lower" House to the poor as to close the "Upper" House to the New rich.

Why a peerage should be described as an honour we confess ourselves unable to determine, and it is certainly a question on which history throws little light. The doctrine that a title obtained by violence in the Middle Ages is more honourable than one obtained by commercial enterprise in our own day seems more fitted to commend itself to the German mind than the English, just at present. Perhaps Lord Duncannon has not considered the danger of raising the question of the origin of peerages and the possibility that logical minds may wish to extend the inquiry beyond the cases of Lord Snook and Viscount Hook, say, to the dukedoms of Cleveland, Grafton, and St. Albans.

The sale of peerages is in substance a bargain by which a wealthy man with no political ability undertakes to pay the election expenses of a certain number of poor men with ability, in return for an imaginary rank to which no wise man any longer aspires. In fact it is a very short time since we were asked to relieve the class of distressed eldest sons of peers from their damosel hereditas. The only real evil in the business is in the poor man having to accept such aid, and the only real remedy is the payment of election expenses by the nation, as is done by practically every nation but this. A party that does not see, or will not advocate, that remedy is as truly National as the Society for the Registration of Baronets.

We should like respectfully to suggest to the numerous and increasing class of founders of National Parties that they cannot be too indefinite in drawing up their National Programme. Vague expressions about social welfare, accompanied by equally vague professions of disinterestedness, do not carry us much further. Promises from the Outs to govern us better than the Ins are what we have been accustomed to for the last couple of centuries. It would also seem to be an essential condition of success that a National Party should be prepared in due course to form a National Government; and here the organisation whose headquarters are in King Street, St. James's, seems to compare rather unfavourably with the John Bull League. That body is at least provided with a Prime Minister, which is more than half the battle. The protéges of the "Morning Post" suffer from too much modesty. It is true they profess an opinion that brains are not of much consequence in the rulers of a great empire, but to the cynic this profession may not seem quite disinterested.

It may be prejudice on our part to deem that a National Party ought to be composed of adherents of more than one of the existing parties, and might usefully include a few independent political thinkers who are at present unable to find any party to which they can adhere. The list of names hitherto issued from King Street reminds us rather painfully of the patria manzon formerly issued from Tooley Street. However right it may be for the three political tailors of King Street to reject in advance the support of Cabinet Ministers, we cannot but think them too severe in excluding men of eminence in science and literature, as well as in the world of business and finance. Nor does their avowed policy of boycotting brains seem necessarily to involve the complete rejection of the representatives of organised Labour.

We consider the National Party would command more confidence in the constituencies, except, perhaps, in the Chartist districts, where it has something to lay before the nation at least a skeleton list of a National Ministry; and, as we wish the party well, we have pleasure in offering them the following suggestions:

Prime Minister : The Premier Peer of England (to be represented during minority by the next Peer in order of precedence).

First Lord of the Treasury : Mr. Horatio Bottomley.

Lord Chancellor : The Bishop of London (in accordance with mediaeval precedent).

Lord President of the Council : The Lord Duncannon.

Secretary for War : Brigadier-General Page-Croft (if not at the front).

Secretary for Air : F. C. Pemberton-Billing, M.P.

First Lord of the Admiralty : J. Havelock-Wilson, M.P.

Home Secretary : Miss Christabel Pankhurst, M.P. (in prospect).

Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland : Count Plunket.

Minister for Government Contracts : Mr. Claud Johnson.


Food Controller : The Manager of the Savoy.

Censor : Callisthenes.
To Begin With.
By Ramiro de Maeztu

Everything in this world, a tree, a book, a nation, appears to us partly good, partly bad, and partly empty. I hope that every reader will subscribe after analysis to this simple proposition. But it is not enough to make an assertion in life. We have to begin by saying that this world is partly good, partly bad, and partly empty. This assertion is of a mystical character. Its truth cannot be proved, neither can the fact it contains be explained unless by some kind of theology, the basis of which must rest on an act of faith. Of all possible explanations the most plausible to my mind is the Christian. This is another question. For the present it is enough to assert that if we begin by accepting the fact that the world is partly good, partly bad, and partly empty, we can derive from this postulate a coherent morality, a satisfactory, though incomplete, orientation for our practical life; and that if we do not admit it there is no possibility of this moral orientation.

When we say that anything is good we are saying that it ought to be conserved; when we say that it is bad, that it ought to be destroyed; and when we say that it is empty, that something ought to be created to fill it. We are in the region of the things that ought to be. Facts of a thing is in itself a guarantee of its preservation, nor is baseness of its destruction, nor is emptiness itself, although it is like an arrow pointing to a desirable creation, an assurance that the creating shaft will ever be sped. In order that the good may be conserved, the bad destroyed, and the empty fulfilled, there must be beings capable of conserving, destroying, and creating. I am a being of this kind. All men are beings of this kind, because they are all capable of conserving, destroying, and creating. The latter assertion is not derived from the former. It is equally elementary. It arises spontaneously as we consider ourselves as activities in the same way as when we direct our eyes to things, the assertion arises that some are good, some bad, and some empty. They never cease to send us their message; there is something to conserve, something to destroy, and something to fulfill. Sometimes we hear this message and sometimes not.

The possibility is just conceivable to us of beings existing in the world superior to ourselves, who obey the appeal of things with the mere instinct of swallows making their migrations or of birds. An instinctive goodness, such as perhaps the Jesus of the Gospels exemplified, is infinitely superior to this vacillating and rational goodness of ours, which only prevails, when it prevails, in conflict against impulses antagonistic to the moral appeal of the world. For man never ceases to perceive within his breast another appeal, that of his own person, that of him himself, who wants to be happy, who wishes to do as he likes, who wants to rebel, and rebels, against the moral yoke of things. Subject to this double appeal: that of duty, which comes from instinct, although it seems to arise immediately from consciousness; and that of selfishness, which comes from within, from self, although it appears to arise from the sensual and lustful aspect of things, man is not more and cannot be more than an imperfect instrument of morality. Imperfect as it is, it is all we have. If it could be proved that there are other animals capable of writing poetry like Shelley or of reasoning like Descartes, or of acting like the explorers of the South Pole or the missionaries of India and China, or even of admiring Shelley, Descartes, the explorers, or the missionaries, we should acknowledge in these animals the same value of possible instruments of the good that men have. What we ought never to do is to consider man as an end in himself.

It is false, the Kantian assertion that rational beings ought to obey a law that prohibits the use of oneself or others merely as a means, and that prescribes that we should treat them at the same time as ends in themselves. It is destructive of morality. The moral law that ought to regulate our relations with ourselves and others might be formulated, in antithesis to the Kingdom of Ends, as the constitution of the Kingdom of Means: "Never treat humanity in your own person or in the person of others merely as a means." In current language: don't take yourself or others too seriously. A sonnet, twenty bars of music, a drawing, an argument, a theorem, a covenant, a law, any action whatever ought to be taken seriously, because it can be either very good or very bad, but goodness ever becomes inherent. Men are not things. And as they are not things, as they lack fixity, they inevitably escape our moral judgment. The only thing that experience has taught us about them is that as soon as they persuade themselves that they are good, they do bad things as a consequence of believing themselves good.

Things point the aim of moral life, to preserve, to destroy, to create. I begin by the conservation, first, because it is the democratic function par excellence. Almost all men can contribute to the preservation of something good. The immense majority of men are devoted to this function. The educative function and the vast majority of cultural institutions are essentially conservative. The function of men engaged in economic work, that is to say, the mass of mankind, is also conservative. The reproductive function of mankind is also conservative. And, above all, I begin with conservation, because it is good. If we begin by acknowledging that the world is filled with good things, we begin by an act of thanksgiving, which is a good in itself. And again, because if we begin by an appreciation of the good things, we shall have taken a long step towards the discovery of what things are bad and what are empty.

The claim arises from things; the obligation, from men. This assertion is essential as a good foundation of law, but we have not yet arrived at law, because we have not yet arrived at society. The claim of some things is of such a nature that man, the individual, can meet it by himself alone. This is the world of morality. Morality prescribes to man this obligation, which he is free to meet or not. But the claim of some other things is of such a nature that the isolated man cannot meet it. The individual cannot conserve a town or a road, or a museum, or even mankind. Hence the origin of societies. But that is another story.

We find the orientation for our conduct in the moral perspective of things. And please do not object that the language of things is uncertain. Their language appears to be uncertain because we are not infallible or pure. Sometimes we do not understand the moral language of things, because our passions cloud our eyes; at other times because, placed in a given perspective, we only see an inessential aspect of things. We have to learn as far as possible to look at things all round, until things reveal to us their essence, that is to say, the unity of their sameness and their difference.

A priori ethics can only speak of values in general. The particular value of everything has to be learned by experience, and scales of values have to be adapted to circumstances. By their fruits we shall know them. And the fate of man is trial and error. The language of things is not always clear. We have to place ourselves in a perspective from which we can hear it. That is why prudence or truthfulness is the first of the cardinal virtues. To be able to follow the call of things we have also to discipline our souls in the virtues of fortitude, justice, and temperance; and the acquisition of the rational virtues will be difficult if we do not call for help from the mystical virtues, Faith, Hope, and
Charity. But if it is true that things are good or bad or empty, although their language may be confusing and our ears dull, we have laid the principle of our orientation on solid ground.

You can roundly deny the principle. You can say that it is not true that things are good, bad, or empty. You can attest, as the Indians though not Socialists in every sense, repeat after them, that this language of things is a pure delusion of our. But then we are lost in the Church Quarterly I have read that Davendranath Tagore wanted to base the regeneration of his country on the positivism of traditional philosophy. It was bound to abandon the attack: "we have no faith in the Vedanta philosophy, because Shankaracharya seeks to prove therein that all created beings are one and the same. What we want is to worship God. If the worshippers and the object of worship become one, then how can there be any worship?"

You can start from the principle that "there is no reality," but then there is neither good nor guidance. You can start also from this other principle that "every reality is one and the same," but then there is no guidance. You can go to the right or the left. You can also say with the utilitarians that good and evil are only words to which no other reality corresponds than pleasure and pain, but then there is no ethics, because ethics are born from the disconcerting fact that there are goods, such as sacrifices, that are not pleasant.

You can also say, and it has been recently said by Professor Alfred Loisy in his "La Religion," that humanity is the beginning and the end of duty: "In the beginning was Duty, and Duty was in Humanity, and Duty was Humanity." But with this assertion, the morality disappears. If a sailor is persuaded that the North Pole exists only in the centre of the compass, and that the Polar Star is to be found in his own breast, the man is lost, and his ship with him.

To avoid this misfortune other people have tried to find an orientation inside the human skin by making a distinction between the higher self which always does the good and the lower self which does the good only when in the service of the higher. You may perhaps have two selves. I am a simple man, and know only of one self within me. This evidence of ourselves is a pretty strong argument against the theory of the two selves. But there is another. If Caroline Otero tells me that it is her higher self that wishes her to be poor and honest, there is no way of convincing her that her lower self wishes her to be rich and evil.

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October 4, 1917

THE NEW AGE

unless our writer grasped, not only the essentials of pre-war Socialism, but the real bearing of the war upon those later social and economic principles which have already threatened to modify, if not to supplant, the older and more orthodox doctrine. A book, written with such a wide sweep, might have become the rallying cry for a great army of men and women now distracted, disorganised, and in sore need of inspired guidance. Instead of which Mr. MacDonald offers us a tentative programme for the I.L.P.

I am occasionally assured, by those who pretend to know, that the I.L.P. will accept Guild principles and lead the van. It may be so; but Mr. MacDonald may be presumed to know his own organisation. He has, been at the centre of the I.L.P. for a long time. No man has done more to wean it from first principles and mould it into opportunist politics. In all the world no Socialist body has been so vulgarised in principle and degraded in method as has the I.L.P. under the leadership of Messrs. MacDonald, Snowden, and Glasier. Certainly Mr. MacDonald seems to agree with me, for nobody else would dare to suggest to a Socialist group such an impudently Radical programme—a programme devoid of any ascertainable principle and entirely oblivious to which the wage-earner now look for spiritual and economic emancipation. I have no reason to suppose that the I.L.P. won't swallow the whole thing holus-bolus.

The sixth chapter is devoted to "A Socialist Programme." Agriculture comes first. Anything about the agricultural labourer? Not a word. There is an attack on the Corn Production Bill and the landlords. Any practical proposal? I don't know. This is all the gentleman says:—"In the impoverished and deburdened state of the nation the rent portion of production cannot be allowed to pass into private pockets to maintain a new class of parasitic people or to enrich the old one." On my word of honour, that's all. Next comes "free-exchange. It sounds absurd, but I'm not joking. Free exchange means free trade, now an unpopular word. The Socialist reply to Tariff Reform, we are gravely informed, is "better organisation and adaptation, more labour control, more intelligence and economy, more education, the prevention of extravagance." So far. Mr. MacDonald plunges: "The programme, then, is to be revolutionary. The war and its honours and offices may have changed some leaders towards reactionary contentment: it has changed the movement towards revolutionary demands. In thinking of programmes this is a fundamental consideration." Isn't he a bore!

But if by any chance this really is the Socialist programme. . . . I have written some strong things about the political Socialists, but I never imagined them capable of anything so futile.

In every industrial centre in Great Britain to-day the workers are denouncing the wage system, and anxiously thinking of the coming peace when unemployment will sap their strength and complete their economic servitude. Free trade, landlordism, and all the Radical bag of tricks, which seem so revolutionary to Mr. MacDonald, are as remote from those wage-earners as the law of primogeniture. When and how are they to secure a "share and interest in the thing produced"? Who is to maintain the unemployment of the unions, the community, or the industries concerned? These are the vital issues upon which hangs the real revolution. And everybody now knows it, except apparently Mr. MacDonald, Mr. Snowden, and the I.L.P. MacDonald has a passing reference to the Guilds, which shows he knows nothing about them; he has not a word to utter on the wage-system. On the contrary, "every low-paid trade should have a bottom standard wage given to it by law or by administrative order." The wage-system, in short, is to be standardised and perpetuated. As for workshop control: "The control of workshops must be shared by organised labour and a committee upon which labour is adequately represented, and which is based upon a system of shop stewards, should become a common feature of management." The idea is as hazy as the grammar. If the shop steward movement means anything, it means no joint control of any kind. Mr. MacDonald's ingenuous pronunciation reminds me of Broadbent, who, you may remember, was "a bit of a Unitarian." Our author evidently believes in the nutritious qualities of the curate's egg. A sane and responsible statesman, he recognises the prudence of mixing the evil with the good.

The cynic will ask whether Mr. MacDonald is as stupid as he seems. Is it possible that a certain cunning is linked with the stupidity? Let us turn to the chapter on "The Independence of Labour." The author, who has all his life intrigued with the Liberals, emphasises the importance of independence. Others are called to the Government, but not he. When his Liberal colleagues resigned, some of the Leicester Socialists—bless their simple hearts!—entered the ranks of a Socialist candidate; Mr. MacDonald promptly squelched that. He said it was contrary to the "understanding." Independence anywhere else you like, but not in Leicester. But to the point. Our author has recently been sore stricken by the apostasy of his Labour friends: "When some Trade Union leaders were willing to accept any loss of liberty, provided they got a war bonus, our souls demanded other companionship." To sojourn in the desert is not congenial to so gregarious a soul. He is reminded that there are other pebbles on the beach. "We must enter a wider world and co-operate with a wider fellowship." Fusion? Gracious, no! Nevertheless, "British politics need the creation of a new Democratic party, modern in its outlook and ideas. If such a party be formed, "it will be our business to differentiate between it and the present Liberal and Conservative parties, and to treat it on the whole as a friend and not as an enemy." It looks as though this new Democratic party's programme is to be an attack on landlordism—the old wheeze—and Free Trade now to be known as "free exchange." We can imagine many intimate confabulations between the U.D.C. leaders and Mr. MacDonald, who is warned not to pitch it too strong, lest rich supporters suddenly discover that they have urgent engagements elsewhere. Certainly there must be no flirting with wage abolition or charging industry with unemployment. We must rely upon Mr. MacDonald, whose good influence and long experience, . . . vague reference, of course, by all means, carrots before the donkey, but . . . no commitments.

If our sense of humour cannot restrain some laughter at this solemn humbug, so palpable to all who know Mr. MacDonald's devious ways, there is yet a serious side to it. If the I.L.P. can be drawn aside so easily from its original economic purpose to follow the old Liberal track, it means that we who continue to advocate political action as the expression of citizenship will have the ground cut from under us by the Syndicalists and others who regard politics with contempt. I am not, however, without hope that the MacDonald type will soon disappear, supplanted by modern minds who realise the relation of the individual to function and of function to life. As things are, it is the MacDonal ds and the Snowdens who are the most effective enemies of citizenship. They either cannot or will not understand that politics must dissociate itself from every kind of economic influence; that in consequence they vitiate politics and divert Labour from its most urgent task. 

VETERAN,
IX.—ENTER EVE.

All my life I have tried to regard women with a normal eye; to see in her the usual attributes of human beings, neither setting her on a pedestal nor degrading her in my estimation of her natural functions. I have tried to see her without investing her with mystery or romance, to find in her a friend and companion. Tried, but not so successfully as I could have wished. Be it nature, or tradition, or glamour, or, perhaps, an inherited sex-appetite, the fact remains that even now, after all these years, I cannot "place" her; she remains an enigma, is still "incomprise." The which here written sounds banal. But I cannot help it; it is the literal truth. Why, then, waste ten minutes writing something so obvious? Because it is a preliminary observation to explain the answer to a question I recently asked myself, after a chance meeting with Helen Thompson.

I had not seen Helen for twenty years. She married a prosperous manufacturer, and gradually withdrew into her own home life. I sent her a little wedding-gift. In acknowledging it, emphatically she assured me that her marriage would not open her way for greater usefulness in the sacred cause to which we had both consecrated ourselves. And here she was in a friend's drawing-room, a little plump, hair streaked with grey, rather becoming, but open her way for greater usefulness in the sacred cause to which we had both consecrated ourselves.

She was in a friend's drawing-room, a little plump, hair streaked with grey, rather becoming, she was up in Town to visit her daughter, just returned from her honeymoon. Helen told me about it gravely, spoke of the young husband who certainly had a "career" before him, a private income, and he was wondering why you didn't marry your girl because it is for your own good, but because, if you stand firm and win the battle, it will help the women's cause all over the country—this country of ours with such a glorious past.

"Personally, I hate the thought of you, my sisters, spending the precious hours of your womanhood in sweating in a wretched, insanitary factory. I do not believe God intended it. For to me it seems, given the supreme task of keeping alight the fire of life, of bringing into the home gaiety and mother-tenderness,"

She drew herself up straight, then with an inimitable gesture, her finger-tips lightly resting on her breasts, she said:

"It has not been given to me to be a mother; but vague, undefined influence. Loss or gain, it had to be. But whether loss or gain, I know not. I only know that I would rather have been without them. So I write now; but thirty years ago, I was thrilled in the presence of Sybil Lloyd.

It must have been November or December. The night was black, the air cut shrewdly, the gas-lamps shed streaks of yellow light upon scattered cinders and greasy pavements. Women operatives, in gaudy shawls, were to be seen hastening in twos and threes to the Oddfellows' Hall. Men lunched out of the taverns, and trudged home, talking to each other in the West Country dialect, their vowels broadened, yet without losing a certain harsh menace in their tones. Night scenes of that grim city crowd upon my memory—squalor and misery, a vast penetrating pain of helpless discontent, filth and lust—but what comes most vividly to mind is the sinister silence which draped the streets as though death were always present. During the years I spent there, I cannot recall the sound of laughter on any occasion. I remember a Socialist meeting. The crowd gathered thick—there was a lock-out—speeches in every conceivable key were delivered, impassioned, humourous, provocative. Futility! Silently the crowd collected; in silence it dispersed. On this night I too was on my way to the Oddfellows' Hall, where Sybil Lloyd was to speak to the women operatives, who were on strike. I turned down a dark side-passage, entered a dimly-lit doorway, climbed some stairs and so into the room. Oddly enough, the only things I remember about that room were the wire globes round the gas-jets and photographs of men in monstrous hats and marvellously embroidered aprons. The women sat quiet and listless. An anemic child, of the pupil-teacher type, drone out tunes on an ancient harmonium. Although every window was shut tight, the street-fog had filtered through. A door behind the platform opened and Sybil Lloyd, accompanied by some women and two or three men, came forward and took the chair. One or two girls perfunctorily clapped their hands, but, in general, the audience regarded the platform with apparent indifference. Indeed I thought I saw in some faces a look almost of hatred, seeming to say: "If it wasn't for those people on the platform, we shouldn't be sweating here and we wouldn't be out of work, and we should be getting wages, not much to be sure but some."

Sybil stood up. Very charming she looked, black hair done Madonna-wise, black, shining eyes, clean-cut features—a desirable woman. She raised her left hand, showing only her wedding-ring, read out one or two announcements, told briefly of the growing subscription list and paused. Then leaning over the table she gave speech:

"Dear friends. For the first time in the history of the West of England the women operatives have determined to win for themselves a living wage. Your sisters in Lancashire have long since led the way. They look to you to follow in their wake, not only because it is for your own good, but because, if you stand firm and win the battle, it will help the women's cause all over the country—this country of ours with such a glorious past.

"Personally, I hate the thought of you, my sisters, spending the precious hours of your womanhood in sweating in a wretched, insanitary factory. I do not believe God intended it. For to me it seems, given the supreme task of keeping alight the fire of life, of bringing into the home gaiety and mother-tenderness,"

She drew herself up straight, then with an inimitable gesture, her finger-tips lightly resting on her breasts, she said:

"It has not been given to me to be a mother; but
all women are mothers, by instinct and in their hearts, and I feel rebellious at the thought that your little one, and because yours mine, must go through the long day tended by the stranger. It is the Capitalist system that thus drives you into bondage; it can be destroyed when we women join with the men and put all industry under the control of the State, which we shall control by our representatives in Parliament. So, you see, that in carrying on this fight there is more in it than a mere rise of half-a-crown a week in wages. That is partly why our friends come here representing the Socialist Society and the Trades Council. I am sure that they will hearten us by their speeches as they are practically helping us in money and food.

Again came some perfunctory applause as Sybil sat down and a big bearded man rose to speak, massive, stentorian, empty of meaning but meaning well. Each succeeding speech was slightly worse and quite as dull as its predecessor; the proceedings had grown dreary beyond words. I was indeed thankful when Sybil rose to make some more announcements and declare the meeting closed.

Walking home with her, she turned upon me with great animation, her eyes shining:-

"What did you think of it, Tony?"

"I didn't think of it; I was thinking of you."

"What?"

"That if you were my wife, instead of another fellow's, you wouldn't have been at that meeting at all."

"Pray, where should I be?"

"At home, minding our four children—two boys and two girls, to be precise."

"Delicious!"

She had a way of speaking with her hands. She raised her right hand, palm up, clenched it for a moment, then opened her fingers, as though to say—"See! You cannot clap the intangible."

"The fact is, Sybil, you are no more a Socialist than your cat. What you want is a family, all your very own, and the Oddfellows' Hall will know you no more."

We walked on in silence. At a corner I hailed a cab. We had scarcely started when she spoke.

"There's a lot in what you say, Tony. I fancy we women really want wider opportunities for choosing our mates. We do the choosing, you know, and we're perpetually choosing wrong. That's woman's wrong! Anyway, I'm quite sure that the eternal feminine. Men said that they wouldn't grudge the suffrage to serious old maiden-aunts, indeed they were very welcome (so long as they didn't interfere with our morals), but to confer the suffrage on young and giddy women, that was quite another pair of shoes.

The next type was the one I knew best. She came in the late 'eighties and early 'nineties, and finally captured the Fabian Society. Anything but dowdy, she dressed quietly and well, not emphasising sex, yet not ignoring it. But she did not shrink from discussing sex problems. Those early Fabian meetings never erred on the side of reticence, and I never observed that anybody was one penny the worse. It was about this time that I heard less of Harriet Martineau and more of Mary Wollstonecraft. The early High School teachers started it.

Followed a rather more drab type, shot up out of the Trade Union movement, statistically inclined, industrious organisers, contemptuous of feminine charms, useful and necessary."

In due course, facile descensus, came the Suffragettes—frou-frou in their skirt, their hearts, and their heads.

On that Thursday afternoon I was shown into Sybil Lloyd's home by an elderly maid-servant of oppressive propriety. Everything in that house was solid. Mahogany and oak dominated the establishment. Family portraits hung from every available space; the wall-papers were dark, if rich; the curtains matched. A grandfather's clock stood in the hall opposite a heavy oak hat-stand. A dark oak table stood sentinel between them. The drawing-room was early Victorian, a monstrous chandelier hanging from the ceiling, trimmed with an army of quadrilateral glass slabs that tinkled responsively to undue vibration. Henry Lloyd had inherited it from his pious father, and saw in it the perfection of respectability. The maid entered with a torch, lit the floor, and saw the room as she would see it for the last time that we heard less of Harriet Martineau."

"Who the deuce is she, and must I call her Sally?"

"She's the very last word. Beautiful, charming, university degree, steeped in Socialist lore, and she's taking tea with me on Thursday, and you'll come too."

I have lived long enough to encounter four different types of public woman. As a boy, the sober, old-maidish kind often stayed at my father's house. They derived partly from the Quaker tradition, partly from Harriet Martineau and Helen Taylor. Not given to dreams, Utopias of every kind, they kept steadily in view woman's suffrage as a common purpose, whilst each would also hammer, in her precise, kindly, philanthropic way, at some secondary object—temperance, education, poor-law, anti-opium, prison reform. I was a boy at the time, and did not understand her subject in the very least, when my mother took me to some drawing-room to meet and hear Josephine Butler. She was the most exotic woman I have ever seen or heard. She might have posed to any painter seeking to embody spiritual beauty in bodily perfection. No picture I have ever seen of St. Catherine ever approached Josephine Butler in reality. This first type gave to the woman's movement solidarity that was of ennobling value, at a time when women were universally regarded as physically and morally fragile. But they had the defects of their qualities. We all recognise how comforting a maiden-aunt may be; we all picture a different type for wives and mothers. So it came about that the appeal for women's franchise became associated in our minds with a type deviating from the eternal feminine. Men said that they wouldn't grudge the suffrage to serious old maiden-aunts, indeed they were very welcome (so long as they didn't interfere with our morals), but to confer the suffrage on young and giddy women, that was quite another pair of shoes.

"Shake hands with Susan, Tony," she said.

Susan was evidently miles removed from Sybil, in looks, vitality and intelligence. But she took herself very seriously, and, with a rather heavy touch, plunged into the Socialist chatter of the moment. Sybil sat back, hardly speaking. I thought she was distraite. The maid entered with a torch, lit the gas, pulled the blinds, drew the curtains. Sybil watched her as though interested for some ulterior reason.

"That will do, thanks, Smith. You want to go out. We shall not be dining, so you need not be home until ten o'clock."

A quarter of an hour later the bell rang, and Sybil went out, returning with Jack Kennedy.
Only Susan seemed unconscious of some strain, some new spirit pervading the company. I saw what I had suspected for months; Jack was moody and ill at ease; Sybil smiled at me, shook her head, and looked for signs in the blazing logs. Our Susan, nothing loath, engaged in a monologue: "Yes," she was saying, "our movement now assumes a new shape. The middle classes are looking to us for redemption. They not only see many of the cares of life taken off their shoulders, but they also are sensing a wonderful and marvellously beautiful new religion which will raise them to the heights. Don't you feel it, comrades? And it is because of this great new fact, almost like the coming of the Lord, that we must not only dedicate ourselves anew to it, but resist our old rebellious way of living, disregarding the marriage bond, proclaiming free love and adventures of that sort. Not because they cannot be logically argued and defended, but because we must not injure our movement by personal selfishness."

She looked round the room solemnly, waiting for more inspiration. Jack caught my eye and winked. Sybil detected us in our ungallant conduct and blushed. Susan returned to the charge: "I know I carry you with me, Sybil, in what I have been saying, and I do feel it so necessary that we should now take a really strong stand on these matters. London, I fear, is hopeless; it is we of the provinces, of the mountain, who must show the way." Something desperate had to be done. Sybil and Jack were speechless. So I had to jump into the breach. "What you say, Miss Arundel, calls for serious thought. But I'm horribly irresponsible in matters of this sort. Where are you staying, and may I take you there? You can develop your theme on the way." Such is the perversity of human nature that for days I thought of poor Henry Lloyd, dull, kindly, unimaginative, of a rectitude inviolable.

MIND AND FORM.

Mind breaketh form, and into other forms Poreth his content till the mental o'ersows; The bright heat rends, the energy that blows From whence it knoweth, soreth up in storms Of heavenward lightning, lightning that re-forms Each darting motion, radiance that shows Height after height, eternity's pure snows In awful vision vigilant informs.

Form is the need, and form the sole desire Of man within his armoury, so sure defence before the voice of God! Through myriad callots pours the smoky fire, Where none hath voice and none hath care to feel Form is the plough and form the shattered clost.

J. A. M. A.

PRAYER FOR A FAIR PEOPLE.

We thy beloved are most poor, That entertain no innocence; We are not steadfast to endure: Make thou the men, when we go hence, With a great spirit of thee and sure, Joys that shall need no penitence; Make them than lovely love more saint, Make them than yellow gold more fair: Now have I ended all my plaint, Now have I made thee all my prayer, And the last incense, thin and faint, Smokes upward from mine altar shrine.

RUTH PITTER.

Readers and Writers.

Shall I spare Rationalism in the person of Mr. J. M. Robertson another week before Robert's hard task is done? The truth, in the meantime dealing with sordid matters that have eluded air raids and reached my mind? There is a time for mercy even for critics; and I propose to spare and strike not. Let Rationalism therefore play for another week. A subject that has been in my attention during the last few days has been the future of the Cinema. I have recently been to a cinema exhibition, and I was not a little surprised by the contrast it presented with the moving pictures I saw some ten or eleven years ago. Then, I remember, the exhibition was extremely crude but surprisingly interesting for the length, at any rate, of half an hour. One saw scenery photographed from a moving train, rivers from source to mouth, panoramas of cities and the like. It was a vivid geography lesson. In the cinema of to-day, to judge by my recent experience, one seldom sees any of these instructive things. The programme is designed to amuse, to thrill, to interest, but never to instruct. I am not complaining of it, mark you; there is probably some good reason for the course the development of the cinema has taken; I am merely noting the fact that instruction has certainly ceased to be an object of the cinema. [What has the cinema to do with readers and writers, you ask? "R. H. C." is merely filling up space with the subject for want of something to write about! Oh, not at all; I never write to fill space which is more easily left unfilled, and there are at least fifty subjects awaiting my modest column. Wait and see.]

Reflecting on the tremendous change that has taken place in cinema production during the last ten years, I came to some tentative conclusions about it. Such questions as these arose: What is the secret of the popularity of the cinema? (I am told that ten million 'Anglo-Saxons attend the cinema daily, and that sixty thousand new films are produced every year). What reactions is the cinema likely to induce in our novels and in the drama? Is the cinema here to stay, and, if so, what are likely to be and what ought to be its further developments? Can it ever become a form of amusement worth the attention of intelligent persons—are there the makings of a form of art in it? After answering these questions to the best of my ability, I submitted the replies to one of my colleagues well known for his rare sympathy with new ideas and for his particular interest in all that concerns the drama. To my surprise he was completely sceptical. The cinema, he said, had no relation to the drama, could have no effect upon drama, but was, at best, only of use to science. Drama, he told me, is personal, whereas the cinema is mechanical; and since things and persons have nothing in common cinema and the drama can ever meet, even to quarrel. To say that I was surprised is euphemistic. I was hoary. Theatre-managers of my acquaintance complain to me of the decadence of the age as exhibited in the gradual conversion of theatres into picture palaces. Half a dozen London theatres that once provided material for the wit of my colleague are now emptied of drama and filled with cinema-pictures. Half the profession is already exclusively engaged in acting for the cinema, and the other half is getting ready to take to the films instead of the boards at the first opportunity. Writers (I will not call them dramatists) who used to write for the legitimate now write for the cinema; and even the writers who still aim at the boards have the screen in their mind as their final ambition. Yet my authority assures me that the cinema has no relation with the drama. What doubtless he means is that the abstract notion of drama remains unaffected and unaffected by the rise of the new spirit pervading the company, as epic, let us say, remains unaffected even
when the world has abandoned the form, and instead of epic everybody is writing Limericks. But that in the world of persons where drama equals the theatre, the cinema has no effect upon the stage, I permit myself to deny with checked and finally destroyed; and with its destruction the play of character, of psychology, and of the spoken word may come to be written again.

These are preliminary guesses at a riddle of which nobody as yet knows the answer. No, not even my colleague. Any other guesses? R. H. C.

A Dill Pickle.

By Katherine Mansfield

And then, after six years, she saw him again. He was seated at one of those little bamboo tables decorated with a Japanese vase of paper daffodils. There was a tall plate of fruit in front of him, and, very carefully, in a way that she recognised immediately as his "special" way, he was peeling an orange. He must have felt that shock of recognition in her for he looked up and met her eyes. Incredible! He didn't know her! She smiled; he frowned. She came towards him. He closed his eyes an instant, but opening them his face lit up as though he had struck a match in a dark room. He laid down the orange and pushed back his chair, and she took him little warm hand out of her muff and gave it to him.

"Vera!" he exclaimed. "How strange! Really, for a moment I didn't know you. Won't you sit down? You've had lunch? Won't you have some coffee?"

She hesitated, but of course she meant to.

"Yes, I'd like some coffee," and she sat down opposite him.

"You've changed. You've changed very much," he said, staring at her with that eager, lighted look.

"You look so well. I've never seen you look so well before."

"Really!" She raised her veil and unbuttoned her high fur collar. "I don't feel very well. I can't bear this weather, you know."

"But she was thinking—the older one grows—"

"Loathe it," she shuddered. "And the worst of it is that the older one grows . . ."

He interrupted her, "Excuse me," and tapped on the table for the waitress. "Please bring some coffee and cream."

To her: "You are sure you won't eat anything? Some fruit, perhaps. The fruit here is very good."

"No thanks. Nothing."

"Then that's settled." And smiling just a hint too broadly he took up the orange again. "You were saying—the older one grows—"

"The colder," she laughed. But she was thinking how well she remembered that trick of his—that trick of interrupting her—and of how it used to exasperate her six years ago. She used to feel then as though he, quite suddenly, in the middle of what she was saying, put his hand over her lips, turned from her, attended to something different, and then took his hand away, and with just the same, slightly too broad smile, gave her his attention again . . . Now we are ready! That is settled!

"The colder," he echoed her words, laughing too.

"Ah, yes! You hate the cold . . ."

"You have only to say one word and I would know your voice among all other voices. I don't know what it is—I've wondered so often—that makes your voice such a haunting memory . . . Do you remember that first after-
noon we spent together at Kew Gardens? You were so surprised because I did not know the names of any flowers. I am still just as ignorant for all your telling me. But whenever it is very fine and warm, and I see some beautiful colours—first of all marigold and verbena! And I feel those three words are all I recall of some forgotten heavenly language... You remember that afternoon?

"Oh, yes, very well." She drew a long, soft breath, as though the paper drolldrol between them were almost too sweet to bear. Yet, what had remained in her mind of that particular afternoon was an absurd scene over the tea-table. A great many people taking tea in a Chinese pagoda, and he, behaving like a maniac about the wasps—waving them away, bapping at them with his straw hat, serious and infuriated out of all proportion to the occasion. How delighted the sniggering tea-drinkers had been! And how she had suffered!

But now, as he spoke, that memory faded. His was the truer. Yes, it had been a wonderful afternoon, full of geranium and marigold and verbena, and—warm sunshine. Her thoughts lingered over the last two words as though she sang them.

In the warmth, as it were, another memory unfurled. She saw herself, sitting on a lawn. He lay beside her, and suddenly, after a long absence, he rolled over and put his head in her lap.

"I wish," he said, in a low, troubled voice, "I wish that I had taken poison and were about to die—here now!"

At that moment a little girl in a white dress, holding a long, dripping water lily, dodged from behind a bush, stared at them, and dodged back again. But he did not see. She leaned over him.

"Ah, why do you say that? I could not say that."

But he gave a kind of soft moan, and taking her hand, he held it to his cheek.

"Because I know I am going to love you too much—far too much. And I shall suffer so terribly, Vera, because you never, never will love me."

He was certainly far better-looking now than he had been then. He had lost all that dreamy vagueness and indecision. Now, he had the air of a man who has found his place in life, and fills it with a confidence and an assurance which was, to say the least, impressive. He must have made money, too. His clothes were admirable, and at that moment he pulled a Russian leather cigarette case out of his waistcoat pocket.

"You smoke!"

"Yes, I will." She hovered over them. "They look very good."

"I think they are. I get them made for me by a little man in St. James' Street. I don't smoke very much. I'm not like you—but when I do, they must be delicious, very fresh cigarettes. Smoking isn't a habit with me; it's a luxury—like perfume. Are you still so fond of perfumes? Ah, when I was in Russia..."

She broke in. "You've really been to Russia?"

"Oh, yes. I was there for over a year. Have you forgotten how we used to talk of going there?"

"No, I've not forgotten."

He gave a strange, half laugh, and leaned back in his chair. Isn't it curious! I have really carried out all those little projects we used to plan. Yes, I have been to all those places that we talked of, and stayed in them long enough—to as you used to say—'air oneself' in them. In fact, I have spent the last three years of my life travelling all the time. Spain, Corsica, Siberia, Russia, Egypt. The only country left is China, and I mean to go there, too, when the war is over."

As he spoke, so lightly, tapping his cigarette against the ash-tray, she felt the strange beast that had slumbered so long within her bosom stir, stretch itself, yawn, pick up its ears, and suddenly bound to its feet, and fix its longing hungry eyes upon those far away places. But all she said was, smiling gently: "How I envy you!"

He accepted that. "It has been," he said, "very wonderful—especially Russia. Russia was all that we had imagined, and far, far more. I even spent some days in a river boat on the Volga. Do you remember that boatman's song you used to play?"

"Yes." It began to play again in her mind as he spoke.

"Do you ever play it now?"

"No, I've no piano."

He was amazed at that. "But what has become of your beautiful piano?"

She made a little grimace. "SOLD. Ages ago."

"But you were so fond of music," he wondered.

"I've no time for it now," said she.

He let it go that. "That river song," he went on, "is something quite special. After a day or two you cannot realise that you have ever known another. And it is not necessary to speak the language—the life of the boat creates a bond between you and the people that's more than sufficient. You eat with them, pass the day with them, and in the evening there is that endless singing..."

She shivered, hearing the boatman's song break out again loud and tragic, and seeing the boat floating on the darkening river with melancholy trees on either side..."Yes, I should like that," said she, stroking her muff.

"You'd like almost everything about Russian life," he said warmly. "It's so informal, so impulsive, so free without question. And then the peasants are so splendid. They are such human beings—yes, that is it. Even the man who drives your carriage has—has some real part in what is happening. I remember the evening a party of us, two friends of mine and a wife of one of them, went for a picnic by the Black Sea. We took supper and champagne and ate and drank on the grass. And while we were eating the coachman came up...

"Have a dill pickle," he said. He wanted to share with us. That seemed to me so right, so—you know what I mean?"

And she seemed at that moment to be sitting on the grass beside the mysteriously Black Sea, black as velvet, and rippling against the banks in silent, velvet waves. She saw the carriage drawn up to one side of the road, and the little group on the grass, their faces and hands white in the moonlight. She saw the pale dress of the woman outspread, and her folded parasol, lying on the grass like a huge pearl crochet-hook. Apart from them, with his supper in a cloth on his knees, sat the coachman. "Have a dill pickle," said he, and although she was not certain what a dill pickle was, she saw the greenish glass jar with a red chilli like a parrot's beak glistening through. She sucked in her cheeks; the dill pickle was terribly sour...

"Yes, I know perfectly what you mean," she said. In the pause that followed they looked at each other. In the past when they had looked at each other like that, there for over a year. Have you forgotten how we used to talk of going there?"

"No, I've not forgotten."

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"Yes, I know perfectly what you mean," she said. In the pause that followed they looked at each other. In the past when they had looked at each other like that, they had felt such a boundless understanding between them that their souls had, as it were, put their arms round each other and dropped into the same sea, content to be drowned like two mournful lovers. But now, the surprising thing was that it was he who held back. He who said:

"What a marvellous listener you are. When you look at me with those wild eyes I feel I could tell you things that I never would breathe to another human being."

Was there just a hint of mockery in his voice or was it her fancy. She could not be sure.
This page contains a mix of English text and what appears to be a page from a book or magazine. The content is not clearly legible due to the quality of the image. The text seems to be a mix of narrative and descriptive prose, possibly from a story or essay. The content includes references to personal experiences and reflections, possibly about childhood memories or past events. The text appears to be written in a conversational tone, with some personal anecdotes and observations. The overall theme of the text is not immediately clear from the image provided.
correspondent alleges, shelters the revolutionists. "Most of the revolutionists are within its ranks, and a large number of them, as well as the committee, stewards or local delegates; but they have not won the formal approval of the members to their principles, though they frequently win their assent to the practical measure of a strike of which the aim is really revolutionary. We are told that these men "have no acknowledged leaders," and that as a result, organisation at all, it is not specified. They seem to live a parasitical existence within the Trade Union Movement, and are represented as having no power but the power of corruption, or, as the "Times" correspondent calls it, the power of fermentation. If we are discussing bacteriology, it would be possible to write quite an interesting article, full of striking analogies; but as we are discussing politics, we must be as dull as the "Times" correspondent.

In the first place, we may say that a local strike (which is all that a shop steward could declare) has no revolutionary aim, if we are to keep to the definite meaning of revolution as the overthrow of a Governmental system. In the second place, even if it had a revolutionary aim, it could not possibly succeed without acknowledged leaders. Revolutions, like Governments, must be organised; Stepniak, who is an illustrious obscurity is reserved for those who have nowhere else. The nation organises itself, d'état to suppress the need in this case even for the spy "Gordon" to reveal the required impulse."

It is clear, then, that the "Times" correspondent, by proving that his "revolutionists" have no acknowledged leaders, no organisation, nothing but a purely anarchical individualism, has proved too much; he has proved that the revolution that he has discovered, that what was intended to be a "do-me-good" book should do the author good.

Mr. Chapman's gay manner of treating grave subjects has a very simple technique; instead of accusing people directly of their sins, he imagines that they write to him to justify themselves, and in the act discover their own wickedness. It is certainly convenient for the Chaplain of the Savoy that all these people judge themselves just as he would judge them, and are as aware of their defects as the most uncharitable observer could be; it relieves him of the rather more intricate work of adjudicating cases of conscience, and the English clergy never were expert casuists.

A Rational Wages System. By Henry Atkinson. (Bell. 1s. net.)

To National Guildsmen, the title of this pamphlet will be a contradiction in terms. It certainly does nothing to establish the responsibility of industry for its labour supply. It does practically nothing to give the worker control of the conditions of production, except by an adaptation of the check-weighman idea. A rational wages system only means that the man will be rewarded if he earns more than his day wage; if he earns less, he will, of course, be discharged as an unprofitable servant. The Reward System as here ad-
vocated is an ingenious means of speeding up and thereby increasing production and reducing prime cost, and returning to the workman a share of what is gained. The basis of the whole scheme is an accurate time-study of the job; a good average worker is chosen (he is paid time and a quarter during the study), and every element of the job is timed and recorded. This is assumed to be the fastest time in which the job can be done, and is called the "base time"; but it is also assumed that this time cannot be reached regularly by every worker. The mere fact of its being a best time shows that the conditions are not normal; the good average workers would qualify for reward. Mr. Atkinson suggests 75 per cent. as a usual figure. It works out, in one case that Mr. Atkinson states, that 43s. per week of the Straits must be internationalised, for the holding of Constantinople is a strategic necessity if you are to prevent that nation the rule of the world, that, as he puts it himself: "The holding of Constantinople is a strategic necessity if you are to be certain of security. Very well, you hold Constantinople; and then immediately you find that the holding of some other place has become a strategic necessity to the holding of Constantinople. The only logical and possible issue for a policy based on strategy is a world empire." So the Straits must be internationalised, disarmed, and free, in war and peace, to the ships of war and commerce of all nations, like the Suez Canal, which is as open to the German as to the English fleet.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

THE CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR.

Sir,—"A. E. R.'s" long dissertation on "conscience," as he interprets the word, was interesting as a human document, but leaves the position of the conscientious objector untouched. He has evidently mistaken Mrs. Hobhouse's appeal for an alteration of the "C.O.'s." legal status for the "C.O.'s." own defence of himself, not knowing that Mrs. Hobhouse does not agree with the men she writes about, understands them but imperfectly, and does not touch upon matters which mostly concern the majority of them.

It is futile for men like "A. E. R." to categorise and define the position and motives of the "C.O.'s." He hasn't one; he has thousands. I am a "C.O." myself, and alter my own position about once a week, as each new development of the world's insanity brings something else to object to. I can, however, by no means assure "A. E. R." that most "C.O.'s." appear to me to be comparatively indifferent to those things which he evidently assumes to be their main problems. Why does he trouble to defend the Government against the charge of injustice to the objectors? The men themselves do not seem to be concerned much with the Government, except in so far as they may get something out of it. Personally, I do not expect the Government to behave

The whole question resolves itself into the problem of maintaining a free passage through the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles; Constantinople is a mere appurtenance. Mr. Wilson considers that a single or joint national control of the highway only, of course, to show that it would not operate successfully; he is careful to show that the "administrative internationalism" that Lord Cromer alleged to lead to administrative impotence in Egypt is not the internationalism that he means, if, indeed, Lord Cromer's example was an example of International Government at all; and then, with a proper flourish, he brings out his history of the European Commission of the Danube. After sketching the triumph of Internationalism in this case, he applies it, mutatis mutandis, to the problem of Constantinople; and concludes that the principle can be as successfully applied in the one case as in the other. Having demonstrated that the solution of the problem is as easy as falling off a stool, he is confronted with the argument that the stragetic importance of the Dardanelles. He has only to prove that military theorists are most incorrigible Utopians, that Constantinople and the Dardanelles have no strategic importance worth speaking of, that as possession of them by Turkey never gave her the rule of the Straits, possession by any other nation would not give that nation the rule of the world, that, as he puts it himself: "The holding of Constantinople is a strategic necessity if you are to be certain of security. Very well, you hold Constantinople; and then immediately you find that the holding of some other place has become a strategic necessity to the holding of Constantinople. The only logical and possible issue for a policy based on strategy is a world empire." So the Straits must be internationalised, disarmed, and free, in war and peace, to the ships of war and commerce of all nations, like the Suez Canal, which is as open to the German as to the English fleet.

To those who like demonstrations of the practicability of International Government, Mr. Wilson's treatise will be a delight. His argument is primarily devoted to diminishing the importance of Constantinople, to proving that its importance in time of peace is due entirely to the fact that it stands upon, and to some extent dominates, a great highway of commercial traffic. The population is mixed, and the Turks are in a minority; the hinterland is not productive, and the foreign trade of the area is rather less than that of Trinidad. There is, therefore, no difficulty of nationality or of commerce to complicate the problem; Constantinople is simply a city standing upon a navigable river. A city by the river's brink, a pretty city was to him, and it was nothing more.

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any differently. I have deliberately disobeyed it, refused its offer of compromise, and don't blame it if it sends its policemen after me to keep me in the way that the law lays down, and they don't know any better. But, according to "A. E. R.,” we are all whining because the Government is so unkind to us. It is simply not a fact.

"A. E. R.’s” definition of what is and is not to be called “conscience” and the side of the law which is right and the side of the law which is wrong, and as far as I can follow him amount to no more than his own private and particular views of the difference between right and wrong. Most of the “R.A.M.C.” I am sick of the word, and leave its use to those who amuse themselves by making fun of pacifists or who are interested in its etymology. The important fact to us is that the thing—the motive—is there, whether it is called “conscience” or “principle” or “policy” or just plain “objection.” If “A. E. R.” cannot understand why a man should object to doing Red Cross work as strenuously as he objects to killing, then he doesn’t understand the extent to which the motive of an action can be with some men the paramount consideration. Incidentally, he is also unable to understand a very numerous type of conscientious objector—the man who objects as much to the denial of individual liberty of action involved in conscription as to the actual killing of Germans, or the man who would take up a rifle in an industrial action as much as he would in a uniform. So we may as well give the King’s uniform—even in the R.A.M.C. Presumably that kind of attitude must be left out of “A. E. R.’s” category of conscientious objection. All we must find some other word for it; it is as sincere an attitude as any other, otherwise we must refuse the right of John Brown (he of the body) or any other revolutionary character to be called conscientious objectors.

"A. E. R.’s” triumphant resurrection of the state old argument that because one cannot live in the country without involuntarily assisting in the prosecution of the war, therefore our position is an absurdity, is worthy of those tribunal members who discovered in diabolical and vivid illumination that because the tobacconist helped to buy munitions, therefore a man who smoked could not have a conscientious objection to war. If a man cannot cross that pawn, without, there is nothing we can do for him, except to suggest that he must not call himself a Socialist so long as he deals business with a capitalist, nor a Christian so long as he buys bread from a Atheist, nor a Liberal so long as he lives under a Tory Government. "A. E. R.” talks as though the attitude of the conscientious objector was negative, and consequently he absents himself from all activities. The fact is we are engaged in a positive task, trying to set a pacific example, and call the attention of the nation to pacifism. For this we must choose quite our own private methods of action, and not those dictated by some King’s uniform—even in the R.A.M.C. Presumably that kind of attitude must be left out of “A. E. R.’s” category of conscientious objection. If we do not do our best to assist in some way, then we don’t understand the extent to which the motive of an action can be with some men the paramount consideration. Incidentally, he is also unable to understand a very numerous type of conscientious objector—the man who objects as much to the denial of individual liberty of action involved in conscription as to the actual killing of Germans, or the man who would take up a rifle in an industrial action as much as he would in a uniform. So we may as well give the King’s uniform—even in the R.A.M.C. Presumably that kind of attitude must be left out of “A. E. R.’s” category of conscientious objection. All we must find some other word for it; it is as sincere an attitude as any other, otherwise we must refuse the right of John Brown (he of the body) or any other revolutionary character to be called conscientious objectors.

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writers of great isolated thoughts—thoughts which requested their readers to co-relate and complete them; thoughts which questioned. The great merit of these thinkers is that they are stimulating, and that what they stimulate finally is commonsense. In short, the task of commonsense is to "justify the ways of God to men." But those who question the ways of God are also, in their sphere, fulfilling God's will.

Here, finally, my point of disagreement with "R. H. C." becomes clear. It is that, while he is more than generous to myself in putting me in the same boat as Nietzsche and other very great men (though my inclusion is only on the score of lack of commonsense), he is less than fair to them in calling them "considerable if not great minds." Nietzsche, I think, was not of the mind of scarcely less than the first rank. One is entitled to ask whether he could have been as great as he was in his own kind had he possessed commonsense; and the reply must be, I think, that he could not. There is one greatness which was Plato, a greatness divine, illuminating, bringing peace; there is another, which is stimulating. The possession of greatness in the one thought, in short, which were questions. The great merit of the writers of great isolated thought—thoughts which were questions. The great merit of these thinkers is that they are stimulating, and that what they stimulate finally is commonsense. In short, the task of commonsense is to "justify the ways of God to men." But those who question the ways of God are also, in their sphere, fulfilling God's will.

Unfortunately, the modern man of letters can only describe what people do and feel, because he does not know these things himself. Current history is no longer reflected in literature. Wonderful things have happened in our time, but they are not Bridges or De Morgan. The growing control of births by the individual will is perhaps the greatest thing in history. The gradual disappearance of the fear of death is something very wonderful: to Epicurus the fear of the gods and of death was the great misery of human life. Literature is all but silent about such things: when it does mention them, it does so with peevish disapproval.

I may say that English life is very rich in subjects for literature. Lloyd George, Asquith, Baldwin, and Carson; Shaw and the Webbs, McCabe, Drysdale, and Wells, the Pankhursts, Chesterton and Belloc, and the National Guildsmen are as good material as existed in the fifth century before Christ. Aristophanes would have gloried in them all, and would probably have put every one of them on the stage. It is a pity that in order to write "literature" it is now necessary to write about Atlanta and Melengre.

We thus have two kinds of modern writers: vulgar ones, who have something to say; and superior persons who know nothing, and therefore say nothing. Such an atmosphere is not favourable to the drawing out of talent.

MODERN LITERATURE.

Sir,—In your issue of July 26 Mr. R. H. Congreve speaks of "the very small amount of real literary ability in existence." I am not at all sure that he is right. From the number of splendidly written private letters I have read, I think there is a good deal. Many people who can write, however, are not tempted to do so under existing conditions.

There are two kinds of literature to-day. One is the kind that people read—viz., "John Bull," "The British Weekly," Charles Garvice, Annie Sloan, and "Rita." The other kind is called "literature," but is not read. It consists of the works of Swinburne, Morris, Meredith, Bridges, Conrad, Hudson, Belloc and so on.

Now it happens that in the early days of literature no such distinction existed at all. The men who produced "literature" were then the men who were read, or rather heard. Homer was far more popular than Nat Gondl. Multitudes of men, women, and children sat on the grass and heard while the twenty-four books of the Iliad were recited by relays of reciters, and next day they were ready for the twenty-four books of the Odyssey. The Greek tragic and comic writers were tremendously popular. Since then there has been an ever increasing separation between the people and literature, so that now it is taken for granted that nothing really good can be popular.

One of the palpable results of this divorce is that the men who possess aesthetic feeling are now almost wholly out of touch with life. An American paper lately complained that those who can write know so little, while those who have lived do not write. I find nearly everything that is now called "literature" astonishingly uninteresting. I cannot read Swinburne's "Atalanta," nor can I wade through the classical stories in "The Earthly Paradise"; yet I am fond of Ovid's "Metamorphoses," from which all these stories are taken, than of any other book in the world. Mr. Congreve says you have "the first dramatic critic in England." I do not question this, but I regret to say that I cannot read him. Yet I have lately read through all the plays of Plautus and Terence, and have begun to read them again.

It is now considered that nobody who writes "literature" can be interested in anything so vulgar as the events of his time. In that we are most unlike the ancients. Euripides and Aristophanes carried the squabbles of the streets into the theatre; hence they are still studied. The subject-matter of what is best in Plato is simply the debates and discussions that he had many times heard in halls and rooms and in the open air. Literature that is really alive is nearly always of this kind. Shaw's "Cæsar and Cleopatra" will not live; but "The Fabian Society: What It Has Done and How It Has Done It" will assuredly live.

AN ANNOUNCEMENT.

Sir,—I ask your kind permission to announce that I am prepared to lecture on the following subjects, either singly or as a connected course:

HISTORY: The Origin of Life, Sex and Religion, the Discovery of the Sun, The Chosen People, the Four Gospels, Yeshu-ha-Notzri.

PROPHECY: The Silence of the Churches, Spiritual Reconstruction, the Rights of God, the Kingdom of Man, the Order of Genius, the New Jerusalem.

Some of these lectures embody results of original research which I see no other means of laying before the public at present.

Royal Societies' Club, St. James's Street, S.W. 1.

Memoranda.

(From last week's New Age.)

Liberalism rests at bottom upon promises rather than threats.—"Notes of the Week."

To England and France peace was a necessity; and if the aims of their moneyed men were not noble, they were at least not murderous.

No German money goes where German arms, if necessary, cannot conveniently interfere.

The distribution of Allied Finance has been solely economic; that of German finance almost entirely strategic.—J. M. Kennedy.

Judgment about value cannot in the end be proved.—O. Latham.

We exhausted our artistic resources of international compliment when we tired of hearing two, or more, National Anthems in one evening.

All good art is supposed to be educative, and bad art should at least have good intentions.

The eternal verities of human nature melodrama can never forget and never express.—John Francis Hope.

One might as well expect to discredit science by attacking the Harrismouth Encyclopaedia as hope to discredit Christian theology by criticising the Bible.—R. H. C.

There is no shorter cut to barbarism than disrespect for the rule of Idw, and in a state of barbarism there is no respect for the conscientious objector.—A. R. R.
PRESS CUTTINGS.

It is quite true that wages in the long run tend to adjust themselves to the fluctuations in the cost of living, but this adjustment is always approximate only. The labour market is always lagging behind the facts of the market in commodities and the imperfect adjustment is marked by wasteful labour disputes. Perhaps, indeed, the whole idea of labour as commodity is wrong. If it were a real commodity, the cheaper it would be the better; the idea of an equation of wages which is efficient (which it is not) would it would still be against public policy to let its wage value fall below the amount consistent with the living of the life of a freeman and a citizen."—Manchester Guardian.

They all aim at abolishing the "capitalist system" or the "wage system," which rests on private ownership of the means of production. They differ about what should be substituted for it. Socialism—or, more accurately, Collectivism—would have State or public ownership and control; Syndicalism claims both for labour organised in industrial unions; Guild Socialism seeks to combine the two by vesting ownership with supervision in the State, but entrusting the conduct of each industry to the unions or guilds. The articles says that the last is now quite intelligible. It has attractions for the advocates of both Collectivism and Syndicalism, though less for the latter than the former, and it avoids some of the most obvious objections to both. It undoubtedly has a future, though not the future its admirers anticipate.—"The Times."

"GUILD PRINCIPLES IN WAR AND PEACE" (G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., 2s. 6d., pp. 176). Of the necessity for commercial and economic reconstruction, attended or closely followed by some sort of social reconstruction, there can be no doubt. Socialism, indeed, already is officially admitted by the aristocracies of whose special duty is to "think," and who would suppose, to evolve working proposals which will serve at least as a basis for discussion when the time for discussion arrives. Mr. Hobson appears to think that that moment has come. He, in common with many others who sympathetically aim at the emancipation of the great industrial class, sees that "the after-war problem of unemployment is unique, and that the solution for normal unemployment is inapplicable to it." And in this book he proposes the serious consideration of the principle of National Guilds, which is the combination of all the labour of every kind, admission of the whole working class to particular industry. In includes those who work with their brains as well as those who contribute labour. This proposition of industrial reconstruction, or a larger and more catholic than that of our present Trade Union system, and though the ideal may be too Utopian for immediate application, it is good to have amongst us ardent spirits like the author who reach forward towards the better things that are for the moment out of reach. "The Cabinet Maker."

Negatively, it is no part, and never has been any part, of our war policy (as the Pan-Germans pretend) to aim at the annihilation of Germany, or the permanent degradation of the German people. It is true that, not only the manner in which the war was engineered and launched, but, still more, the methods, first of callousness and brutal cruelty, then of refined and inventive wickedness, by its conduct has been carried on—witness the latest disclosure of what was being hatched in the Imperial Consulate at Bukarest in view of a rupture with Rumania—have profusely and abundantly, and must for a long time to come affect the whole world's estimate of German character and temperament. It may not be wholly true, though in the long run it comes pretty near the truth, to say that every country has the Government which it deserves. As history shows, there could be no more poignant example than what we are witnessing this year in Russia, the process of getting rid of a bad Government is apt to be a costly and protracted business. But there is nothing in this war that has aroused more world-wide surprise and counteraction than that Germany, opinion should have, in the early stages, consented with tolerance, and should now have come to applaud with fervour, the worst and most harrowing transgression of the German Government. It shows us, at any rate, from what unmeasured perils—from what a setback to the whole machinery of civilisation—man-kind has been delivered, now that the Allies have shuttled for ever the dreams of German hegemony. It shows, too, for the instruction and warning of others, whether a nation is bound to tend when it submits itself for a generation to the guidance of militarism and materialism, walking hand in hand, Russian militarism—that has been and is our objective—since it chose to force matters to an issue. But for the German democracy we have no other wish than that, having shaken off this soul-dwelling incubus, it should learn the lessons and enjoy in full measure the blessings of freedom.—Mr. Asquith.

The successful consolidation of the recent Revolution in Russia brings all the Allied nations into line as democratic peoples living under representative Constitutional Government. At the Peace Conference in which they take part the representatives of all the Allied Governments will speak and act in the name of their respective peoples, but at present German representatives speak and act only for the Kaiser. I know there are those who say that the question of the system of government in Germany is one solely for the people of Germany to determine. Before the war this claim was perfectly justifiable, but in the light of the last three years' experience it is not now admissible. The whole world is groaning and quivering under the blighting influence and effects of the policy pursued by Imperialist Germany—a policy which no democratically governed nation could have conceived or would have tolerated. When the devastating feet of German Imperialism trespassed across the territorial frontiers of Germany, Belgium, France, and Serbia, and across the frontiers of the national ideals of other peoples, it became a problem of vital and immediate concern to the whole world. Moreover, as one party to any peace settlement that may be made, the Allies are perfectly justified in saying to the German people: "After our past experiences we cannot accept the bond of your Kaiser. Our quarrel is with him and his irresponsible advisers, who consider treaties to be 'scaps of paper,' and whose international policy is based on the formula 'necessity knows no law.' President Wilson, the Prime Minister, Russia, and our Allied statesmen, and Allied Labour and Socialist conferences have all declared that the Allies are not at war with the German people as a people, but with the Kaiser and his Government; and that it would be much easier for the Allies to negotiate with a democratic Germany. National responsibility, as it is conceived by a free people, can only be given and accepted as a guarantee for the sanctity and permanence of a peace settlement through the democratically elected representatives of a free people."—Mr. Arthur Henderson, in the "Daily News."

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